

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.



Optional Bible Story materials listed on page 25.

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:

- ① What worked well today? What truth did you discover from God’s Word?
- ① Did the kids take away their need to read God’s Word to know more about Jesus?
- ① Be prepared to briefly tell about the time when you experienced God’s presence in your life.

Materials

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



Session 3
Grades 5 and 6

Tell the Bible Story

Preparation: Mark John 1, 5, 11 and 14 in student's Bibles. (Optional: Use Post-it Notes to mark Bibles.) If Bibles are not available for all students, 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! How many of you had a hard time 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 guess who **CREATED** the law? Volunteers respond, "God!"



The goal here is to get the egg into the glass. BUT . . . I cannot touch the egg, the tube or the glass. How am I going to do it? Allow time 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? (Gravity.)

Yesterday we heard about Adam and Eve and how their sin separated them—and us—from God. But God made a promise at the end of that story to send a Savior who would make things right again (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, as we research this account, consider the following: What force 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

What do you know about the beginning of everything? Volunteers respond. **Let's read John 1:1–2 to hear how, with God's help, Jesus' friend John described that same beginning.** "The Word" is another name for Jesus. He was always there; He was with God at Creation—because He is God!



When Adam and Eve sinned, what was the effect? (They were separated from God.) Sin came between people and God. As time went by, even though God loved people, and even though He had promised to send a Savior, many people had forgotten about God and His promises.

Jesus Becomes a Man

BUT God's plan is never stopped by forgetful people! Although hundreds and HUNDREDS of years had passed, at just the right time, the Word became flesh. That means Jesus, the Son of God, became a human being with skin and bones and hands and feet and hair and eyes! He was born in a stable in Bethlehem. Jesus' birth is the reason we celebrate Christmas!

Jesus Teaches His Disciples

Jesus came to Earth and grew up. He didn't come to visit; He came to experience everything people experience. When He was about 30 years old, He met John, the writer of this eyewitness account. John began to follow Jesus—along with 11 other men, called Jesus' disciples. They traveled with Jesus. They ate their meals together. They slept in the same houses. They watched what Jesus did and listened carefully to what He said. But it still took Jesus' disciples a while to understand exactly who He IS!

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.**

Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

But Jesus had come to show everyone what God is like. Here's one example: Jesus was walking past the Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem. Its five porches were filled with people who all were sick or disabled in some way—blind, lame, paralyzed. They were all waiting for a miracle. They wanted to be healed!

Read John 5:5–6 to find out what Jesus asked one man. Jesus stopped. He took time to talk with a man who had been paralyzed for 38 years. And then, 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! WOW! Jesus was showing people that God CARES, that God has TIME for people, that God loves to HEAL and HELP people!

Jesus Calms the Storm

Another time, Jesus had worked a miracle so that He and His friends gave bread and fish to well over 5,000 people! Jesus sent His friends on ahead across the sea while He went to be alone with God, His Father.

As Jesus' friends were on the water, strong winds and high waves began to rock the boat. They had to take down the sail and row as hard as they could just to keep the boat from sinking! Suddenly, they saw

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*.

someone walking toward them ON THE WATER. Jesus' friends screamed! But then they heard, "Don't be afraid! It is I!" It was Jesus! He got into the boat, and RIGHT THEN the wind stopped and the boat landed, safe on the other shore. Jesus was showing more about God: He can do ANYTHING! He can feed hungry people. He can BREAK the law of gravity by walking on water. Because Jesus is GOD, He could tell the wind to stop and it OBEYED!

Jesus' Enemies Make Their Plans

You would think that everyone would LOVE someone 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 what He said when they saw the miracles He did! But not everyone liked what Jesus said and did. In fact, some religious leaders HATED Him. They wanted to kill Him. They were jealous and upset because Jesus had so many followers and because His teachings were different from theirs. **Read John 11:57 to find out what these people did.** These religious leaders planned to arrest Jesus, even though Jesus had done NOTHING wrong!

Jesus Tells About the Father

Those were dangerous days for Jesus and 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! 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 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 know Him and love Him, too.

Our Scripture verse for today is John 14:6–7. Let's hear it again: "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 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

Dear God, we thank You that You . . . Volunteers complete the sentence prayer by naming things they know about God and Jesus 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 preteens to complete “What is God Like?” activity on page 10 of the *Lab Journal*. As they work, ask these questions to guide conversation:

- **On which holiday do we celebrate Jesus’ coming to Earth?** (Christmas.)
- **Name one amazing thing Jesus did.** (Healed a paralyzed man. Walked on water. Stopped wind.)
- **Why did some people not like Jesus?** (They were jealous that so many people followed Jesus. Jesus taught people new things about God, 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? Volunteers respond. The Q&A answer is that “When you read about Jesus in the Bible, you know more about God.” Why do you think God wants us to know Him? Volunteers respond. 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

Preteens stand in a circle while you close your eyes. While you slowly count to three, kids swap places. Keeping your eyes closed, call out one player’s name. The player 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 says what is true.) **How is Jesus “the Life”?** (Jesus made a way for us to join God’s family so we can live an amazing life with Him now and forever in heaven.)

Preteens complete “What Do You Think?” activity on page 11 of the *Lab Journal*. Ask questions such as the following:

- **Thinking about the verse, what is a reason we ALL need Jesus?** (He provided a way for us to live with Him forever in heaven. We all need Jesus’ forgiveness.)
- **What is something a kid your age might need to know about Jesus?** (Jesus is with us when we’re scared. Jesus listens to our prayers. Jesus gives us courage to do what is right and good.)
- **Why is it so important to follow Jesus?** (Jesus gives the people in His family everything we need. He guides us to know what to do. He helps us live in the very best way.)

What part of God’s plan are we talking about today? Pause for preteens to respond, “4 Us 2 KNOW Him!” **God gave us His Word, the Bible, so that we can read about Jesus’ life and know 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. Jesus showed us what God the Father is like!**

Hold up Session 3 Daily Plan Pennant. **The Bible shape 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 big plan—GP4U = J!**

Tomorrow, we’ll find out about the most TRANSFORMATIVE part of God’s plan.