

God's Plan: 4 Us 2 KNOW Him!

Bible Story

The Personification Revelation

John 1:1–2,14; 5:1–9; 6:16–21; 11:57; 14:1–7

What is
God like?

Bible Verse

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'" John 14:6–7

When you read
about Jesus in
the Bible, you
know more
about God.

Session Goals

1. PARTICIPATE in telling the story of Jesus' life.
2. IDENTIFY ways to learn more about God.
3. THANK God for His Word, the Bible, and that we can know Him by reading about Jesus.
4. CHOOSE to live as a member of God's family.

Spark Principle—Motion

Objects at rest stay at rest until a force puts them in motion. People were stuck in sin until Jesus came and put God's plan in motion.



Bible

God sent His Son, Jesus, to Earth so that we can know God better. Jesus said if we know Him, we will know God. We can know Jesus by reading about His life in God's Word, the Bible. When you see a Bible, you can remember that God wants us to know Him.



Heart Prep

What is God like? The question has been asked through the ages. Many answers have been given. Some are false. All were incomplete until the Lord Jesus Christ came and explained, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9).

The account of Christ's life in the Bible is limited. This is one of the proofs of the Word. Had someone invented a history of the life of Christ, how exaggerated would have been the tales, like the ancients told of their gods. Jesus spoke as no other person spoke—this we know; but He also did what no other person did. Crowds kept coming after Him, seeking a sign to prove who He was. What signs did He furnish? He said, "the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them" (Matthew 11:5). He never catered to the demands of idle curiosity, nor was any work ever done selfishly. He only desired to show that He was sufficient for the needs of the body and the spirit.

He did want all people to know that He is the Christ. He not only called Himself the Son of God, but He also allowed Peter to make it a public confession. Every other thing in Jesus' character that we know to be true would have compelled Him to quickly deny such a statement if it had been untrue.

Some say that Jesus is the greatest of all teachers; yes, the best man who ever lived. But this is not enough, for this man was to be our Savior; and if He is not God, then He cannot redeem a lost world.

Daily Recap

At the end of each session, take time to reflect on what happened. Use these questions as a guide:

- What worked well today? What truth did you discover from God's Word?
- Did the kids take away their need to read God's Word to know more about Jesus?
- Be prepared to briefly tell about the time when you experienced God's presence in your life.

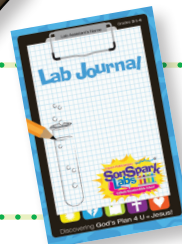
Materials

Optional Bible Story materials listed on page 25.

Bibles



Lab Journal



Session 3 Daily Plan Pennant



Session 3 Bible Story Poster from Bible Teaching Poster Pack



water in a clear glass



metal pie pan



empty toilet-paper tube



large egg



markers



Tell the Bible Story

Preparation: Mark John 1, 5, 11 and 14 in children's Bibles. (Optional: Use Post-it Notes to mark Bibles.) If Bibles are not available for all children, mark your Bible and ask volunteers to read verses as indicated in the story.

Place a table where you will be leading the Story Starter activity. Set a clear glass of water on table. Center pie pan on the top of the glass of water. Place the toilet-paper tube in the center of the pie pan. Set the egg on top of tube (see photo). Practice a few times the directions below for smacking the pie plate, and make sure you are comfortable with the demonstration before doing it in front of the kids!

Story Starter

So glad to see you again! Did you have trouble getting out of bed this morning? I did! It reminded me of today's experiment. This experiment demonstrates the first of Sir Isaac Newton's laws of motion, the law of inertia. You know, Sir Isaac Newton may have been the guy who wrote the law down, but who CREATED the laws of motion? Volunteers respond, "God!"

The goal here is to get the egg in the glass. BUT . . . I cannot touch the egg, the tube or the glass. How am I going to do it? Allow a few

moments for responses. Then place your hand flat a few inches away from the pie pan. Keeping your hand flat, swing it back a few inches and then smack pie pan forcefully. The pie pan will slide off the glass, the rim of the pan will knock the tube away and the egg will drop into the glass.

Basically, Sir Isaac Newton's first law of motion, the law of inertia, states that an object at rest will stay at rest until an outside force sets it in motion—like when I had trouble getting out of bed this morning!

Similarly, an object in motion will stay in motion unless an outside force causes it to slow or stop. So, once I got the pie pan in motion, it caused the tube to move. Once the tube was gone, the egg momentarily stayed still, but then another force caused it to drop. What force caused the egg to drop? Hint: We learned about it in Session 1! (Gravity.)

Yesterday we heard all about Adam and Eve and how their sin separated them from God. At the end of that story in the Bible, we read a promise from God to send a Savior (Genesis 3:15). God's people waited for hundreds of years for this Savior to come. In a way, they were stuck, and like an object at rest, they weren't going anywhere. Today we're going to hear about that Savior—the force that caused God's plan to move into motion . . . FAST!

The Personification Revelation

John 1:1–2,14; 5:1–9; 6:16–21; 11:57; 14:1–7

Back to the Beginning

Let's see . . . **What do you know about the beginning of everything?** (God created the heavens and the earth.) **Let's read John 1:1–2 to find out how God helped Jesus' friend John describe that same beginning.** Jesus was with God in the beginning. "The Word" is another name for Jesus. Jesus was there with God when everything was created. He was there because He, too, is God.





Bring the Bible Story to Life!

Dress in a Bible-times costume and pretend to be Jesus' disciple, John. It doesn't matter if you're female! Kids will join in the fun of pretending you are this person from the Bible. Tell the story in first-person point of view, as if you were there—because John WAS there and wrote the Scriptures that form the basis of today's story!

Bring additional Bible-times costumes for volunteers to wear as they pantomime the story action as you tell the story.

Begin story, **Hello! My name is John. I am a follower of Jesus of Nazareth. You want to know what God is like? You couldn't have come at a better time! I've just finished writing my own eyewitness account of some of the things Jesus did while He was here on Earth. You can find this story in the Bible. There were so MANY things, I couldn't write about them all! But everything I DID write shows who Jesus is.**

What happened to Adam and Eve, the man and woman God created in the beginning? (They sinned. They were separated from God.) Sin came between people and God. As time went on, people thought less and less about God. So sin became more and more common.

Jesus Becomes a Man

After hundreds of years had passed God did the most incredible thing! The Word—Jesus, the Son of God—became flesh. That means Jesus became a human being with skin and bones and hands and feet and hair and eyes! And He came to Earth to LIVE with people, not just VISIT with them! We celebrate when Jesus came to Earth every year at Christmas!

Jesus Teaches His Disciples

Jesus grew up and became a man. John, who wrote the Bible book we're reading today, met Jesus and began to follow Him when Jesus was about 30 years old. Eventually, there were 12 friends of Jesus. These friends were called His disciples. These disciples traveled with Jesus from village to village. They ate their meals together. They slept in the same houses. They got to know Jesus as their Teacher and their Friend. They watched what He did and listened

carefully to everything He said. But it still took Jesus' disciples a while to understand exactly who He IS!

Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

Once, Jesus and His disciples were walking past the Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem. Its five porches were filled with the most miserable-looking and awful-smelling people you could imagine. Some were blind. Some were lame. Some were paralyzed. They were all waiting for a miracle—they wanted to be healed. Everyone wanted to hurry past them, but not Jesus! **What do you think Jesus did? Read John 5:5–6 to find out.** Jesus didn't hurry past! He stopped and began to talk with a man who had been paralyzed for 38 years! Jesus' friends couldn't believe their eyes! And they couldn't believe their ears! Jesus said to the man, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." And just like that . . . *snap fingers* . . . the man stood on his feet, picked up his mat and walked away!

Jesus Calms the Storm

Another time, Jesus and His friends had an exhausting day of teaching and feeding over 5,000 people. Jesus' friends were so tired! Jesus must have known how His friends felt, because He sent them

Skit Option

As a fun alternative or supplement to this Bible story, ask leaders, youth helpers or other volunteers to perform "It's a Miracle" Bible story skit in *ShowTime! Assemblies*.

ahead of Him across the Sea of Galilee. Jesus wanted to have some quiet time with God.

As Jesus' friends were on the water, strong winds and high waves began to rock the boat. They were rowing as hard as they could, trying to keep from drowning. Suddenly, they saw someone walking toward them ON THE WATER. They screamed in terror!

But then they heard a familiar voice. "Don't be afraid! It is I!" It was Jesus! The minute He got into the boat, the wind died down and the boat landed, safe on the other shore.

Jesus' Enemies Make Their Plans

You would think that everyone would love someone who was so loving and kind and powerful—who healed the sick and cared for people who were hurting or frightened. You would think everyone would believe the things He taught when they saw the miracles He did. But not everyone liked what Jesus said and did. In fact, some people hated Him and wanted to kill Him. These people were the religious leaders. They were jealous and upset because Jesus had so many followers and His teachings were different from theirs. **Read John 11:57 to find out what these people did.** The religious leaders made plans to trap Jesus and arrest Him, even though Jesus had done NOTHING wrong!

Jesus Tells About the Father

Those were dangerous days for Jesus and all of His friends. One night Jesus told His friends that He was going away to prepare a place where they could be with Him and His Father forever. Jesus even said that they knew the way to get there. Jesus' friends were all VERY confused by what Jesus was saying. Thomas said, "Lord, we don't know where you're going. How can we know the way?"

Read John 14:6–7 to find out Jesus' answer to Thomas. There you have it! How do we know what God is like? Look at Jesus! Reading about Jesus' life in the Bible is one way we can know about Jesus. And when we know what Jesus is like, we know what God is like. It's as simple and as amazing as that!

Conclusion

Today's Daily Plan is "God's Plan: 4 Us 2 KNOW Him!" God carefully and purposefully created Earth as a perfect home for people who would know Him and love Him. YOU are here because God loves you and wants you to love Him, too.

Our Scripture verse for today is John 14:6–7, the same passage we read a few moments ago, "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him.'" God wants us to know Him. That's why He sent His Son, Jesus. When we read about Jesus in the Bible, we learn what God is like.



St. Matthew was one of Jesus' apostles and wrote one of the Gospels. Before Jesus came Matthew was a tax collector and didn't always do the right thing. But once he started following Jesus he worked hard to do the right thing all the time. Matthew wrote his Gospel, with the help of the Holy Spirit, so we could know Jesus better and be His friend too! **(Adapted from *Matthew the Apostle: Banker and God's Storyteller* by Barbara Yoffie © 2014 Liguori Publications).**

Prayer

Invite volunteers to complete the sentence prayer **Dear God, thank You that You . . .** by naming things they know about God and for which they are thankful. Conclude prayer by thanking God for sending Jesus to Earth and for giving us His Word so that we can read about Jesus and know more about Him.



Catechetical Connection: Part of growing closer to God is learning about him. We hear all about God during the readings at Mass. All the readings are important, but especially the Gospel because that is Jesus himself speaking to us about God's love! (That's also why we stand during the Gospel). So pay close attention to the Gospel reading this Sunday! **(Adapted from *Handbook for Today's Catholic Children*, by Francine O'Connor © Liguori Publications).**

Apply the Bible Story

Bible Story Review

To review the Bible Story, lead children to complete “What Is God Like?” activity on page 10 of the *Lab Journal*. As children work, ask these questions to guide conversation:

- On which holiday do we celebrate Jesus’ coming to Earth? (Christmas.)
- Name one of the amazing things Jesus did. (Healed a man who couldn’t walk. Walked on water. Calmed a storm.)
- Why did some people not like Jesus? (They were jealous that so many people liked Jesus and wanted to follow Him. Jesus taught people things about God that were different from what the religious leaders taught.)
- What do you know about Jesus? (He is kind, powerful, loving, etc.)

The question in today’s Q&A is “What is God like?” After hearing our story, how would you answer that question? Volunteers respond. The Q&A answer is that “When you read about Jesus in the Bible, you know more about God.” God wants us to know Him. Why? Because you can’t really be friends with someone until you know what that person is like. God sent Jesus to Earth so that we could know Him better. That’s also why God gave us His Word, the Bible. When we read about Jesus in the Bible, we get to know Jesus. And when we know Jesus, we know God.

Active Review

Children stand in a circle while you close your eyes. Ask a helper to guide several children to switch positions while you slowly count to three. Keeping your eyes closed, call out one child’s name. The child standing to the right of the one whose name you called answers one of the questions above or chooses a volunteer to answer. Repeat, swapping places, calling names and asking different questions.

God’s Plan for Me (Life Application)

Today’s Scripture verse is John 14:6–7. Volunteer reads verse aloud from Bible. **How is Jesus “the Way”?** (We can only know God by going through Jesus.) **How is Jesus “the Truth”?** (Jesus always speaks the truth. Jesus is the one true Savior.) **How is Jesus “the Life”?** (Because Jesus made a way for us to become members of God’s family, we can live with Him forever in heaven.)

Children complete “Knowing God” activity on page 11 of the *Lab Journal*. Ask children questions such as these:

- Thinking about the verse, what is a reason we ALL need Jesus? (We all sin and all need Jesus’ forgiveness.)
- What is one thing a kid your age might need to know about Jesus? (Jesus is with us when we’re scared. Jesus listens to our prayers. Jesus helps us have courage or strength to do good things.)
- Why is following Jesus important to our lives? (Jesus helps us. He gives us what we need. Jesus guides us. He helps us know and do what God has planned for us. Jesus shows us how to live in the very best way.)

What part of God’s plan are we talking about today? Pause for children to respond, “4 Us 2 KNOW Him!” **God gave us His Word, the Bible, so that we can read about Jesus’ life and learn about who Jesus is. Jesus makes it possible for us to know God, because Jesus tells us that when we know Him, we know God the Father as well.**

Hold up Session 3 Daily Plan Pennant. **The Bible we see reminds us that God wants us to know Him. God already knows us and loves us! He wants us to know and love Him, too.**

Knowing who God is by knowing Jesus is part of God’s plan—GP4U = J! Tomorrow we’re going to hear about the most important part of God’s plan.