

## **INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT HISTORIES**

### Lessons:

1. The Five History Books of the New Testament
2. Why FOUR Gospels?
3. Matthew
4. Mark
5. “A Deaf Man Meets Jesus” – A story from the Gospel of Mark
6. Luke
7. John
8. Acts: The Birth of the Church
9. Acts: Persecution Spreads the Good News
10. Acts: The Missionary

### Rationale:

Since the life of Jesus is covered by another study in this series, we deliberately “neglected” that topic while reviewing the four Gospels. Our focus is on the authors, their individual emphasis, and their unique contribution to the story of Jesus’ life and ministry.

We spend more time in the book of Acts, because Acts may not be covered elsewhere in this series. And, since this is our only chance to catch the story of Jesus and the deaf man, in Mark 7, we devote one lesson to it here.

Each lesson is suppose to take one hour. There is, undoubtedly, more material offered in each lesson than can be covered in just one hour. The leader will need to decide which questions to emphasize, and which to omit.

Ron Friedrich

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT HISTORIES Leader's Guide</b></p>
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**Lesson 1  
The Five History Books of the New Testament**

*"In the past God spoke to our people through the prophets. God spoke to them many times and in many different ways. And now in these last days God has spoken to us again. God has spoken to us through His Son." Hebrews 1:1*

Preparing the lesson

- Begin your private study of the lesson with prayer. Pray for wisdom. Pray for your students. Pray that God's Word will show its life-changing power in your life.
- Read the SUMMARY and GOALS section of the Study Guide.
- Read the teaching suggestions in this Leader's Guide.
- Look up the Bible verses cited in the Study Guide. Write in answers to your own copy of the Study Guide. Also write notes that will remind you about extra suggestions offered here.

Setting up the room for the meeting

- How many people do you expect will come to the lesson? Have that many chairs, plus one or two more. You should always have an empty chair to help you remember to pray for opportunities to invite new people to come.

Teaching the lesson

- Distribute copies of the Study Guide for Lesson 1.
- Begin your meeting with prayer. Have a short prayer that God will give each person the Holy Spirit. Pray that Jesus will lead the meeting. Pray that we will understand more clearly God's Word, the Bible.
- Explain that you are beginning a new series of lessons that will touch on each of the history books of the New Testament.
- This first lesson will give some background on the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament of the Bible.

Introduction to New Testament Histories  
Lesson 1

- Open your Bible and show the title page to the “Old Testament” section. Hold that, while you then show the title page to the “New Testament” section. Ask the group to share their ideas about the difference between these two parts of the Bible.
- Then as a group, answer questions 1 – 8. Let students who may know the answers offer them. Complement them and affirm the right answers.

**[#1] & [#5]**

The story of creation is the first book of the Bible, Genesis (chapters 1 and 2).

**[#2]**

There are many chapter in both OT and NT that describe God’s plan for eternity. But detail about “End Times” is in the NT. Jesus spoke about it often in Gospels, Paul wrote about it in his letters, and, of course, the LAST book of the Bible, Revelation, talks a lot about “End Times.”

**[#6]**

Genesis 3, Adam and Eve fall into sin.

**[#7] & [#8]**

In the OT, God promised in prophecy that He will send a Savior for all people. The NT tells how God did as He had promised.

**[#9]**

An easy place to find this answer is in the Table of Contents, in the front of the Bible.

The two parts of the Bible are OLD TESTAMENT and NEW TESTAMENT (sign OT and NT). Read the sentences here, then write OLD or NEW in the blank to finish the sentence correctly:

#1. The Old Testament tells how God made the world.

#2. The New Testament tells how the world will end.

#3. The Old Testament is "Before Jesus."

#4. The New Testament is "After Jesus."

#5. The Old Testament tells about the first people, Adam and Eve.

#6. The Old Testament tells how sin started in the world.

#7. The Old Testament **promised** that God **will** send a Savior.

#8. The New Testament tells us that God **did** as He promised, and gave us the Savior Jesus.

#9. The first four books of the New Testament are:

Matthew

Mark

Luke

John

- The first five books of the New Testament are the history books.
- The next 21 New Testament books are letters. The St. Paul wrote 13 of those letters.
- The last book of the Bible, Revelation, is full of symbolism and End Time prophecy. We can never fully understand it.



## **Lesson 2**

### **Why FOUR Gospels?**

#### Preparing the lesson

- Begin your private study of the lesson with prayer. Pray for wisdom. Pray for your students. Pray that God's Word will show its life-changing power in your life.
- Read the SUMMARY and GOALS section of the Study Guide.
- Read the teaching suggestions in this Leader's Guide.
- Look up the Bible verses cited in the Study Guide. Write in answers to your own copy of the Study Guide. Also write notes that will remind you about extra suggestions offered here.

#### Opening the lesson

- Distribute copies of the Study Guide for Lesson 2.
- Begin your meeting with prayer. Have a short prayer that God will give each person the Holy Spirit. Pray that Jesus will lead the meeting. Pray that we will understand more clearly God's Word, the Bible.

#### Review Lesson 1

- There two parts of the Bible: Old Testament and New Testament.
- The first four books of the NT have the stories about Jesus' life and teaching. (What are the names of those four books?)
- The first four books of the NT are the GOSPELS.
- What does the word GOSPEL mean? "Good News.:"

#### Tell two stories

##### **STORY #1**

You are a police officer. A car accident happens. The police (YOU!) go to the accident. What do you do? [The group tells their ideas.]

The policeman must write a report about the accident. But you never saw the accident. So how can you report about things you did not see? [Ideas from group: The Policeman looks at the cars, where they are, the damage, the skid

marks in the road. But most important he must ask people who saw the accident.]

After the policeman talks to only one person, is the policeman satisfied that he has the whole story? [No! He talks to as many witnesses as he can find.]

Why? Why are many witnesses better than just one? Why not use just one witness?

### STORY #2

You are a College student. Your history teacher tells you that you must write a research paper about World War I. How many books and encyclopedias should you study first, to help you write your paper?

After the group briefly discusses these stories, ask someone to read the “*Think about it*” section on the first page of the study guide.

Just as a policeman interview several witnesses, and a student researches several books, God has given us several sources to learn about Jesus:

- **Matthew** was one of Jesus’ 12 Disciples. Matthew was an *eye witness*. He shared one special point of view about Jesus.
- **Mark** was not one of the 12 Disciples, but he knew Jesus well. Mark also was an *eye witness* and shared another point of view about Jesus.
- **Luke** may have never met Jesus before Jesus went back to heaven. But Luke *interviewed* many of Jesus’ friends and family. Luke wrote about Jesus from what those people told him.
- **John** was also one of Jesus’ 12 Disciples. John was an *eye witness*. He shared his views about Jesus.

Ask someone to read to read the *Theme Verse* from the first page of the study guide. This is what Peter said about Jesus...

#### **Think About it...:**

How does a policeman investigate a traffic accident?  
...ask the witnesses!

How does a student do research to write a paper?  
...read many different books and articles!

#### **How do we learn about the life of Jesus?**

...see *what the eye witnesses said!*

### INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT HISTORIES

#### Lesson 2 Why FOUR Gospels?

Theme verse: “We told you about the power of our Lord Jesus Christ. We told you about His coming. Those things we told you were not smart stories that people invented. No! We saw the greatness of Jesus with our own eyes.” 2 Peter 1:16

Group may prefer to answer questions 1-5 on their papers first, and then report back to the group their answers. Or the group may work on the answers all together, this way...

**[#1] – [#3]**

Ask people in the group to each find the last chapter of one of the Gospels.

- One person finds the last chapter of Matthew.
- Another person finds the last chapter of Mark.
- Another person... Luke.
- Another person... John.

Ask them to tell everyone the *number* of the last chapter of each book, so everyone can write the answers.

Now ask the group to find the first chapters of the Gospels.

**[#4]**

Ask the group to find *the family tree* of Jesus. The Family Tree (genealogy) is only in two Gospels:

Matthew 1:1-17  
Luke 3:23-38

**[#5]**

Ask the group to find stories about Jesus being born. (Hint: Look at the titles over each section of the Bible text.) Again, these stories are only in two Gospels:

Matthew 1:18-25  
Luke 2:1-6

**[#6]**

Ask people in the group to find the chapters in the Bible printed in the study guide. These verses all tell about Jesus nailed on the cross and dying.

- Ask the people to read their verses, looking for the words that Jesus said.
- Ask the group to look at the chart on the last page of the study guide.

**SAME & DIFFERENT:**  
We have not just one history book about Jesus. We have FOUR history books about Jesus!

#1. How many chapters are in each Gospel?  
Matthew has 28 chapters.  
Mark has 16 chapters.  
Luke has 24 chapters.  
John has 21 chapters.

#2. Which Gospel is shortest? Mark

#3. Which Gospel is longest? Matthew

**Look at the first two chapters of each Gospel.**  
 Matthew 1    Mark 1    Luke 2-3    John 1

#4. Which Gospels show Jesus' "family tree?"  
Matthew and Luke

#5. Which Gospels tell about Baby Jesus birth?  
Matthew and Luke

#6. **Jesus speaks from the Cross:**  
 Matthew 27:35-50.  
 Mark 15:24-37.  
 Luke 23:33-46.  
 John 19:18-30.

Jesus said 7 different things from His Cross. But we must look at all four Gospels to find all 7 things that Jesus said. In the chart on the next page, write the verse number that reports Jesus' words. (The first one, Luke 23:34, is printed for you.)

Introduction to New Testament Histories  
Lesson 2

- If people find Jesus' words from the chart in the Bible text, they can write in the chart the *verse numbers* that have those words. (The first Bible reference is already printed, as an example for the students.)
- The correct answers are as follows:

	<b>JESUS SAID...</b>	<b>Matt. 27: 35-50</b>	<b>Mark 15: 24:-37</b>	<b>Luke 23: 33-46</b>	<b>John 19: 18:30</b>
<b>1</b>	"Father, forgive these people. They don't know what they are doing."			verse 34	
<b>2</b>	"Today you will be with me in Paradise."			verse 43	
<b>3</b>	"Woman, here is your son... Here is your mother."				verses 26-27
<b>4</b>	"My God, my God, why have you left me alone?"	verse 46	verse 34		
<b>5</b>	"I am thirsty."				verse 28
<b>6</b>	"It is finished."				verse 30
<b>7</b>	"Father, I give you my spirit."			verse 46	

The purpose of this activity is to show that each of the Gospels show some of the same information, and they each show some different information. *We need all four Gospels to see what Jesus said and did.*

- [1] **"Father, forgive these people. They don't know what they are doing."** Luke 23:34  
These are the first words Jesus said, when He got crucified (nailed on the cross). He forgave people who were killing him. He forgives us, too.
- [2] **"Today you will be with me in Paradise."** Luke 23:43  
Jesus said this to one of the men on the cross, dying with Him. The thief was sorry for his sin, and he asked Jesus, "Remember me when You come into Your Kingdom." This is Jesus' answer: "Today you will be with me in Paradise (heaven)." The promise is good for us, too. If we trust in Jesus as that thief was, we also will be with Jesus in heaven.
- [3] **"Woman, here is your son... Here is your mother."** John 19:26-27  
Jesus said these words to His mother, Mary, and to His disciple, John. Jesus told John he should take care of Jesus' mother.
- [4] **"My God, my God, why have you left me alone?"** Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34  
These are the only words of Jesus on the cross from Matthew and Mark. They are a sad prayer from the Old Testament, Psalm 22. Here Jesus felt the punishment of hell

Introduction to New Testament Histories  
Lesson 2

for our sin. Jesus felt separated from the Father, as we would be separated from God forever in hell, if Jesus did not save us.

[5] **"I am thirsty."** John 19:28

This again shows that Jesus is truly human, at the same time being true God.

[6] **"It is finished."** John 19:30

What is finished? Jesus finished paying our debt to God for all our sins. Now we are free!

[7] **"Father, I give you my spirit."** Luke 23:46

After Jesus said these words, he died.

Closing the lesson

- Announce that next lesson will look at
  - ✓ Who was Matthew?
  - ✓ What did Matthew say about Jesus.
- Close your meeting by sharing prayer requests. You should lead the prayer. Also pray for someone to come and fill the empty chair.

### Lesson 3 Matthew

#### ❑ Preparing the lesson

- Begin your private study of the lesson with prayer. Pray for wisdom. Pray for your students. Pray that God's Word will show its life-changing power in your life.
- Read the SUMMARY and GOALS section of the Study Guide.
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- Look up the Bible verses cited in the Study Guide. Write in answers to your own copy of the Study Guide. Also write notes that will remind you about extra suggestions offered here.

#### ❑ Opening the lesson

- Distribute copies of the Study Guide for Lesson 3.
- Begin your meeting with prayer. Have a short prayer that God will give each person the Holy Spirit. Pray that Jesus will lead the meeting. Pray that we will understand more clearly God's Word, the Bible.

#### ❑ Review Lesson 2

- The Bible has FOUR Gospel books that tell the story about Jesus (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John). *Why four gospels?*
- The Gospels are four *eye witness* reports about Jesus.
- With four eye witness reports, we have much *more information* about Jesus, than if we had only one story.

#### ❑ Introduce Lesson 3

For each Gospel, we want to find the answer to three questions:

(1) Who wrote the Gospel?

(2) For whom did he write the Gospel? Who were the first readers of the Gospel?

(3) What was the writer's message? What did the writer want to say about Jesus?

Today we will look at Matthew.

□ "Who is Matthew?"

**[#1] & [#2]**

Ask the group to read  
Matthew 9:9-10

Ask students to answer  
questions #1 and #2 on the  
student sheet. (Note that  
students using KJV Bibles will  
have old English words  
different than your answer.)

Matthew was a Jewish man.  
But he worked for the Roman  
Government. His job was  
collecting taxes from the  
Jewish people for the Romans.  
The Jews talked about the "tax  
collectors and other sinners,"  
because the Jews thought *tax  
collectors were bad sinners.*

**GOALS:**

- KNOW who Matthew was.
- UNDERSTAND Matthew's message.
- BELIEVE that Jesus is the Savior God promised in the Old Testament.

**WHO is Matthew?**

□ Read *Matthew 9:9-10*

#1. Matthew worked where? at the tax office

#2. What was Matthew's job? tax collector

**History background:**

Sometimes the tax collectors were called "Publicans."  
Jewish people hated tax collectors, for two reasons:

- The taxes were not for the Jewish government. The taxes were for the Roman government.
- The tax collectors charged people too much. The extra money they took, they kept for themselves.

Often tax collectors (or Publicans) were rich, because they overcharged the people.  
Example: If your tax bill was \$100, the tax collector maybe charged you \$125, and he kept the extra \$25 for himself.

**[#3] – [#5]**

Matthew...

- quit his tax collector job,
- followed Jesus, and
- had a party for Jesus with all his sinner friends.

The religious leaders criticized  
Jesus for being friends of  
sinners. *That is great news!*  
*Jesus is your friend, too!*

#3. Jesus told Matthew to do what? "Follow me."

#4. Matthew did what?  
He left his job and followed Jesus

□ Read Matthew 10:2-4.

#5. Jesus chose Matthew to join what group? 12 Disciples

□ Read Mark 2:14 (Same story, but different writer)

#6. What was Matthew's other name? Levi

**[#6]**

Matthew's other name: Matthew, Mark, and Luke all wrote the same story:

Matthew 10:2-4

Mark 2:14

Luke 5:27-28

But they called Matthew by two different names. Matthew only called himself “Matthew.” Mark and Luke called him “Levi” in this story, and in other verses, they also called him “Matthew” (Mark 3:18, Luke 6:15, Acts 1:13).

## □ Matthew’s Message

Note the lesson **Theme Verse:**

*"All this happened to make clear the full meaning of the things the Lord said through the prophet..." Matthew 1:22*

Matthew wanted to show the Jews that the Old Testament prophecies about the Savior are really prophecies about Jesus!

Matthew tells us here that the Old Testament prophesied:

- the birth of Jesus hundreds of years before Jesus was born
- who Jesus is ("God with us")
- Jesus' mother was a virgin woman

### [#7]

Matthew 1:23 is a quote from the Old Testament, Isaiah 7:14.

*More than 20 times Matthew quotes from the Old Testament to that prove Jesus is the Savior God had promised.*

### [#8] – [#12]

Here we find a few things that are only in Matthew's Gospel.

The Christmas Story from Joseph's experience.

Important teaching about God's holiness in our lives.

#7. Read the next verse (Matthew 1:23) in your Bible. Here Matthew quotes from the Old Testament. Maybe your Bible has a note at the bottom of the page, or at the side of the page, a note that tells you where in the Old Testament God says first says this verse. *If your Bible has a note about this verse, tell the group, and write the Old Testament verse name and number here:*

#### Isaiah 7:14

Matthew does this same thing many times in his Gospel:

- Something happens to Jesus.
- Matthew says "This happened as the Lord said through the prophet..."
- Matthew quotes a verse in the Old Testament that tells what will happen to Jesus.

All through the Old Testament, God told the Jews that He will send a Savior, from the family of King David. Matthew shows us that everything God said about the Savior in the Old Testament happened as Jesus came to save us from sin and hell. Matthew's message to the Jews was: *"You are looking for the Savior that God promised? Well, here He is: JESUS!"*

#### **MATTHEW'S SPECIAL INFORMATION ABOUT JESUS:**

#8. Matthew 1:18-24

Jesus' birth

#9. Matthew 2:1-23

The Wise Men visit Jesus

#10. Matthew 5:1-7:28

The Sermon on the Mount

#11. Matthew 25:31-46

Judgment Day

#12. Matthew 28:18-20

The Great Commission

❑ SUMMARY

- Matthew was one of Jesus' Twelve Disciples.
- Matthew wrote the Gospel to show us Jesus is Savior that God promised in the Old Testament.

❑ EXTRA HANDOUT

You may copy the chart on the next page, and give it to the class after the lesson is finished. This is "take-home" pages for student files. The chart shows many Old Testament prophesies that came true in Jesus. (Note how many are cited in Matthew.)

❑ CLOSING

- Announce that next time we will study the Gospel of MARK.
- Close your meeting by sharing prayer requests. You should lead the prayer. Also pray for someone to come and fill the empty chair.

Introduction to New Testament Histories  
Lesson 3

THE LIFE OF CHRIST	O.T. PROPHECY	N.T. FULFILLMENT
1 He was born from human mother	Genesis 3:15	Gal.4:4; Matt.1:20f
2 He was born from a virgin woman	Isaiah 7:14	Matt.1:18f; Lk.1:26f
3 He is the Son of God	Psalms 2:7	Matt. 3:17, etc.
4 He is descended from Abraham	Genesis 22:18	Matthew 1:1
5 He is descended from Isaac	Genesis 21:12	Matt.1:2; Lk.3:23
6 He is descended from Jacob	Num.24:17	Matt.1:2; Lk.3:23-34
7 He is descended from Judah	Gen.49:10;Mic.5:2	Matt.1:2; Lk.3:23-33
8 He is descended from Jesse	Isaiah 11:1,10	Matt.1:6; Lk.3:23-32
9 He is descended from David	Jeremiah 23:5	Luke 3:23-31, etc.
10 He was born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2	Matt.2:1; Lk.2:4-7
11 Wise Men give gifts	Ps.72:10; Is.60:6	Matthew 2:1-11
12 Herod kills children	Jeremiah 31:15	Matthew 2:16
13 Preceded by Messenger (John)	Is.40:3; Mal.3:1	Matt. 3:1-3; 11:10f
14 Anointed with the Holy Spirit	Is. 11:2; 61:1	Matt.3:16f;Lk.4:16ff
15 Ministry begins in Galilee	Isaiah 9:1	Matthew 4:12-17
16 Ministry of Miracles	Is.35:5-6; 32:3-4	Matt.4:24 8:17 9:35
17 Palm Sunday, rides donkey	Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 21:1-11
18 He entered Temple	Malachi 3:1	Matthew 21:12
19 He was betrayed by a friend	Ps.41:9 55:12-14	Matt.26; Jn.13
20 He was sold for 30 silver coins	Zechariah 11:12	Matthew 26:15
21 Money thrown into God's House	Zechariah 11:13	Matthew 27:5
22 Price for potter's field	Zechariah 11:13	Matthew 27:7
23 He was forsaken by His disciples	Zechariah 13:7	Matt. 26:31,56
24 Accused by false witnesses	Psalms 35:11	Matt. 26:59-60
25 He was silent before accusers	Isaiah 53:7	Matthew 27:12
26 He was wounded and bruised	Isaiah 53:5	Matthew 27:26
27 People hit and spit on Him	Isaiah 50:6	Matthew 26:67
28 He was mocked	Psalms 22:7-8	Matt. 27:31,43
29 His hands and feet were pierced	Psalms 22:16	Lk.24:39f Jn.20:25
30 He was crucified with thieves	Isaiah 53:12	Matt.27:38 Lk.23.33
31 He prayed for His persecutors	Isaiah 53:12	Luke 23:34
32 Rejected by His own people	Isaiah 53:3	John 1:11; 7:5,48
33 People hated Him for no reason	Psalms 69:4	John 15:25
34 Friends stood far away	Psalms 38:11	Lk.23:49;Mt.27:55
35 People shook their heads at Him	Ps.22:7; 109:25	Matthew 27:39
36 People stared at Him	Psalms 22:17	Luke 23:35
37 Soldiers gamble for His clothes	Psalms 22:18	Matt.27:35;Jn.19:23f
38 He suffered thirst	Ps.22:15; 69:21	John 19:28
39 He was offered vinegar & gall	Psalms 69:21	Matt.27:34;Jn.19:28f
40 He cried out, forsaken by God	Psalms 22:1	Matthew 27:46
41 He trusted God with His life	Psalms 31:5	Luke 23:46
42 Darkness over the land	Amos 8:9	Matthew 27:45
43 His bones were not broken	Psalms 34:20	John 19:31-36
44 His side was pierced	Zechariah 12:10	John 19:34,37
45 Buried in a rich man's tomb	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-60
46 He rose to life again	Ps. 16:10; 30:3 Is.53:10-11 etc.	Matt.28 Mk.16 Lk.24 Jn.20; Acts 2:24
47 He ascended to heaven	Psalms 68:18	Acts 1:9
48 Seated at Father's right hand	Psalms 110:1	Mk.16:19; Heb.1:3
49 He sends the Holy Spirit	Joel 2:28	Acts 2:1-4
50 Christ will come again	Daniel 7:13-14	

*FOR FURTHER STUDY: Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53*

**Lesson 4**  
**Mark**

Preparing the lesson

- Begin your private study of the lesson with prayer. Pray for wisdom. Pray for your students. Pray that God's Word will show its life-changing power in your life.
- Read the SUMMARY and GOALS section of the Study Guide.
- Read the teaching suggestions in this Leader's Guide.
- Look up the Bible verses cited in the Study Guide. Write in answers to your own copy of the Study Guide. Also write notes that will remind you about extra suggestions offered here.

Opening the lesson

- Distribute copies of the Study Guide for Lesson 4.
- Begin your meeting with prayer. Have a short prayer that God will give each person the Holy Spirit. Pray that Jesus will lead the meeting. Pray that we will understand more clearly God's Word, the Bible.

Review Lesson 3

- The Bible has FOUR Gospel books that tell the story about Jesus (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John).
- We finished studying the first Gospel: Matthew
- Matthew was one of Jesus' 12 Disciples. His other name was Levi. Matthew was a tax collector.
- Matthew's Gospel was written for Jewish people to help them understand that Jesus is the Savior that God promised in the Old Testament.
- Matthew quotes the Old Testament a lot.

Introduce Lesson 4

- Today we will look at Mark.
- Mark is the shortest of all four Gospels.
- Almost everything in Mark is also in Matthew, Luke, or John.

"Who is Mark?"

- Ask the class to read Acts 12:12 and answer questions #1 - #4.
- Mark's full name was John Mark.[#1].
- Mark was not one of the 12 Disciples, but...

It seems that Mark was with the Disciples a lot, when they were with Jesus. Therefore, Mark was an eyewitness.

### [#3] & [#4]

Mark's home in Jerusalem was a meeting place for prayer for the Apostles.

### [#5] – [#7]

The city of Antioch was north of Israel in Syria. *(This is a good time to give everyone a copy of the map included with this lesson. Show where Jerusalem and Antioch are.)*

The pastor of Antioch, named Barnabas, and his assistant, Paul (Saul), came to Jerusalem to meet the Apostles. Barnabas was Mark's cousin (a few translators suggest Barnabas is Mark's uncle). When Barnabas and Paul returned to Antioch, Mark went with them.

### [#8]

Later, Barnabas and Paul went on their first missionary trip. Mark started the trip with them. But half way through the trip, Mark quit and went back to Antioch. This upset Paul. When Paul and Barnabas wanted to start their second missionary trip, Mark wanted to go with them. Barnabas said, "Yes." Paul said, "No!" Paul and Barnabas could not agree about taking Mark. So Paul and Barnabas went separate ways. Barnabas took Mark with him, and Paul traveled with another friend.

### [#9]

We do not see Barnabas again in the New Testament history. But Mark pops up again as Paul's helper! (See Colossians 4:10.) *A question for later discussion: [#20] Why did Paul change his mind about Mark? (We can only guess the reason.)*

### [#10]

Peter says he has a "son" named Mark working with him. Was this the same Mark as Barnabas' cousin and Paul's helper? If so, then Peter's reference to Mark as his "son"

#### **WHO is Mark?**

- Mark was an EYE WITNESS.
- Mark was not one of Jesus' twelve disciples.
- Mark was a young man when he knew Jesus.
- Mark's name shows up in later New Testament history:

Read Acts 12:12

#1. What is Mark's full name? John Mark

#2. Who was Mark's mother? Mary (not Jesus' mother)

#3. Who was at Mark's house? Peter & many people

#4. What were they doing? Praying

Read Colossians 4:10

#5. Who was Mark's cousin? Barnabas

Read Acts 12:25

#6. Mark moved from Jerusalem to what city? Antioch

#7. Mark moved help two men in their work. Those two men were who?

Barnabas

Saul

Read Acts 15:37-39

#8. Paul was upset about Mark. Why? Mark quit on the first trip.

Read Philemon 23-24 and 2 Timothy 4:11

#9. Later in prison, how did Paul feel about Mark? Paul wanted Mark to come help him.

Read 1 Peter 5:13

#10. Peter says Mark is his SON in Christ.

means that Mark was Peter's "son in Christ," or Peter's student. However, there is a small possibility that Peter really did have a son named Mark, who is a different person than Barnabas' cousin. If there were two men named Mark, one Barnabas' cousin and the other Peter's son, we can only guess which one wrote the Gospel of Mark. Tradition says there was only one Mark, and that he got a lot of information for the Gospel from Peter.

**Mark's Message:**

- Jesus is the *Son of God* [#11]. The person saying this was the Roman army officer (centurion) standing near Jesus' cross. When Jesus died, there was an earthquake. The officer knew that Jesus was innocent. Now he understood who Jesus is.
- Jesus is Lord and Savior [#12]
- Jesus has *authority*...
  - ✓ *in his teaching*, "not as the other teachers." The teachers quote other leaders for their support, but Jesus said, "I tell you..." [#13]
  - ✓ *over evil spirits* (the devil and his demons) [#14]
  - ✓ *to forgive our sins* [#15]. The teachers said Jesus was wrong, "because only God can forgive sins." Jesus showed them that His word is true. So Jesus proved to them that He really is God!
  - ✓ *over nature* (because Jesus created the world!) [#16]

**Mark's Special information about Jesus**

- Almost everything in Mark's Gospel you can find in Matthew and Luke. But in a few stories, Mark gives us a little more information. Mark's extra

information makes us think that he was an eye witness. Here are two important examples:

- ✓ Jesus helped a deaf man hear and speak. [#17]
- ✓ When Jesus was arrested and his disciples ran away, the soldiers grabbed the robe of one young man. That young man ran away naked. [#18] *We think that young man was Mark. See discussion question [#19].*

**Mark's Message: WHO IS JESUS?**

Read Mark 15:39

#11. Jesus is the Son of God

Read Mark 1:3; 2:28; 12:36-37

#12. Jesus is the Lord

Read Mark 1:22

#13. Jesus has authority in the way He teaches

Read Mark 1:27

#14. Jesus has authority over whom? evil spirits

Read Mark 2:10

#15. Jesus has authority to do what? forgive sins

Read Mark 4:39-41

#16. Jesus has authority over what? wind, waves, sea

**Mark wrote the Gospel about Jesus FOR WHOM?**

- Mark's Gospel looks as maybe he wrote it for Roman, non-Jewish (Gentile) people.

**MARK'S SPECIAL INFORMATION ABOUT JESUS:**

The following stories are found only in Mark's Gospel.

#17. Mark 7:31-37 Jesus gave a deaf man hearing and speech.

#18. Mark 14:51 A young man ran away naked.

❑ DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**[#19]**

It is fun to guess if the young man who ran away naked in the Garden of Gethsemane was Mark himself.

***Discussion Questions:***

*#19 (See Question #18) Was this young man maybe Mark himself? (Only Mark tells about it.)*

*#20. (See Question #9) Why did Paul change his mind about Mark?*

**[#20]**

We see that Paul first rejected Mark as a helper [#8], but later Paul asked for Mark to come help him [#9]. Mark was with Paul when Paul wrote his letter to the Colossians (Col. 4:10). The Bible does not tell us why or when Paul changed his mind about Mark.

❑ CLOSING

- Announce that next time we will study the story about the deaf man in Mark 7.
- Close your meeting by sharing prayer requests. You should lead the prayer. Also pray for someone to come and fill the empty chair.

**Lesson 5**  
**"A Deaf Man Meets Jesus"**  
A story from the Gospel of Mark

Preparing the lesson

- Begin your private study of the lesson with prayer. Pray for wisdom. Pray for your students. Pray that God's Word will show its life-changing power in your life.
- Read the SUMMARY and GOALS section of the Study Guide.
- Read the teaching suggestions in this Leader's Guide.
- Look up the Bible verses cited in the Study Guide. Write in answers to your own copy of the Study Guide. Also write notes that will remind you about extra suggestions offered here.

Opening the lesson

- Distribute copies of the Study Guide for Lesson 5.
- Begin your meeting with prayer. Have a short prayer that God will give each person the Holy Spirit. Pray that Jesus will lead the meeting. Pray that we will understand more clearly God's Word, the Bible.

Review Lesson 4

- In lesson 4 we took a quick look at the Gospel of Mark, the shortest of the four Gospels.
- Mark was an eye witness.
- Mark was not one of the 12 Disciples, but he was a close friend with them.
- Mark was a helper for Paul and Peter.

Introduce Lesson 5

- Almost all of the Gospel of Mark is also in Matthew and Luke. But Mark has one story that is in none of the other three Gospels. It is the story of the deaf man who met Jesus.
- The story about the deaf man is in Mark chapter 7. But the full story really begins back in chapter 5.

Read Mark 5:1-20

**[#1] & [#2]**

Jesus' "home base" or headquarters was Peter's home in *Capernaum* on the Sea (or Lake) of Galilee. Jesus

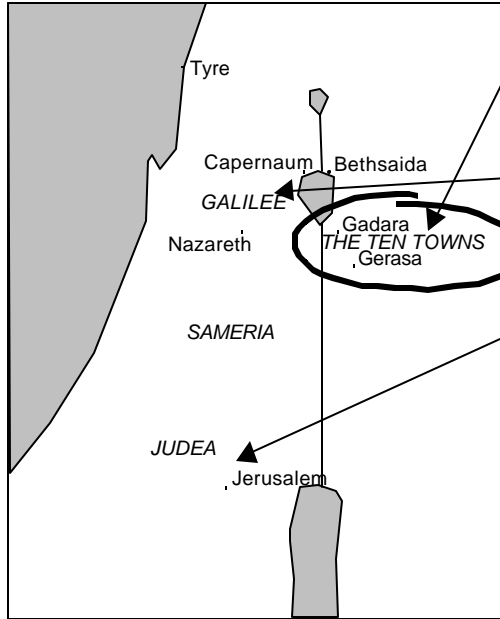
and his disciples went by boat across the lake to the southwest side, an area called "The

***Background to the story:***

- Read Mark 5:1-20

#1. (Mark 5:1) Where did Jesus go? *Across the lake*  
*to the Gerasene people*

This is with the "Ten Towns." Find it on the map.



Ten Cities" or "The Ten Towns." In Greek, it is called the *Decapolis*. Two important cities there are Gerasa and Gadara. So the people are called "Gerasenes" or "Gadarenes."

As you look at the map, Israel (Galilee and Judea) is between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. The people who met Jesus in Mark 5 were *Arabs*, not Jews (and Jesus is a Jew). See the pigs in verses 1-14. Jews had strict rules about not eating pork, but pork was okay for people in other cultures.

The people in the area of the Ten Towns did not worship God, they worshipped devil-idols. Sometimes it happens that people who give attention to the devil become controlled by a demon (evil angel). That is what happened to the man who met Jesus near the graves. The man was demon possessed

**[#3]**

Jesus sent the evil spirits out of the man. The spirits went into the pigs. The pigs went crazy (just as the man was before). The pigs ran into the water and all the pigs died.

**[#4] & [#5]**

The people were afraid of Jesus, so they asked him to go away.

**[#6] – [#8]**

The man wanted to go back to Israel with Jesus. But Jesus told him, "No." Jesus told the man to let his friends and family know how God helped him.

❖ *Lesson for our lives:* The first people we should tell about Jesus is our family and friends.

**[#9]**

The man went all over the Ten Towns (or the Decapolis) telling everyone about Jesus. *But there was one person there who did not hear the man's story about Jesus.*

- NOTE: This area was NOT in Israel. It was east of Israel. The people living there were not Jewish. They did not worship God, but they worshipped devil-idols.
- #2. (Mark 5:2) Jesus met who? **a man with an evil spirit**
- #3. (Mark 5:8) What did Jesus do for the man? **Jesus told the evil spirit to come out of the man.**
- #4. (Mark 5:15) How did the people in that country feel about Jesus? **afraid**
- #5. (Mark 5:17) What did the people ask Jesus to do? **They asked Jesus to go away, leave.**
- #6. (Mark 5:18) The man wanted to go where? **with Jesus**
- #7. (Mark 5:19) Jesus told the man to go where? **home**
- #8. Jesus told the man to do what? **tell his family and friends about what the Lord did for him**
- #9. (Mark 5:20) Where did the man go to tell people about Jesus? **in the Ten Towns**
- NOTE: The city named in verse 1 is one of the "Ten Towns" in verse 20.

[Mark 5:21-7:23]

This is not a question for the class to answer. This is just information to explain what happened between chapter 5 and chapter 7. Jesus helped more people, and He visited other cities in Galilee.

Mark 5:21 - 7:23 Jesus traveled and taught in many places round Galilee.

#10. (Mark 7:24) Jesus went where?     **Tyre**      
NOTE: This city was not in Israel. It was northwest.

**[#10]**

Then Jesus went to visit another non-Jewish city, the Syrian city of Tyre, northwest of Israel. (*See the map.*) There Jesus saved a demon-possessed girl.

Mark 7:31-37

**[#11] – [#13]**

Jesus went to the Decapolis (the Ten towns, or Ten Cities) again. The man Jesus had healed and saved the first time told many people about Jesus. So now, when Jesus visits a second time, the people welcome him. And they bring to Jesus a man who was not able hear the story about the first man who was saved.

❖ *Lesson for our lives:* ...Personal Evangelism. We should tell people about Jesus. We should tell them what Jesus did for us.

**[#14]**

Jesus wanted to help the man privately. Jesus did not want to show-off.

❖ *Lesson for our lives:* Worship and Bible study with other Christians is important, but it is also important to have private time alone with Jesus, reading your Bible and praying.

**[#15]**

See Jesus' actions:

- ✓ Touch the man's ears
- ✓ Spit (an old symbol of healing)
- ✓ Touch the man's tongue
- ✓ Look up to the sky
- ✓ Take a big breath

***Meet the deaf man...***

Read Mark 7:31-37

#11. (Mark 7:31) Then Jesus went where?     ***the Ten Towns***    

#12. Remember the first time Jesus came here, the people asked Jesus to go away. Now the people were happy to see Jesus come. Why did they change?

    ***The man Jesus saved (in Mark 5) told them about Jesus. The people saw the man's changed life.***    

#13. (Mark 7:32) Who did the people bring to Jesus?  
    ***a deaf man***    

#14. (Mark 7:33) Where did Jesus take the man?  
    ***away from the people, to be alone with him***    

#15. How did Jesus communicate (talk) to the man?  
    ***Sign Language***    

We can only guess that Jesus was talking to the deaf man in that man's sign language.

❖ *Lesson for our lives:* Jesus communicates with us in ways that we can understand -- through His Word, the Bible, through preaching and teaching in Sign Language. Jesus came from His place in heaven as God, and came to earth to become a man, on

our level, to show us God's love. Jesus has a special sign for "I Love You:" The "sign" is His hand nailed on a cross.

**[#16] – [#18]**

"Ephphatha" is pronounced: *EF-ah-thah*. This is word in the Jewish language that means "Be opened!" Jesus said it, and then it happened! The man spoke his people's language clearly, and he understood the words people spoke to him. *What do you think is the first thing man said?*

- ❖ *Lesson for our lives:* Jesus has power to help us understand God's Word. Jesus has power to help us speak to other people about Him.

#16. (Mark 7:34) What did Jesus say to the man?

**Ephphatha**

#17. What does "Ephphatha" mean?

**"Open!" or "Be opened"**

#18. (Mark 7:35) What happened to the man?

**He was able to hear and speak clearly.**

**Discussion Questions**

#19. Who can we bring to Jesus?

#20. Compare Mark 5:19 and Mark 7:36. What is different? *Why* are they different?

Discussion questions

**[#19]**

The goal of this lesson is to make us more aware of our need to bring people to Jesus. Who do we know, that does not yet know Jesus? Are we praying daily for those friends?

**[#20]**

The first time Jesus came to the Ten Towns, he helped a man. Jesus told that man to tell people what Jesus did. But the second time Jesus came, he helped a man, and Jesus told the people keep quiet about it. The Bible does not tell us the reason. We can only guess. The real reason He came to earth was not to just heal bodies. Jesus came to save our souls.

CLOSING

- Announce that next time we will study the next Gospel about Jesus, that Luke wrote.
- Close your meeting by sharing prayer requests. You should lead the prayer. Also pray for someone to come and fill the empty chair.

**Lesson 6**  
**Luke**

Preparing the lesson

- Begin your private study of the lesson with prayer. Pray for wisdom. Pray for your students. Pray that God's Word will show its life-changing power in your life.
- Read the SUMMARY and GOALS section of the Study Guide.
- Read the teaching suggestions in this Leader's Guide.
- Look up the Bible verses cited in the Study Guide. Write in answers to your own copy of the Study Guide. Also write notes that will remind you about extra suggestions offered here.

Opening the lesson

- Distribute copies of the Study Guide for Lesson 6
- Begin your meeting with prayer. Have a short prayer that God will give each person the Holy Spirit. Pray that Jesus will lead the meeting. Pray that we will understand more clearly God's Word, the Bible.

Review

- The Bible has FOUR Gospel books that tell the story about Jesus' life (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John).
- We finished studying the first two Gospels: Matthew and Mark., both eye witnesses.

Introduce Lesson 6

- Luke was very different than Matthew and Mark. Luke was probably *not* an eye witness to Jesus' life and ministry. But he lived during that time. After Luke became a Christian, he had a chance to live in Israel and meet Jesus' friends and family.
- Luke was a careful historian. So when he went to Israel, he did some very careful research about Jesus.

Who is Luke?

**[#1] – [#4]**

Luke met Paul and Timothy in Turkey (Acts 16). Together they traveled to Macedonia (the city of Philippi) in northern Greece. Luke stayed there while Paul traveled to other

cities preaching about Jesus. Later, Luke went with Paul to Jerusalem (Acts 20-21). Paul was arrested and kept in prison for more than two years. It is possible that was the time when Luke did his historical research to write the Gospel of Luke.

Then Paul went to Rome for his trial, and Luke went with him (Acts 27-28).

Luke, Mark, Timothy, and other people, were with Paul as he wrote his letter to the Colossians.

What did Luke write?

Luke wrote *The Gospel According to Luke* and *The Acts of the Apostles* from the viewpoint of an historian. (We know that Luke saw and heard many of the things he describes in Acts, because often Luke referred to “we” and “us” as he described Paul’s travels.)

**[#5] & [#6]**

It is obvious from the opening verses of *Luke* and *Acts* that Luke wrote both books.

Luke 1:1 and Acts 1:1 are both addressed to “Theophilus.” The name *Theophilus* means *friend of God, loved by God or one who loves God*. So did Luke write to a man named Theophilus? Or did he write for all love God? We can only guess.

Luke 1:1-2 acknowledges the work other people have done to write about Jesus’ life and ministry. Does Luke mean the other New Testament history books, like Matthew, Mark, or John? Possibly.

Luke 1:3-4 tells Luke’s purpose in researching and writing this history. He had heard stories about Jesus. But he had a chance to “check it out.” As a historian, he wanted to investigate: Were the stories about Jesus true? If they are true, when did they happen? How did they happen? And he wanted to write the story of Jesus as history.

Luke 1:3 begins giving us a solid historical reference in time. Luke cites the names of well known government and religious leaders. Luke 2:1-2 gives us another historical

**WHO is Luke?**

Read Colossians 4:14

#1. What was Luke's work? *medical doctor, physician*

Read Colossians 1:1

#2. The person writing the Letter to the Colossians was with Luke. Who was that person?

*Paul (with Timothy)*

Read Colossians 4:10

#3. Who else was with them? *Mark (and others)*

Read Acts 21:17

#4. Luke traveled with Paul to what city? *Jerusalem*

Read Luke 1:1 and Acts 1:1

#5. Luke wrote the history for whom? *Theophilus*

Read Luke 1:4

#6. Why did Luke write the history? *“...so you can know that what you have been taught is true.”*

time reference for the birth of Jesus. Luke 3:1-2 gives us an historical time reference for the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

### ☐ Luke's Special Information about Jesus

These are stories which about Jesus only in Luke. Matthew, Mark, and John don't have this information. (Note that student will have various answers, depending on the Bible version they are using.)

#### [#7] – [#11]

The story about the birth of John the Baptizer is only in Luke. We saw the story of Jesus' birth from Joseph's experience in Matthew. Luke tells us the Christmas story from Mary's point of view:

- Angel appears to Mary .....Luke
- Angel appears to Joseph.....Matthew
- Roman census.....Luke
- Baby Jesus in a manger.....Luke
- Shepherds & angels .....Luke
- Baby Jesus at the temple ....Luke
- Wise men visit .....Matthew
- Escape to Egypt.....Matthew
- Herod kills baby boys .....Matthew
- Return to Nazareth.....Matthew
- Boy Jesus at the temple .....Luke

**LUKE'S SPECIAL INFORMATION ABOUT JESUS:**  
Luke has a lot of information about Jesus' life, that we don't find in the other Gospel books. Write the titles of these stories from your Bible: \_\_\_\_\_

#7. Luke 1:26 angel appears to Mary

#8. Luke 1:57 birth of John the Baptizer

#9. Luke 2:1 birth of Jesus

#10. Luke 2:22 Jesus presented in the temple

#11. Luke 2:41 Boy Jesus goes to the temple

#12. Luke 10:38 Mary and Martha

#13. Luke 24:13 on the road to Emmaus

The Gospels by Mark and John report nothing about the birth of Jesus. They begin with Jesus' ministry as an adult.

#### [#12]

Only Luke has the famous story about the two sisters, "Mary and Martha." Where did they live? Luke didn't say. But John did. John told a different story about the two sisters, *and* their brother, Lazarus, (Luke didn't mention the brother), and the city where they lived, Bethany (John 11).

#### [#13]

The story of Jesus appearing to disciples on the road to Emmaus on Easter Sunday is an important one, and only Luke has it.

### ☐ Healing Miracles

#### [#14] – [#17]

As a medical doctor, Luke had a special interest in Jesus' healing miracles. In describing the miracles, Luke was careful to include details of the person's disability or illness, and even the person's age (Luke 8:42, Acts 4:22)

Luke did not write more about healings than did the other Gospel writers. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John each has some healing stories the other three Gospels don't mention.

#### ☐ Parables

##### [#18] – [#24]

Almost all of the parables that Jesus told are reported in Matthew and Luke. And each one reports different parables. Only very few are duplicated by both.

#### ☐ Luke's emphasis

Besides being careful to report a historical context for Jesus' life, Doctor Luke also is sensitive to Jesus' ministry of *mercy*. Jesus offers forgiveness to sinners. Jesus heals sick and hurting people. Jesus offers the comfort of God's love to those who hurt. Jesus accepts people whom the world has rejected.

Luke tells about most of the healing miracles that Matthew reports, plus... (Write the story titles):

#14. Luke 7:11 *Jesus raises the widows son at Nain*

#15. Luke 13:10 *Jesus heals a woman the Sabbath*

#16. Luke 14:1 *Jesus at Pharisee's house; "Is it right to heal on the Sabbath day?"*

#17. Luke 17:11 *Jesus heals Ten Lepers*

The next teaching stories (parables) are found only in Luke:

#18. Luke 14:15 *Parable about the banquet*

#19. Luke 15:3 *Parable about the lost sheep*

#20. Luke 15:8 *Parable about the lost coin*

#21. Luke 15:11 *Parable about the lost son*

#22. Luke 16:19 *The rich man and Lazarus*

#23. Luke 18:1 *The unjust judge & persistent widow*

#24. Luke 18:9 *The Pharisee and the tax collector*

All these special stories in Luke show:

- Jesus forgives people who sin,
- Jesus heals sick people, and
- Jesus comforts people who feel sad.

#### **Discussion Question:**

#25. What has Jesus done to help you?

Our **Theme Verse**: "*Look! This man [Jesus] welcomes sinners and even eats with them!*" (Luke 15:3) is offered as criticism against Jesus by proud Pharisees. But in criticizing Jesus, they tell the best Good News – Jesus loves and forgives sinners... like us!

This is also one of the points in Mary's song, which only Luke reports: "...*God has shown His care for me... God will always give mercy to those who worship Him... God brings down rulers from their thrones, and He raises up the humble people. God fills hungry people with good things, but He sends rich, selfish people away with nothing...*" (Luke 1:46-55)

#### ☐ CLOSING

- Announce that next time we will study the next Gospel about Jesus, that John wrote.
- Close your meeting by sharing prayer requests. You should lead the prayer. Also pray for someone to come and fill the empty chair.

## Lesson 7 John

### ❑ Preparing the lesson

- Begin your private study of the lesson with prayer. Pray for wisdom. Pray for your students. Pray that God's Word will show its life-changing power in your life.
- Read the SUMMARY and GOALS section of the Study Guide.
- Read the teaching suggestions in this Leader's Guide.
- Look up the Bible verses cited in the Study Guide. Write in answers to your own copy of the Study Guide. Also write notes that will remind you about extra suggestions offered here.

### ❑ Special background information for the leader

- John's Gospel is very different than Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The first three Gospel books are very similar in what they say, and how they say it (content and style). Their similarities are so strong, that Bible teachers call Matthew, Mark, and Luke the *Synoptic Gospels*. "Synoptic" means "see together."
- Matthew, Mark, and Luke have an even balance between Jesus' miracles and Jesus' teaching. John only has very few miracles. John mostly reports Jesus' teaching. And each of the teaching sections in John is very long. The teaching sections in John are different than the teaching sections in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. John gives a lot of very important information not included in Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
- Matthew, Mark, and Luke just reported what people (including Jesus) said and did. But all through his Gospel, John explained why things happened. And John explained what Jesus means for us today.

### ❑ Opening the lesson

- Distribute copies of the Study Guide for Lesson 7
- Begin your meeting with prayer. Have a short prayer that God will give each person the Holy Spirit. Pray that Jesus will lead the meeting. Pray that we will understand more clearly God's Word, the Bible.

Review

- The Bible has FOUR Gospel books that tell the story about Jesus' life (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John).
- We finished studying the first three Gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Matthew and Mark were eye witnesses; Matthew was one of the 12 Disciples of Jesus. Luke wrote as a researcher of history, meeting and interviewing Jesus' family and friends.

Who is John?

- Note: This John is *not* John the Baptizer. There are other men in the Bible named John.

[#1] – [#5]

- John is the only New Testament history writer for whom we have family background information. However, for this information we must look in Matthew, Mark, or Luke. John himself didn't report this story.

(Matthew 20:20 also reports a story about John's mother.)

- Zebedee and his sons, James and John, were in the fishing business together. Two other brothers, Simon Peter and Andrew were also fishermen (Matt. 4:18-20). They may have even been business partners with Zebedee, James, and John (see Luke 4:1-11). Both sets of brothers, Peter and Andrew, James and John, left the fishing business to become Jesus' disciples.
- Peter, James, and John were the closest to Jesus. Jesus took them to places, where He did not bring the others. (Mark 5:37, Mark 9:2, Mark 13:3, Mark 14:33).
- John's brother, James, was the first of the 12 Disciples to die for Jesus (Acts 12:1-2).
- According to tradition, John was the only one of the 12 Disciples who was allowed to live to an old age. In two of his letters, John refers to himself as "the Elder."

What Bible books did John write? [#6]&[#7]

- The four books that have John's name are: *John* (the Gospel story of Jesus' work), and three letters: *1 John*, *2 John*, and *3 John*.
- The letter of *1 John* discusses some of the same themes covered in John's Gospel. It may be that John wrote both around the same time, and John wanted us to study them together.

**WHO is John?**

- Read **Matthew** 4:21-22

- #1. Who was John's brother? James
- #2. Who was John's father? Zebedee
- #3. What was their work? fishing
- #4. Jesus asked John and his brother to do what? follow Jesus

- Read John 13:23 (or John 19:26) *Sometimes John identified himself without saying his own name.*

- #5. What words did John use to identify himself? "The Disciple whom Jesus loved"

**WHAT Bible books did John write?**

- Look at the Table of Contents page in front of your Bible.

- #6. How many books in the New Testament have John's name? 4

- John also wrote the last book of the Bible.

- #7. The name of the last book of the Bible is: Revelation

- The reference that identifies John as the author of the last book in the Bible is Revelation 1:4.

Why did John write the history about Jesus?

**[#8] & [#9]**

- John reports the reason he wrote about Jesus. John also explained why he picked certain stories and left out other stories:

*“Jesus did many other miracles that his followers saw. Those miracles are not written in this book. But these things are written so that you can believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Then, by believing, you can have life through his name.” John 20:30-31*

- Notice the Theme Verse for this lesson, “the Gospel in a nut shell” John 3:16.

*“Yes, God love the world so much that He gave His only son. God gave His Son so that every person that believes in Him would not be lost, but have life forever.”*

Apply this verse to your life by substituting the words “the world” and “every person” with your name...

*“God love \_\_\_\_\_ so much that He gave His only son. God gave His Son so that \_\_\_\_\_ that believes in Him would not be lost, but have life forever.”*

John’s special information about Jesus

Students will have various answers, depending on the Bible versions they are using

**[#10]**

The Wedding at Cana is where Jesus change water into wine.

**[#11]**

Nicodemus was a Pharisee, who believed in Jesus. But he was a secret follower, because he was afraid what other people would think.

This is the famous chapter where Jesus said, “You must be born again” (John 3:3), and also we have John 3:16, our Theme Verse for this lesson.

**WHY did John write the history about Jesus?**

Read John 20: 31

#8. John wrote this history so we will **believe** what? \_\_\_\_\_  
***“...that Jesus is the Christ.”***

#9. John wrote this history so we will have what? \_\_\_\_\_  
***“...life through his name.”***

**JOHN'S SPECIAL INFORMATION ABOUT JESUS:**

John has a lot of special information about Jesus, not found in the other Gospel books. Write the titles of these stories from your Bible:

#10. John 2:1 ***The wedding at Cana***

#11. John 3:1 ***Jesus and Nicodemus***

#12. John 4:1 ***The Samaritan woman at the well***

#13. John 5:1 ***Healing at the pool of Bethesda***

#14 John 9:1 ***Healing a man born blind***

**[#15]**

This is a very interesting story. This is where Jesus said, “*I am the resurrection and the life...*”

**[#16]**

John 13-16 is a long section of teaching (4 chapters). First half of the teaching is during the Lord’s Supper, and the last half of the teaching is while they are walking to the Garden of Gethsemane.

This teaching has a lot of important information. It is in this teaching Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life...” and “I am the vine; you are the branches...” Here Jesus promised to give His followers the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit will give us faith in Jesus.

**[#17]**

This is the story about “doubting Thomas,” one week after Jesus rose from the dead.

**[#18]**

In this story John and his fishing buddies (Peter, James, and others) go fishing for the last time. Jesus appeared to them, but they didn’t recognize Him. It was John who first figured it out that it was Jesus. This section ends with Jesus and Peter having an important discussion.

Who is Jesus?

**[#19] – [#26]**

In the Old Testament, Moses asked God, “What is Your name?”

God answered, “I AM.”

The Jewish people in Jesus’ day understood that “I AM” is a very special name for God. It was so special, they did not even want to say that name for God – Yahweh (or Jehovah). So they substituted a title of honor, LORD, for the name of God.

But Jesus emphasized to the people that He is *God*, and dared even to use God’s most holy name for Himself... I AM!

- #15. John 11:38 (Some Bibles show the title at John 11:1)  
*Raising Lazarus from the dead*
- #16. John 13:1 *Washing Disciples’ feet\**
- #17. John 20:24 *Jesus appears to Thomas*
- #18. John 21:1 *Jesus appears at Sea of Galilee*

- JOHN'S MESSAGE: Who is Jesus?**  
Jesus uses many special names for Himself:
- Read John 1:1
  - #19. "The Word" (Jesus) is Who? *God*
  - Read John 4:10
  - #20. Jesus said, "I give you *Living Water* "
  - Read John 6:35
  - #21. Jesus said, "I AM *the Bread of Life* "
  - Read John 8:12
  - #22. Jesus said, "I AM *the Light of the world* "
  - Read John 8:58
  - #23. Jesus said, "Before Abraham was born, *I AM* "
  - Read John 10:9
  - #24. Jesus said, "I AM *the gate (door) for the sheep* "
  - Read John 10:11
  - #25. Jesus said, "I AM *the Good Shepherd* "
  - Read John 14:6
  - #26. Jesus answered, "I AM *the Way, the Truth, and the Life...*"
  - #27. Who is the only true way to God, our Father? *Jesus*

❑ CLOSING

- This finishes the introduction to the four history books about the life of Jesus. We did not actually study the life of Jesus, since that topic is covered in another Bible study series. But these lessons simply introduced you to the four different authors, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
- We have one more New Testament history book to study: *Acts*. We will spend our next three lessons in *Acts*.
- Close your meeting by sharing prayer requests. You should lead the prayer. Also pray for someone to come and fill the empty chair.

**Lesson 8**  
**Acts: The Birth of the Church**

Preparing the lesson

- Begin your private study of the lesson with prayer. Pray for wisdom. Pray for your students. Pray that God's Word will show its life-changing power in your life.
- Read the SUMMARY and GOALS section of the Study Guide.
- Read the teaching suggestions in this Leader's Guide.
- Look up the Bible verses cited in the Study Guide. Write in answers to your own copy of the Study Guide. Also write notes that will remind you about extra suggestions offered here.

Opening the lesson

- Distribute copies of the Study Guide for Lesson 8.
- Begin your meeting with prayer. Have a short prayer that God will give each person the Holy Spirit. Pray that Jesus will lead the meeting. Pray that we will understand more clearly God's Word, the Bible.

Introduction to Acts

- We finished lessons about the four Gospel books that tell the story about Jesus' life (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John).
- Today we begin learning about the 5<sup>th</sup> history book in the New Testament, the book of *Acts*.
- *Acts* is the history book of the New Testament church. *Acts* explains how the church started, and how the church began to spread into Europe. *Acts* also gives us very important information about several New Testament authors (including Mark, Luke, Paul, and James).
- The author of *Acts* is Doctor Luke, the same man who wrote the Gospel, the history about Jesus.
- The full name of the book is *The Acts of the Apostles*. Some teachers prefer to call it, *The Acts of the Holy Spirit*.

**[#1]**

This is a review question from Lesson 6. Luke's introduction to the Gospel reports his purpose in researching and writing the history books of the New Testament. *Read page 24 again for the explanation of who Luke is, his purpose in writing, and the identity of Theophilus.*

**[#2]**

Acts 1:1-2 is Luke's review of his first book – the life and ministry of Jesus. Now Luke begins his second book, *Acts*, with the *last* event of Jesus' life on earth – leaving, going back to heaven, the Ascension. Oh, but before Jesus went away, He told the Disciples something very important...

Jesus' Ascension

**[#3] & [#4]**

Acts 1:8 sets the theme for the whole book of Acts:

*“But the Holy Spirit will come to you. Then you receive power. You will be my witnesses – you will tell people about me. First, you will tell people in Jerusalem. They you will tell people in all of Judea, in Samaria, and every part of the world.”*

Notice the steps:

- (a) You will receive the Holy Spirit.
- (b) You will receive power.
- (c) You will tell people about Me in...
  - Jerusalem
- (d) Judea
- (e) Samaria
- (f) every part of the world.

This lesson covers steps (a) – (c). Lesson 9 covers step (d) and (e). And Lesson 10 covers step (f). If you look at a New Testament Bible map, you can see that steps (c), (d), (e), and (f) spread further and further out, like waves or ripples in a pond.

**[#5] & [#6]**

Why did he go up into a cloud? Where did Jesus really go? Maybe this was Jesus' way of showing the Disciples that they would not see Him again until they saw him in heaven, or until He comes again from the sky, in great power (Matthew 24:30; Mark 14:62).

**INTRODUCTION TO ACTS**

Read Luke 1:1-4 and Acts 1:1

#1. Luke wrote the history for whom? *Theophilus*

#2. Luke wrote the his first book about whom? *Jesus*

**ASCENSION**

Read Acts 1:6-11

#3. Jesus promised to give the apostles what? (verse 8)

*The Holy Spirit*

#4. Jesus promised that the apostles will do what? (verse 8)

*tell people about Jesus (witness)*

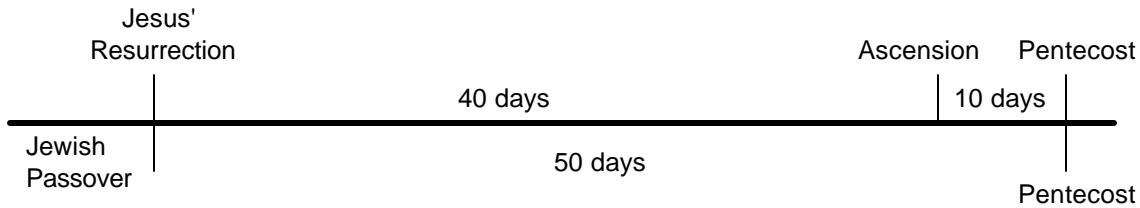
#5. Jesus went where? (verse 9) *up into clouds (sky)*

#6. Jesus will do what? (verse 11) *come again*

Note: Today many cults say that Jesus has come back in the person of their cult leaders. But that disagrees with what the angels told the disciples the way Jesus will return.

Notice that in Acts 1:4 Jesus told the Disciples to *wait* in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit's power.

Acts 1:3 says that there were 40 days between the Resurrection (Easter) and Ascension. Then 10 days later, during the Jewish festival of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came (Acts 2:1). *Pentecost* is a Greek word that means "50<sup>th</sup>." Pentecost was 50 days after the Jewish festival of Passover.



It is interesting to read what the Disciples did during those 10 days, while they were waiting for Jesus to send the Holy Spirit. They prayed (Acts 1:14) and they chose a 12<sup>th</sup> Apostle to replace Judas (Acts 1:15-26).

It is also interesting to read who was with the Disciples that week: "Mary, the mother of Jesus, and His brothers" (Acts 1:14). Jesus' brothers (really, *half-brothers*) are named in Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3. John 7:5 and Mark 3:21 tell us that these brothers did not believe in Jesus during His time of ministry. But here, after Jesus' Ascension, we see that Jesus' brothers are real believers. Why did they change? 1 Corinthians 15:3-7 tells us that Jesus appeared to His brothers again after His Resurrection. At least two of Jesus' brothers became leaders in the church.

Pentecost

Pentecost is called "*the Birthday of the Church.*"

**[#7]**

The Holy Spirit came with supernatural sign of a loud noise (verse 2) and "tongues of fire" that stood

over each person (verse 3). Therefore, in the church today, we use fire as a symbol for the Holy Spirit. Fire symbolizes inspiration, light, and energy.

**[#8]**

When the Apostles could preach in other languages, it impressed the people visiting Jerusalem from many other countries (verses 5-11). It is very important to note *what did the Apostles say* in those languages? The people listening said, "We are from these different countries. But we can hear these men in our own languages! We can all understand *the great things they are saying about God.*" (verse 11). Many people returned to their home countries, bringing the message of Christ with them.

**PENTECOST**

Read Acts 2:1-4

#7 What filled the Apostles? (verse 4) *the Holy Spirit*

#8 They had power to do what? (verse 4) \_\_\_\_\_  
*speak in other languages*

### [#9] & [#10]

Luke records Peter's sermon in Acts 2:14-40. It is easy to see a big change in Peter here. During Jesus' arrest and trial, Peter was very afraid what people thought about him. Peter was afraid that he would get arrested, too. So he told the people that he didn't know Jesus. In Acts 2, and again later in Acts 3 and 4, Peter speaks boldly about Jesus, no matter that Peter could get killed for talking that way about Jesus. Peter really changed! Why? The Holy Spirit changed him.

- Read Acts 2:14  
#9. Who talked to the people? *Peter*
- Read Acts 2:22-24  
#10. He told the people about whom? *Jesus*
- Read Acts 2:37-41  
#11. How many people believed in Jesus? *3,000*
- Read Acts 2:42-47  
#12. How did the new Christian believers live? *They met in the temple to receive teaching from the apostles. They met in each other's homes to share meals. They shared and gave away money to people who needed it.*

❖ *Lesson for our lives:* The Holy Spirit is the business of changing our attitudes, to make us more like Jesus. We can bring our sinful attitudes, actions, and habits to Jesus for forgiveness *and* for His Holy Spirit power to change us on the inside. The Holy Spirit's chief tool for changing us is the Word of God, the Bible. That is why it is so important to learn God's Word and to apply it to our lives every day, in every situation.

### [#11] & [#12]

We also see a change in attitude and action in the people who heard Peter's sermon. Their change in life style won the respect of many non-Christians, and many more trusted Christ (Acts 5:13-14). Later, even some of the Jewish priests believed in Jesus (Acts 6:7). The 3,000 new believers on Pentecost was only the start. Already in Acts 4:4, Luke reported that the church in Jerusalem had grown to 5,000.

### [#13] & [#14]

Here we see the first church develop its organization with the beginning of what today we call the ministry of the *deacons*. These are church leaders who serve by helping people with their physical needs. This was important work, but the Apostles felt it was distracting them from

- Read Acts 6:1-7  
#13. The church chose seven men to help the Apostles do what? *manage food distribution to widows*
- #14. The Apostles want to do what kind of work? *Study and teach God's Word*
- #15. Most Christian believers lived in what city? (verse 7)  
*Jerusalem*

the work God wanted them to do: study and teach God's Word. It turns out that two of the first seven deacons were also good preachers (Stephen – Acts 7; and Philip – Acts 8)

### [#15]

The significance of this question becomes clear in our next two lessons.

## ❑ Discussion Questions

These two questions deal with our motivation and our ability to tell people about Jesus. Telling people about Jesus can be difficult and awkward. We have difficulty in...

- bringing up the subject of religion
- sharing our faith without sounding judgmental
- touching a very personal, private subject in people's lives
- knowing what to say about Jesus

### **Discussion Questions:**

- #16. Telling people about Jesus, is that easy or hard? Why?
- #17. Why is it important to tell people about Jesus?

Today we live in a culture that says, "All religions are the same. You don't have the right to tell someone that their religion is wrong. They have their religion and you have yours. What other people believe is none of your business." It is very sad that even some people who call themselves "Christian" and are members of our churches believe this false idea. People who believe this, either...

- don't agree with the Bible, when it says that all who die without Christ are lost in hell forever, or they
- believe it, but don't care that their non-Christian friends and family will spend eternity in hell; they lack the love Jesus has for all people.

All too often, however, we *want* to tell people about Jesus, but we don't know *how*. In today's lesson, we see three very important keys in being able to share Jesus with people:

- [1] Pray for friends and family who are lost without Jesus.
- [2] Know God's word, the Bible. That means read and study it all through your life.
- [3] Ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit's power,
  - ✓ to help you be sensitive to the needs of the lost,
  - ✓ to help you be aware of opportunities God gives you to share Jesus with someone, and
  - ✓ to give courage and the right words to say, when those opportunities happen each day.

Here is a good little "trick" to help us be more effective witnesses for Jesus: Wake up each morning with the prayer: "Lord, help me tell someone about Jesus today." God answers that prayer in simple little ways that may surprise you.

Jesus give Life, and His Word gives hope. And deep inside their hearts, that's what people want

## ❑ Closing the lesson

Close your meeting by sharing prayer requests. You should lead the prayer. Also pray for someone to come and fill the empty chair. Pray for God to help you tell people about Jesus.

## Lesson 9 Acts: Persecution Spreads the Good News

### Preparing the lesson

- Begin your private study of the lesson with prayer. Pray for wisdom. Pray for your students. Pray that God's Word will show its life-changing power in your life.
- Read the SUMMARY and GOALS section of the Study Guide.
- Read the teaching suggestions in this Leader's Guide.
- Look up the Bible verses cited in the Study Guide. Write in answers to your own copy of the Study Guide. Also write notes that will remind you about extra suggestions offered here.

### Opening the lesson

- Distribute copies of the Study Guide for Lesson 9.
- Begin your meeting with prayer. Have a short prayer that God will give each person the Holy Spirit. Pray that Jesus will lead the meeting. Pray that we will understand more clearly God's Word, the Bible.

### Review

- The New Testament has 5 history books – four about the life of Jesus, and the 5<sup>th</sup> is the history about the Christian Church, how the church began and spread.
- In Lesson 8 we began our study of the 5<sup>th</sup> book, Acts.
- The author is Dr. Luke, the same man who wrote the 3<sup>rd</sup> history book in the New Testament, the book that has his name as the title, *Luke*, but is about the life of Jesus.
- Acts begins with Jesus' Ascension, and His gift of the Holy Spirit to His followers on Pentecost Day. That day 3,000 came to faith in Jesus, and the Jerusalem church continued to grow after that.

### Teaching the Lesson

#### [#1] – [#3]

In the early days of the church, God healed people through the Apostles, just as Jesus had done. This was proof to the people that the Word they preached about Jesus was true. In the case of this healing in the Temple, a lot of people were curious about what happened. So Peter and John used their curiosity about the healing to direct their attention to Jesus.

- |   |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Acts 3:1-8<br>#1. Peter and John healed a man, where? <u><i>in the Temple</i></u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Acts 3:11-17<br>#2. Peter spoke to whom? <u><i>the people in the Temple</i></u>   |
| #3. Peter spoke about what? <u><i>Jesus</i></u>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read Acts 4:1-4<br>#4. How many men were Christian believers? <u><i>5,000</i></u>      |

Notice what the healed man did (verses 8 and 11): walking, jumping, praising God, and holding on to Peter and John.

**[#4]**

The church started with a couple dozen believers after Jesus' Ascension. Then on Pentecost Day, the church grew to 3,000. Then it added more than 2,000 more in a short time.. So by Acts 4, there were "5,000 men." The Greek term that Luke uses for "men" indicates that he meant the males. We can guess there were as many women among the believers (or even more), which could make the church membership as high as 10,000 people! It is no surprise that the Jewish leaders were really upset with the Apostles.

**[#5]**

Acts 4:2 – "They were upset because the two apostles were teaching... that people will rise from death through the power of Jesus."

The priests put Peter and John on trial. *This was the same court that condemned Jesus to death, while Peter denied Jesus.* They asked Peter and John "By what power or what name did you do this?" (According to Luke's Greek text in verse 7, that is all they asked. The *English Version for the Deaf* translation incorrectly adds text that Luke didn't write.) The priests were asking about Peter's preaching.

- #5. Why did the priests arrest Peter and John? for *preaching about Jesus & the resurrection (v.2)*
- Read Acts 4:18-20
- #6. The Jewish leaders told Peter and John they must do what? *stop preaching about Jesus*
- #7. How did Peter and John answer the priests? *they will obey God and tell people*
- Read Acts 4:23-24, 29-31
- #8. The Christians prayed for God to give them what? *make them brave; help them tell about Jesus*

But Peter changes the question and applies to the healing (verse 9). Notice that the healed man is still with them! It may be that the healed man got arrested with Peter and John, and he spent the night in jail with them.

Then when Peter talks about the man's healing "by the power of Jesus," he boldly tells the court that they, too, must be "healed" (i.e. *saved* – the same Greek word in Luke's text) by the name of Jesus. Peter says: "*Jesus is the only One who can save people. His name is the only power in the world that has been given to save people. We must be saved through Jesus!*" (verse 12).

Peter had really changed! Before he was afraid to be identified as a friend of Jesus. Now he was brave and did not care if he died for Jesus. (Thank you, Holy Spirit!)

**[#6] – [#8]**

The priests told the Apostles to stop teaching about Jesus (verse 18). But the priests were afraid to punish Peter and John, because all the people knew God did wonderful through them. Peter and John answered: "Should we obey you or God? We cannot be quiet."

❖ *Lesson for our lives:* Sometimes we must chose between doing what is easy, or doing what is *right*.

### [#9] & [#10]

The story in Acts 5:12-39 is very interesting: The priests arrested the Apostles. During the night, an angel of God let them out of jail and told them to preach in the temple. The next morning they starting teaching in the temple again. And the priests arrested them again.

The High Priest scolded the Apostles: “We told you never to teach about this man (*Jesus*)! But look what you have done! You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching. You are trying to make us responsible for the death of this man (*Jesus*).” (verse 28)

- Acts 5:12-39 tells another story about the priests arresting the Apostles.

Read Acts 5:40-42

#9. What did the Jewish leaders do to the Apostles?

***beat them, and told them not to tell people about Jesus***

#10. How did the Apostles feel? (verse 41) ***they were***

***HAPPY because they suffered for Christ!***

#11. What did the Apostles do? (verse 42) ***continue***

***teaching the people about Jesus***

Read Acts 7:54-60

#12. What did the Jewish leaders do to Stephen?

***They killed him (by stoning him)***

Peter answered, “We must obey God, not you!” Then he told the priests that they were responsible for Jesus’ death, but that God raised Jesus to life again, so that they can be saved and God will forgive their sins (verses 29-32)

This really made the priests angry, and they wanted to kill the Apostles. But one Pharisee name Gamaliel talked them out of it. So they “beat (*hit*) the Apostles and told them not to talk to the people about Jesus again. Then they let the Apostles go free.” (verse 40)

### [#10] & [#11]

Back when Jesus was arrested, the Apostles were afraid they would get arrested and suffer, too. Now they thought it was an *honor* to *suffer* for Jesus. The Holy Spirit had really changed their attitude! And they went on teaching about Jesus.

### [#12]

Acts 6 starts with the story about the seven Deacons, chosen to help distribute food to the widows. One of those Deacons was Stephen. God blessed Stephen in his teaching about Jesus. So the priests arrested him, too. Acts 7:2-53 has Stephen’s long, powerful answer at his trial. The priests were so angry at Stephen, they decided to make him be quiet... by killing him. They threw rocks at him, until he died.

Stephen was the first Christian *martyr*. In the English language, that word “martyr” means a person who dies for a religious cause. In the Greek language, the word “martyr” means “witness.” In Acts 12, James, the brother of John, became the first of the 12 Apostles to die for Jesus. Eventually, all of the Apostles were killed by people who hated Jesus.

### [#13]

Just before Stephen died, he prayed two prayers, the same as Jesus prayed on the cross: “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” (verse 59). And “*Lord, don’t blame them for this sin!*” (verse 60). One of those men, for whom Stephen prayed, later became a Christian (Acts 8).

### [#14] – [#16]

Persecution was Jesus’ way of getting the Christians out of Jerusalem and spreading the Good News about Jesus. The enemies of Jesus were trying to stop the church, but they only made the church grow more!

#### *An Example from Nature:*

Many years ago ocean fisherman caught star fish in the nets. The fishermen hated that. They tried to kill the starfish by cutting them up and throwing the pieces back in the ocean. But each piece of the starfish continued to live and grow into a new starfish. The fishermen made more starfish without realizing it. That’s what happened to the Jerusalem church.

Remember in Acts 1:8 (in our Lesson 8) Jesus said, “You will be my witnesses... in Jerusalem... *in Judea, in Samaria*, and in every part of the world.”

#13. What did Stephen pray? (verses 59-60)

*“Jesus, receive my spirit...”*

*Lord, don’t blame them for this sin.”*

Read Acts 8:1-5

#14 What happened to the Christians in Jerusalem?

*persecution*

#15. Where did they go? *Judea and Samaria*

#16. What did they do? (verses 4-5) *tell about Jesus*

Read Acts 11:1-4

#17. Some Christians in Jerusalem were upset with Peter, why? *He went to visit non-Jewish people.*

Read Acts 11:18

#18. After Peter told his experience, the Christians finally understood what? *Non-Jewish people can believe in Jesus, too. God loves them and they can be saved.*

### [#17] & [#18]

An important story, which we are skipping in this lesson, God sent Peter to the home of an important Roman army officer, name Cornelius. Cornelius and his whole family trusted Jesus, and God filled them with the Holy Spirit. So Peter baptized them.

When Peter got home, his friends criticized him for visiting non-Jews. What Peter did was against Jewish traditions. But Peter explained how God sent him, and how God filled the non-Jewish people with the Holy Spirit when they trusted Jesus.

Today we think it is very odd for a Jewish person to become Christian. But we have it backwards. The first Christian congregation was all Jewish, and they thought only Jews could be Christians. They thought it was odd – no, they thought it was *wrong* – for a non-Jew to become a Christian. That idea stayed strong for a long time, and caused lots of problems in the New Testament church.

**[#19]**

Again, see Acts 1:89 (Lesson 8)  
Jesus said, “You will be my witnesses... in Jerusalem... *in* Judea, in Samaria, *and in every part of the world.*”

Now the anti-Christian persecution is sending Christians farther away from Jerusalem, away from Judea and Samaria, to places very far from Israel.

Read Acts 11:19

#19 This verse lists more places where Christians went for safety, and told people about Jesus:

**Phoenicia, Cyprus, Antioch**

- Try find these places on a New Testament Bible map.

**Discussion Question:**

#20. What ways do Christians suffer persecution today?

As you find these places on a New Testament map, you may notice there are two cities named “Antioch.” This one is in Syria, a north of Israel. Note Acts 11:26 “*In Antioch the followers of Jesus were called ‘Christians’ for the first time.*” In Jerusalem, the church was called, “the Way.” (Acts 9:2), or “the sect of the Nazarene” (Acts 24:5).

Our lesson skips Acts 12, which has a couple more important stories about Christians suffering persecution.

Discussion Question

In some countries of the world, it is very dangerous for Christians to worship publicly, and it is illegal to win other people to faith in Christ. But even in our own nation, it is unpopular, “politically incorrect” to teach the Bible in any place other than in a church or in your private home. Some people call teaching the Bible’s truths about morality and sexual purity as “hate speech.” People who are not ashamed to express their faith in Jesus experience discrimination, especially in government jobs. TV producers are careful to respect all religions, except one. We see that it is okay to make fun of Christians, and write scripts that make Christians look like bad or stupid people.

Has anyone in our group experienced discrimination, criticism or mocking from other deaf people because you trust Jesus, love Him, and obey Him? How did you respond?

Closing the lesson

Close your meeting by sharing prayer requests. You should lead the prayer. Also pray for someone to come and fill the empty chair. Pray for God to help you be brave in standing up for Jesus. Ask God to help you turn persecution into opportunities to tell people about Jesus.

## Lesson 10 Acts: The Missionary

### Preparing the lesson

- Begin your private study of the lesson with prayer. Pray for wisdom. Pray for your students. Pray that God's Word will show its life-changing power in your life.
- Read the SUMMARY and GOALS section of the Study Guide.
- Read the teaching suggestions in this Leader's Guide.
- Look up the Bible verses cited in the Study Guide. Write in answers to your own copy of the Study Guide. Also write notes that will remind you about extra suggestions offered here.

### Opening the lesson

- Distribute copies of the Study Guide for Lesson 10.
- Begin your meeting with prayer. Have a short prayer that God will give each person the Holy Spirit. Pray that Jesus will lead the meeting. Pray that we will understand more clearly God's Word, the Bible.

### Review

- The New Testament has 5 history books – four about the life of Jesus, and the 5<sup>th</sup> is the history about the Christian Church, how the church began and spread.
- The author is Dr. Luke, the same man who wrote the 3<sup>rd</sup> history book in the New Testament, the book that has his name as the title, *Luke*, but is about the life of Jesus.
- Acts begins with Jesus' Ascension, and His gift of the Holy Spirit to His followers on Pentecost Day. That day 3,000 came to faith in Jesus, and the Jerusalem church continued to grow after that.
- Government and religious leaders who hated Jesus began persecuting Christians in Jerusalem – arresting them, beating them, and even killing some.
- Christians escaped to other cities, and to other countries. Every place they went, they told people about Jesus, and churches started in those cities. Faith in Jesus began spreading over the world.

### Teaching the Lesson [#1] – [#3]

In Lesson 9 we learned about the persecution that the Jerusalem Christians suffered. Saul led that persecution. Saul worked hard to destroy the church. "Saul went in their houses. He dragged out men and women and put them jail."

So the Christians went to other cities for safety, and they told the Good News about Jesus every place they went. Saul tried to stop them. He went to Damascus to bring the Christians back to Jerusalem for trial. But on the way to Damascus, Saul met Jesus in a bright light. That light made Paul blind.

- Read Acts 7:57-58, and Acts 8:1-3  
#1. What is the name of the young man who hated Jesus and tried to destroy the church? *Saul*
- Read Acts 9:1-2  
#2. Why did Saul go to the city of Damascus? *to arrest Christians*
- Read Acts 9:3-10  
#3. Who spoke to Saul? *Jesus*

**[#4]**

In a vision, Jesus told a Christian man, Ananias, to go meet Saul and pray with him. Ananias gave Jesus some good reasons why that was a very bad idea. But Jesus told Ananias, “Go! I have chosen Saul for important work.” Jesus said that Saul must suffer for Jesus. Ananias went and prayed with Paul, so Paul could see again. Ananias baptized Saul.

Saul had helped the men who killed Stephen. Saul had hated Christians. Now Saul became a Christian.

**[#5] – [#7]**

Saul knew the Old Testament very well, and with the Holy Spirit’s help, he could see clearly that Jesus was the Savior that God had promised to the Jewish people in the OT. Saul was so good in explaining about Jesus, that the Jewish leaders in Damascus tried to kill him. But Saul escaped over the wall in a basket.

**[#8]**

Saul tried to meet the Christians in Jerusalem, but they were afraid of him. They knew Saul hated Christians and tried to kill them. They did not believe he changed. They thought he was playing a trick to trap them.

**[#9] – [#11]**

Barnabas was a very important person, and he was a very interesting person. His real name was Joseph, but the Apostles gave him the nickname, “Barnabas.” That name means “*Son of Encouragement*” (Acts 4:36-37). Barnabas was a real encourager for Saul. Barnabas took a chance and welcomed Saul, when everyone else was afraid. When Apostles needed to send a pastor for the new church in Antioch (Syria), they sent Barnabas. When Barnabas saw he needed a helper, he went and found Saul.

**[#12]**

The leaders of the church in Antioch were praying together, and God showed them that He wanted Barnabas and Saul to do some special work (Acts 13:1-3). The Holy Spirit led them to go first to the island of Cyprus. **Find Cyprus on a map.** Barnabas was originally from Cyprus (Acts 4:36). They also took with them Barnabas’ nephew, Mark (also called, John Mark – John is a Jewish name, Mark is a Roman name), as a helper.

**[#13]**

While they were visiting Cyprus, **Saul changed his name to Paul.**

<input type="checkbox"/> Read Acts 9:11-19
#4. What happened to Saul after Ananias prayed for him? <u><b><i>He could see again; he was baptized; he ate again.</i></b></u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Read Acts 9:20-22
#5. Then what did Saul do? <u><b><i>teach about Jesus</i></b></u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Read Acts 9:23-25
#6. Why did Saul leave the city? <u><b><i>the Jewish leaders wanted to kill Saul</i></b></u>
#7. How did Saul leave the city? <u><b><i>over the city wall in a basket</i></b></u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Read Acts 9:26-28
#8. Why were the Jerusalem Christians afraid of Saul? <u><b><i>They did not believe he was really a Christian. They knew Saul already tried to kill Christians.</i></b></u>
#9. Who accepted Saul and brought him to the Apostles? <u><b><i>Barnabas</i></b></u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Read Acts 11:22-26
#10. Who was the first pastor of the church in Antioch? <u><b><i>Barnabas</i></b></u>
#11. Who was his helper? <u><b><i>Saul</i></b></u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Read Acts 13:4-5
#12. Barnabas and Saul went to what island? <u><b><i>Cyprus</i></b></u>

- This was the beginning of Paul's missionary journeys. Bibles with maps in the back have maps showing Paul's travels, as Dr. Luke describes them in Acts. Many of the cities where Paul started Christians churches were the places that he sent letters. And those letters are in the New Testament (1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians).
- Dr. Luke described the first three of Paul's missionary journeys. Paul never traveled alone, but he went with other Christian leaders and helpers. On the first trip, Paul went with Barnabas. Mark went with them part of the way. On the second trip, Barnabas (always the encourager) wanted to take Mark again. Paul thought it was a mistake to take Mark. "Paul and Barnabas had a big argument about this. They separated and went different ways. Barnabas sailed to Cyprus and took Mark with him. Paul chose Silas to go with him." (Acts 15:39-40). Later, Paul had other people travel with him, including Timothy (Acts 16:3) and Dr. Luke (Acts 16:10).

#### [#14]

It may be strange to say, but this is the way Paul normally left town. He would come to a new city, and find the Jews. He would teach in the Synagogue, if there was one, and explain that Jesus is the Savior, which God promised in the Old Testament. Some would believe, and some others would become angry. Paul would then teach non-Jews about Jesus, and that would make the Jews even more angry. Those who hated Paul often were able to get powerful people upset about Paul.

The government leaders might ask him to leave, or usually, it was a mob that chased him out. Once he was stoned, but he survived (Acts 14:19). Then Paul and his friends would go on to the next city, and tell them about Jesus... until he was chased out of town.

#### [#15]

Paul had plans to travel in a certain direction (west). He wanted to go to some certain cities (which may have included Ephesus). But the Holy Spirit stopped him... this time. (Paul had a chance to visit that area at a later time.) So Paul decided to go north. Again, the Holy Spirit stopped him. Paul did not want to go back home yet, so he went the only way he could, to the sea coast, at Troas (Acts 16:6-8).

#### [#16]

"That night Paul saw a vision. In this vision, a man from the country of Macedonia ... stood there and begged, 'Come to Macedonia. Help us!'" (Acts 16:9). This famous experience is called the "Macedonian call." We use the phrase (*Macedonian call*) to describe what happens when someone invites a missionary to come and tell them about Jesus.

Read Acts 13:9

#13. What was Saul's other name? *Saul*

- This began Paul's three mission trips. Luke tells about these trips in Acts 13-21.
- Find a Bible with maps in the back. Find the map that shows Paul's travels. (Interesting things happened at each place Paul stopped to tell about Jesus.)

Read Acts 13:49-50.

#14. Why did Paul leave? *people threw him out of town*

Read Acts 16:6-10

#15. Paul wanted to go to Asia and Bithynia. What stopped him? *The Holy Spirit*

#16. Why did Paul go to Macedonia? *He had a vision of a man asking him to come.*

**[#17] – [#19]**

From Troas, Paul and his friends (Timothy, Silas, and Dr. Luke) went to northern Greece (Macedonia). The Holy Spirit led them to Philippi. They met a Jewish woman and her friends. Paul taught them about Jesus, and they believed. What happened next (Acts 16:16-40) is a famous story about God's saving power.

Discussion Questions

**[#20]**

Remember the meaning of Barnabas' name: *Son of Encouragement*.

- Who have been the encouragers in your life?
- Are you encouraging anyone to grow in their life with Christ?

**[#21]**

Too often we measure success only by numbers. "How many people...? How much money...?" The Bible uses a different measure of success. Was Paul successful in his mission work? He was rejected... whipped... stoned... misunderstood... chased out of town... He often left people in charge of churches, without giving them proper training. Contrast Paul's "failures" with the "success" of modern TV preachers. (Or if you prefer, look at the "success" of the Old Testament prophet, Jonah, who won a whole city for God while he had a rotten attitude.) Even Jesus, Himself, by the world's standard of success, measure to be a failure. So what, in God's perspective makes us successful?

Closing the lesson

Close your meeting by sharing prayer requests. You should lead the prayer. Also pray for someone to come and fill the empty chair. Pray for God to help you be faithful in your service. Thank God for those people who have encouraged us in our walk with Jesus. Ask God to fill us with His Holy Spirit, so that we can be sensitive and obedient to His leading to tell people about Jesus.

Read Acts 16:12

#17. Paul went to what city? **Philippi**

- Find that city on the map.

Read Acts 16:16-34

#18. Why did people arrest Paul, beat him, and put him in jail? **He ordered a demon out of a slave girl**

#19. Who became a Christian? **the jailer & family**

**Discussion Questions:**

#20. Barnabas helped Paul become a worker for Jesus.

Who has helped you grow in faith and service for Jesus? Who can you help grow in faith and service?

#21. In serving Jesus, what is "success?" What is "failure?"