



LESSON PLAN

Scripture Texts:

Matthew 16:13-25

2 Corinthians 4:7-18

Session Theme:

Identity

a. Welcome to Class

Teachers should arrive in the classroom well in advance of class. Welcome students as they enter, and inquire about their week. Pass out name tags and record attendance on a classroom chart.

b. Icebreaker: "Take Up Your Cross"

Give each person 2 chenille sticks (pipe cleaners). Challenge them to find a way to attach these and make a cross shape that doesn't fall apart when they hold it up. Crosses can be large or small--the choice is theirs. When kids have finished, have them show you their crosses, and ask them to name all the places they have seen crosses in society (on a church steeple, as a piece of jewelry, etc.) and what these bring to mind.

As Christians, when we see a cross, we think of Jesus. Others may just see a shape or a decoration, but for us, they symbolize our Savior and what he did for us. Did people understand who Jesus was back in Bible times? Let's begin our lesson and find out!

c. Opening Prayer

Faithful Lord, please give us the courage to tell others about you. Sometimes it may be hard to share our faith, but you can help us. Thank you for loving and saving us. In your holy name we pray. Amen.

d. SEED Video or Song (Optional)

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This time may also include an opening song or two, using a commercial Sunday School music CD.

Song suggestions for this lesson:

- "Built on a Rock" (hymn)
- "I Will Call Upon the Lord" (Bible camp song)

e. Brief Bible Background

Read together the introduction to the lessons for the day, and briefly summarize the context and setting:

- Today's Lesson is from the New Testament
- Scripture Section: Foreshadow

In today's story, Jesus asked the disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter declares that he is the Messiah, the son of God. Jesus then told them what he will soon face: suffering, death, but then, being raised from the dead on the third day.

f. Communicate the Bible Story

Always keep in mind that the main purpose of Sunday School is to put people in contact with Bible stories. Use a version that is appropriate to the age level.

Upper Elementary: Read the Bible Story and Rhyme

Youth/Adults: Read the Scripture text from the Bible

For Upper and Lower Elementary, use the Storyteller questions to help the students think about the story.

g. Complete the Worksheet(s)

Continue with the handout sheets appropriate to the age level of the students in class:

Upper Elementary: Worksheet and Drama

Youth: Bible Study (Maps, Timelines, Questions)

Adult: Bible Study Sheet (Introduction and Discussion)

h. Craft and Activity Time

If there is time after covering the Bible story, the class may move to craft and activity time, described on the following page. (Do not let the activity time supersede the actual time spent on the Scripture lesson.)

i. Summarize and Review

Before ending class, briefly summarize the day's lesson one last time. If you have not already done so, introduce the Theme Word for the week, providing the definition, and asking how the lesson connects to that theme.

Youth/Adult: Discuss "Reflection for the Week Ahead"

j. Closing Prayer

Close the session in prayer before dismissal:

Upper Elementary: Practice a prayer from memory (e.g., the Lord's Prayer, Luther's Morning Prayer, etc.)

Youth/Adult: Use the ADTRC Prayer format



Bible Study Leader's Guide

The following is a discussion and answer guide for the Youth and Adult Bible Study sheets. For all leaders, it can serve to provide some background on the Bible lesson.

Discuss: Matthew 16:13-25

1. This story serves as a turning point in the narrative. What had Jesus been doing prior to this? After this, what was he focused on?

Before this, Jesus had been teaching and performing miracles as he traveled back and forth across the country. After this event, he focused on preparing his disciples for his crucifixion and letting them know what it really meant that he is the Messiah. He set his face toward Jerusalem and the cross.

2. The title "Son of Man" was how Jesus often referred to himself. In a literal sense, how is this an accurate description? Compare Daniel 7:13-14. How is the Son of Man described here?

In the literal sense, Jesus is the "Son of Man" because he is truly human (in addition to being fully divine). In Daniel, we read of "one like a son of man" as an apocalyptic figure who is given authority over all creation and who is worshiped as God. This points to Jesus who is true man, and yet also true God, having dominion and being worthy of worship.

3. The Jewish people had long awaited the coming of the Messiah — the Christ, the anointed one, the chosen leader who would defeat their enemies. What "enemies" did Jesus actually come to defeat? How was he going to do it?

Many Jewish people thought that the Messiah would be a military commander who would lead the people to victory over their enemies, the Romans. But Jesus came for a deeper victory. The enemies which Jesus came to defeat were the spiritual forces of sin, death, and the power of the devil. Jesus defeated them through his perfect, sinless life, his death on the cross as the sacrifice for our sins, and his resurrection which demonstrated his victory over these enemies.

4. Peter referred to Jesus as "the Son of the Living God." How can Jesus be a human (son of man) and, at the same time, Son of God?

The "two natures" of Christ is a mystery beyond our human comprehension. But we trust that what Jesus said of himself is true "The Father and I are one" (John 10:30) as well as what the Bible says about him, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). We know that Jesus is the Second

Person of the Holy Trinity -- God the Son -- who took on human flesh and soul in order to be our Savior. His divinity was not diminished by being born as a human being, but the incarnation revealed his full humanity and his full divinity.

5. Jesus says that Peter did not come up with the answer on his own. Who revealed this truth to him? When it comes to faith in our own lives, why must God himself make it happen?

Jesus says that God the Father revealed it to Peter. God must always reveal himself to us because we are by nature spiritually dead and unable to know God. God the Holy Spirit works through his Word to create saving faith in us so that we also can believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

6. The "keys of the kingdom of heaven" refers to the power Jesus gave his followers to forgive sins in his name. Why is this a central part of our mission as Jesus' disciples?

Forgiving sins in Jesus' name is central to our mission as his disciples because he uses us as his hands and voice in the world. Hearing the words of absolution from another believer is like hearing them from Christ himself, and assures us that we are indeed forgiven.

7. What did Peter get wrong about the mission of the Messiah (v. 22)? What did Jesus say must happen? Why? What does it mean for us to take up our sacrificial cross (v. 24)?

Peter was focused on a Messiah who would be an earthly king over an earthly kingdom, he did not understand that Jesus' kingdom was not of this world and that he must sacrifice himself in order to be our savior. For us to take up our cross means that we give up the things which keep us from following Jesus. We place all of our own desires behind the calling which he places on each one of us.

8. Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-18. In what sense do believers share the same fate as Jesus? What promise does Jesus give us in the midst of suffering and loss?

Just as Jesus had to suffer persecution and die in order to save us, those who follow him are called to suffer persecution, and perhaps die, for his sake. He says, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Mt 16:24).

In the midst of the suffering and loss which believers face in this life, Jesus promises that although we will suffer and die for him, we will be raised in new, glorified bodies like his and live forever with him.

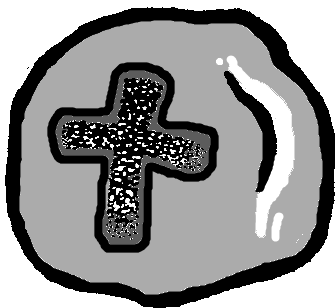
Classroom Craft and Activity Page

Listed below are in-class activities and craft projects related to the theme for the day. Choose one of the following based on the age and capabilities of the students. (Never let the activity or craft time take precedence over the biblical story.)

Activity 1: “On This Rock” Pocket Stones

Materials Needed:

- Small stones
- Non toxic acrylic craft paints
- Paint brushes
- Toothpicks
- Paper towels
- Cups of water
- Optional: Mod Podge (or student glue thinned out with water)



Instructions:

Before class: Collect a number of small rocks or stones outside. If you can't easily find them outside, these can be purchased at most craft stores and some large box stores.

Jesus called Peter the “Rock” on which he would build his church. For this craft, kids will paint small stones with symbols to remind them of today's story. Then, they can either display them at home or carry them in their pockets as a reminder of their faith in Christ.

Give each child a stone, a paintbrush, a toothpick, a cup of water, and a piece of paper towel.

Invite kids to think about symbols that might remind them of today's story. Ideas could include: a cross (for Jesus), a fish shape (for Peter, the fisherman), a church (since Jesus said “On this rock I will build my church”), a key (because Peter would hold “the keys to the kingdom”), a sky (to represent heaven), a city outline (to represent Jerusalem).

Have kids choose one image and paint it on their stone. They can use a toothpick to paint the finer details, especially if their stones are small.

Let the paint completely dry. You might want to have kids play a quick game in the meantime.

Optional Step: When the rocks are dry, invite kids to paint over them with Mod Podge. Let this completely dry. The Mod Podge will protect the paint and keep it from chipping off later.

Activity 2: “Who Am I?” Game

Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Pen
- White board

Instructions:

Before class: Write down the names of 10-15 famous

Bible people who might be familiar to kids. Ideas could include: Noah, Jesus, David, Moses, Mary (Jesus' mother), Goliath, Joseph (Jesus' father), Adam, Eve, Peter, Zaccheus, Pharaoh, etc.

Think of one vague fact that you can say about each Bible person. For example, for Noah: “I got ready to sail on water.”

When ready to play:

- Divide the class into two teams.
- Team A will sit in a huddle on one side of the room. Team B will sit in a huddle on the other side of the room.
- Explain that you are going to say a fact about a Bible person. Afterwards, each team will huddle together and come up with one question to ask in order to figure out who it is. For example, they might think of the question, “Are you a fisherman?”
- After a few minutes, invite each team to ask their question. No guessing the answer out loud!
- You will only answer “Yes” or “No.”
- Next, teams can huddle together and come up with a guess on who the person might be.
- Call on each team for their guess.
- Whichever team guesses correctly gets a point. If both teams are right, both teams get a point. If neither team is right, they can huddle again to ask a second question and repeat the process.
- Keep track of points on the white board. Whichever team has amassed the most points at the end of the game wins.



Worksheet Answer Key

Shown below are the answers and solution to the children's worksheet for this week's lesson:



Map Answers:

Caesarea Philippi

Capernaum

Cana

Nain

Tiberias

Nazareth

where Jesus changed water into wine

where Jesus raised a widow's son

the town where Jesus grew up

city built in honor of the Emperor

where Peter said, "You are the Christ"

where Jesus first met Peter and Andrew

Vocabulary Word for the Week

Teachers may want to introduce the theme word for the week to help expand students' biblical vocabulary.

Identity

who a person is

*Peter recognized Jesus' true identity.
He realized that Jesus was the Son of God!*

Reflection for the Week Ahead

Today's Bible story shows Peter behaving in two different ways. At the beginning of the story, Peter acts faithfully, and Jesus tells him, "On this Rock I will build my church."

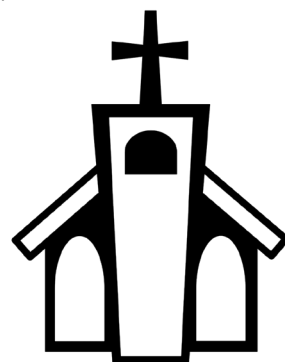
Yet very shortly after that, Peter gets frightened and tries to convince Jesus not to go to Jerusalem. At that point, Jesus says to him, "Get behind me Satan."

So which is it? Was Peter a help or a hindrance? A saint or a sinner?

Both. And so are we.

Sometimes faith comes easily and things seem very clear. At other times, we are confused or scared like Peter was. Thankfully, our salvation doesn't rest on our own abilities. We cannot do things perfectly, try as we might. This is why it is so important that we know "who Jesus is." He is not just a teacher, or a leader, or a prophet, or a historical figure. He is our Savior, and we need him.

Talk about a time when you realized your own need for Jesus. How did your faith grow through that experience?



The Practice of Prayer

Write a prayer thanking God for sending Jesus into the world. Ask him to help you to share your faith with others, so they may know who Jesus truly is.

Practice using the ADTRC Prayer Form: Address, Description, Thanks, Request, Conclusion.