

For your Bible class or study group

To use the Mathetis original videos in conjunction with the curriculum, here are some helpful tips for a smooth start.

1. Check the audio / visual setup of your space. You will need a projector and sound for full class participation or enough people in class to watch the videos on their personal devices.
2. Determine if you have Internet access to stream videos. If you do not have Internet access, you may request access to download videos by contacting us at help@mathetis.org
3. Please determine with your congregation's leaders whether you

can use the videos with background music in your class setting. If you need the videos without background music, please email help@mathetis.org for non-background music video access.

4. Starting with week three, a short link is provided for your convenience to jump directly to an online video. For example, you will see www.mathetis.org/q2w3. Also, all videos are public on our Mathetis App YouTube channel.

5. Pray for wisdom as you prepare to teach and for receptive hearts to whom you are teaching.

For an online group

1. Go to Mathetis.org or download Mathetis on the App Store or Google Play.



2. Take time to watch the tutorials or simply familiarize yourself with the social media network.

3. If your class or group size is nine or under you may use Mathetis completely free. If your class or group size will be over nine, you can explore subscription options that will work best for your situation. For questions and support, please contact help@mathetis.org.

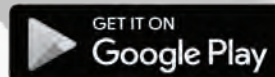
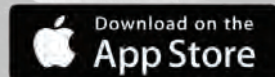
SAMPLE USE ONLY

In Need of a Savior
is the second of three quarterly Bible studies in

THE *reaching* SERIES

devoted to
Reaching Today's Generation
Mathetis: Social Media Discipling

www.mathetis.org



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Week One:

Introducing In Need of A Savior

SAMPLE USE ONLY

Introduction

Matthew's account of the Gospel is like a symphony. Its mood becomes somber at the cross and at the sealed tomb. Then it flourishes in triumph with the resurrection and quickly moves toward the crescendo we call the Great Commission.

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And

behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28: 18-20).

Think about the implications of this glorious conclusion to Jesus' time on earth. Jesus has lived the perfect life. He has died the perfect death to save all people. He has risen from death to the perfect life, never to die again. By His resurrection, He has proved Himself to be the Son of God with power. The Father grants Him "all authority in heaven and on earth."

How will Jesus use that awesome authority, that absolute power? Be thinking about that question.

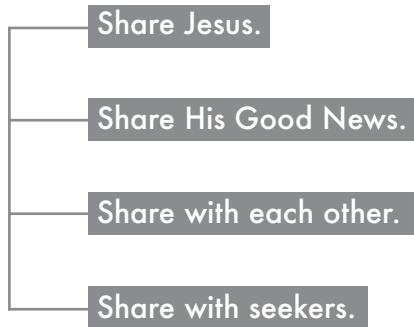
Courtesy www.lumoproject.com



Note to teachers:

Thank you for leading this interactive Bible class entitled *In Need of a Savior*. We focus on the Savior, the

Scriptures and sharing those with others. We want to...



In the spirit of sharing, encourage discussion and interaction. God has gifted each class member with unique experiences for building up the body of Christ. Each class session is packed with discoveries, so keep discussions moving at a brisk pace. There is also ample opportunity to learn more about today's seeker, how to communicate

effectively and the new sharing method called Mathetis.

Above all, this is a Bible study. We'll return in a moment to the Great Commission. In order to appreciate its significance, let's prepare with two brief exercises.

1

Ask your class if any have been involved in creating a "mission statement" for businesses or organizations. What is a "mission statement"? What is its purpose? What are its characteristics?

2

Ask for a quick list of good things that might be accomplished if God gave you all authority on earth. How would you use that power? What would you make your top priority?

With “all authority in heaven and on earth,” Jesus is literally the Master of the universe. He can use His absolute power in any way He chooses. There are so many good things that need attention: families, relationships, hunger, housing, education, justice

and health—just to mention a few. To Jesus these are so important that they feature in the final judgement (Matthew 25:35-36). So which good thing will Jesus choose for His mission statement? How will He apply His supreme, all-encompassing authority? The “therefore” shows His choice:

“ All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples... ”

(Matthew 28:18-19)

Of all the possibilities, Jesus chooses to focus on one thing: “Make disciples!” This is how He chooses to frame His mission statement for all His people for all time.

In Matthew’s part of the Great Commission this is the direct imperative: “Make disciples!” In the Greek language of the New Testament, the attending verb “Go” is a participle, meaning, “As you go...” The verbs “baptizing” and “teaching” are also participles, supporting the main verb which is, “Make disciples!” In other words, “make disciples” involves “baptizing” and further “teaching.”

Does Jesus not care about the other good works? Certainly, He cares! Jesus is the One who teaches us what is good, how to care and be a blessing. Think of all the variety of good that can be done as sunshine on a clear day. Now, picture the Great Commission as a magnifying glass.

It takes that sunshine and brings it to a focus that burns with white hot intensity. That fine focus is “Make disciples!” To become “a disciple” is to commit to learning all Christ commanded, which leads to all the good Jesus inspires.

The Great Commission dominates Jesus’ last forty days on earth. He emphasizes it in various ways on various occasions. Each Gospel account crescendos with this emphasis and it launches the Book of Acts.

And He said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to the whole creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned (Mark 16:15-16).

[Jesus] said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from

the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem (Luke 24:46-47).

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent Me, even so I am sending you" (John 20:21).

“ You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. ”

(Acts 1:8)

Taken together, these statements round out the Great Commission. They are the mission statement and the marching orders for the body of Christ. They identify our top priority.

But wait. Does the Great Commission, given so long ago, really apply to me today? Jesus embeds self-perpetuating principles in the Great Commission, making it fully relevant to each and every follower. Here are two examples:

1) Jesus shows that each believer who is baptized is to learn complete obedience—"teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20). If all that Jesus commanded is to be passed along, then His most recent command—

"Make disciples!"—is certainly included. Each new disciple learns to make disciples and relays that same command to the next disciple.

2) In giving the Great Commission, Jesus is looking down the hall of time—even "to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). That time span certainly includes us in our age.

Yes, if we are disciples, we carry out the Great Commission. We have various roles within the body of Christ. We encounter various opportunities. We bring various gifts to the task. But we apply these roles, gifts and opportunities to one great, overarching mission: Make disciples!



Discussion Questions

As Jesus gave the Great Commission, do you think He was consciously including all true Christianity for all time?

As Jesus gave the Great Commission, could He foresee the challenges we face today?

Do you find the command, "make disciples," intimidating? Why or why not?

Read Matthew 28:16-17, the verses leading up to the Great Commission. Also read Mark 16:14-15. In those verses, does anything strike you about the people with whom Jesus launched the Great Commission? Does that say anything about Jesus' ability to use you?

What particular gifts and opportunities do you bring to fulfilling the Great Commission?



Today's Mission

The mission remains as relevant and as unchanging as ever. But the times change. Society changes. Communication and learning methods change. In order to meet today's challenges, World Bible School introduces a new approach to utilize multi-media and social media in making disciples. That approach is called Mathetis.

In New Testament Greek, the word for disciple is *mathetes* (pronounced math-eit-eis). In order to assist English speakers, we have adapted this to create the name Mathetis.

Mathetis is designed to reach today's seeker, especially in the Western world. By

"Western world" we mean most of North America and Europe. However, much of the world is being influenced by media from Western centers. This means that Mathetis is also useful in many cultures, especially among the young.

In the process of making disciples, we want to be aware of two levels: the individual and the group. Each individual is unique. As we get to know an individual's personality and situation, we adjust to be more effective. Jesus had no bias or partiality. Yet He dealt with Nicodemus (John 3) differently from the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4). In the same way, we approach a skeptical person differently from a receptive

person. In the Mathetis method, “mentors” may be able to tailor their help for individual participants as they get to know them better. Mentors are Christians who come alongside learners using Mathetis lessons.

We are also dealing with groups. Mathetis addresses characteristics of groups generally described as “post-modern.” We do not want to paint with too broad a brush, but we can benefit from general observations. As has happened in other ages, it is not uncommon for newer generations to repudiate much for which the older generations stood.

- Did the old obey authority? The new may be suspicious of authority.
- Did the old respect their institutions? The new may reject institutions. Rather than structured religion, they may prefer personal experiences and mystic spirituality.
- Did the old think in linear terms? Did they employ logic to progress systematically from evidences to definite conclusions? The new may reject linear assumptions in favor of intuitional, emotional and experiential exploration.
- Did the old treat truth as concrete and objective? The new may be more subjective, viewing truth as relative: “I have my truth and you have your truth. And it’s all good.”
- Did the old speak authoritatively? The new may prefer questions and speaking

in terms of opinions and possibilities.

Mathetis seeks to meet today’s seekers, beginning where they are, and moving toward the Good News of Jesus. As an example, consider that phrase, “The new may prefer questions.” Can Christians take that approach? Of course, they can. It is so old that, in education, it has a name: the Socratic Method. It encourages dialogue. It uses questions and answers to stimulate thought, to examine assumptions and to help people reach their own conclusions. Instead of borrowing someone else’s thinking, it encourages personal discovery and ownership.

Far better than Socrates, Jesus used questions.

- In Mark 12, Jesus quoted David’s messianic psalm (Psalm 110) and asked, “David himself calls Him [the Messiah] Lord. So how is He his son?”
 - In Luke 10, when a lawyer asked a question, Jesus asked His own question, “What is written in the Law? How do you read it?”
 - In Luke 20, Jesus’ opponents questioned His authority.
- He answered them, “I also will ask you a question. Now tell me, was the baptism of John from heaven or from man?” (Luke 20:3-4).

In the same way, Christians can take an exploratory approach, asking questions

Discussion Questions

and encouraging discovery. Here are examples of how Mathetis adapts to new ways of learning. More than in the past, today's learning tends to...

- be visual and expects quality productions. Hence, Mathetis features high-quality visual components.
 - take place online, using search words. Hence, many come to Mathetis by searching online for questions and topics they find interesting. (The titles of Mathetis topics result from digital research.)
 - involve social media. Hence, Mathetis encourages interaction through a variety of popular social platforms while providing a new social media platform for spiritual growth.
 - come in small bites related to shorter attention spans. Hence,
- Mathetis is composed of short, bite-size segments.
- be experiential. Hence Mathetis includes activities and exercises.
 - be non-linear. People like to pick their own preferences. Hence, Mathetis offers a variety of topics, allowing seekers to enter at any point of their own choice.
 - be questioning and skeptical of established orders. People may not respond well to dogmatic assertions. They prefer to explore for themselves. Hence, Mathetis takes an enquiring approach that helps people discover for themselves the unchanging truth of God's word.



- Can you think of other examples where Jesus taught by asking questions?
- Have you experienced generational differences in ways of thinking?
- What are some generational differences in communicating?
- Of the seven bullet points above, which do you encounter the most?
- Which of the seven makes sharing the Good News most difficult?
- Which of the seven helps us share the Good News?

Conclusion

Is the Great Commission daunting? Think of the geographical reach: “Go into all the world.” Think of the cultural range: “all nations.” Think of the population: “all creation” or “every creature.” Did Jesus realize the magnitude of the task for His few followers?

If we believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, we answer in the affirmative. Yes, He saw the full scope and knew all the challenges we would face, even in the twenty-first century.

Do we believe that Jesus really has “all authority in heaven and on earth”? Then we also believe that He works powerfully in us to accomplish the task. With Paul, we claim His energy for the mission.

“Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all His energy that He powerfully works within me” (Colossians 1:28-29).

Why wouldn’t Jesus empower us? After all, this is the cause for which He gave

His life, so that responsive people could receive “forgiveness of sins” and “be saved.” This is the Father’s top priority, to fulfill the cosmic purpose for which He sent His Son.

Believing these truths, we are not surprised to find that God provides all that is needed to meet the challenge. It is no coincidence that in our age, when the world’s population is approaching eight billion, that communications encircle the globe at incredible speeds. Some may get rich from technical advances. But that is not their ultimate purpose. Technical advances are part of God’s plan to share His saving message more rapidly with more people in more places.

God is providing amazing new tools for accomplishing His will. Mathetis is one of those tools. With this course, you are on the cutting-edge of new methods for outreach. You are pushing the frontiers as the Kingdom of God invades the dominion of darkness. You are fulfilling a significant role in the ultimate mission of mercy, the Great Commission.

Week Two:

Using Mathetis to Reach our “Jerusalem”

SAMPLE USE ONLY

Introduction

Kella's Story

Kella has long been, and still is, a huge influence connecting responsive seekers to helpful Christians.

Through her efforts, conversions take place all across the USA from coast to coast and in between. Kella helps seekers by locating a nearby congregation for them and getting them in touch with a local Christian. These Christians then help seekers in their next step of faith, whether that be study or baptism. They also help introduce these seekers to a loving fellowship of Christians in a local congregation of the church.

You might think Kella is a road warrior for Christ, with many miles logged for each seeker. However, none of those assumptions would be true. Kella has found a method for great impact in the Kingdom of Christ. She is a World Bible School follow-up partner and does most of her communication with seekers and Christians through phone and email.

Kella does not travel widely. She uses God's gift of modern technology for outreach. Her efforts are yielding harvests that will keep on multiplying for generations to come, even extending to other countries.

As you think about the magnitude of the Great Commission you may find yourself overwhelmed to the point of giving up. Maybe you decide to quit because there is no way to accomplish such a daunting task to “go into all the world.” Satan wants us to feel that “we can’t” and his lies push us to that place. But Jesus gives us the power and the means to “go and make disciples.”

Jesus knew that His apostles had to start somewhere. He gave them a pattern to follow, from which we too can learn. Jesus said, “You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). In other words, start where you are! For them, that was Jerusalem. Yes, they were to go to all nations (Matthew 28:19). But

how did they manage that? Did any one apostle go to “all nations”? No. The Great Commission is a team effort. Beginning with Jerusalem, the Gospel spread like wildfire because the Christians were passionate about sharing the Good News of Jesus. They told their neighbors and friends. They told strangers who traveled back to their homes with the Good News and the process repeated itself over and over again. This is how the Gospel message spread to all nations.

To the teacher:

You may have already taught a previous quarter in the Reaching series. In that case, you may not need to introduce social media definitions and the Mathetis tool. If you need to cover this topic, you may find it at the end of this week’s lesson. If you choose to use Mathetis for this quarter, your task is

“All the world” starts at home. It starts with you, your friends, your contacts, your co-workers, your classmates, your circle. If we don’t share Jesus in our “Jerusalem” what makes us think that we will care more for Samaria or other nations? When we begin where we are, in our “Jerusalem,” we ignite the wildfire that reaches neighboring regions, even “to the end of the earth.”

to register and create a group. During class time you can demonstrate how someone will join the online group you have created. The week before class begins, ask attendees to bring their smart phones or other devices so that everyone can go through the sign up and joining process together.

To the class participant:

Please make a conscious decision of time, place and setting to familiarize yourself with the Mathetis platform. If you have children old enough to engage on social media, this would

be a good opportunity as a family to journey together. Maybe you will start your own family group for learning and discussion then reach out to people you know to teach them.



Watch video at:
www.mathetis.org/q2w2

This video is directed toward those who are seeking answers. They may have found Mathetis through online

searches or through friends. They may be in the middle of asking tough questions about life and God.

After watching, do you know people in these situations who may be asking these questions?

What can you do to create opportunities to speak to someone?

What is your own "Jerusalem"?



As we journey into this lesson, we will explore three examples from the Scriptures that help you

think of ways you can reach those in your Jerusalem or your local area. The most important thing you can do after class is take action and "GO"!

Are you drawing attention in your Jerusalem?

"Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple..."

And leaping up, he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple

with them, walking and leaping and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God, and recognized him as the one who sat at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, asking for alms. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him" (Acts 3:1-3, 8-10).

Continued Discussion

Discussion Questions

- What was significant about the time of day that Peter and John entered the temple?
- Why would a lame beggar be placed at the Beautiful Gate?
- Do you think all this was coincidence or God working through human actions and behavior to have the most impact for the Good News of Jesus?
- What is the reaction of the people when they see this happen?

It is true that God doesn't want us to draw attention to ourselves to gain praise for our own glory. However, causing a stir and commotion for the cause of Christ and to bring Him honor and glory is appropriate. What we see in this scenario from Acts is an important lesson for us today.

The location in which the beggar was placed was not an accident. This gate was one of the main entrances to the temple courts. We see a perfect formula consisting of the highest traffic time of day and the highest traffic point. This yields the highest return for attention.

This healing caused a stir and commotion among the people. Their great amazement led Peter to say,

"Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk? ... [Jesus'] name— by faith in His name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all"
(Acts 3:12, 16).

Yes, they caused a commotion. Yes, they drew attention, but the glory was given to God and the saving power of Jesus.

- What opportunities do we have as a group to cause a stir among the people in our "Jerusalem"?
- Personally, how can you create a stir among your friends, colleagues or acquaintances?
- How do you make Jesus the focus?

Do you look different in your “Jerusalem”?

The apostles were bringing a new and challenging message. They were not conforming to Jewish norms. The commotion over the healing caused great concern for the Jewish authorities. They had Peter and John arrested. After they were questioned, Peter said,

“This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:11-12).

Peter and John were not going to give in to the pressure. Throughout Acts, the apostles and early Christians boldly proclaimed the word of God. Their confidence caused the Jewish Council to react.

“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus. But seeing the man who was healed standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition” (Acts 4:13-14).

What are ways that you blend in with culture?

What do you think would be good to change?

How can you act or talk differently so that people know you belong to Christ?

Do you think you are bold in your proclamation as a follower of Jesus?

How can you demonstrate or increase that boldness?



Are you hospitable in Reaching your Jerusalem?

Another powerful example we see in Acts is how the early Christians treated each other. We know that many of the congregations met in homes. This is a great step in reaching your Jerusalem. Our homes and lives becoming open to those who are seeking relationships, seeking a savior. Hospitality is a powerful way to share the Gospel with those who desperately need the Good News.

Let's read how the early New Testament church acted toward one another:

"Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was

distributed to each as any had need" (Acts 4:32-35).

"And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus" (Acts 5:42).

As we read the inspired letters to Christians, we see this pattern continue:

*"The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the **church in their house**, send you hearty greetings in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 16:19).*

*"Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha **and the church in her house**" (Colossians 4:15).*

*"Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our beloved fellow worker and Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, **and the church in your house**" (Philemon 1:1, 2).*



Discussion Questions

These accounts make it clear that Christian homes were an integral part of fellowship, worship and reaching the lost. Our culture has become less open and inviting. Perhaps we are

so busy with so many activities and distractions that the art of hospitality has been lost over time. The Bible has not changed. It still encourages us,

“ Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. ”

(Hebrews 13:2)



Do you use your home for hospitality? In what way?

Hospitality doesn't necessarily involve a house. Sometimes our life and acceptance of others into our life is hospitality. Do you find yourself open to getting to know others? Do you think others feel comfortable around you?

What steps can you take to be more welcoming?

How To Use Mathetis

Those in the class who are willing to participate online should register on the Mathetis website or app. Registration is simple and can be done during class. That way, participants can get any help

they need. They can have their questions answered and they can complete the registration process. If you choose not to use class time, give a challenge for registration to be completed before the next meeting time.

Your Study Group Task list

- 1) Visit **www.mathetis.org** or download the app from the App Store or Google Play.
- 2) Register your account and choose a profile picture.
- 3) Join the group created by the teacher by clicking the link given to you.
- 4) Find the Mathetis course for this quarter "In Need of a Savior"
- 5) Open a lesson to familiarize yourself with the layout and options.

How to Start Your Own Mathetis Group

If the instructor chooses to not have a class-wide online group, you can go online to create your own group. Follow these steps to start using Mathetis today:

- 1) Visit **www.mathetis.org** on your web browser or download Mathetis in the App Store or Google Play.
- 2) Click the button to register and fill out your information.
- 3) Find a course you want to start and create your first group following the onscreen prompts and directions. You may select a subject that is of interest to you and your friends or you may select a course that seems suitable as practice and a warm up.
- 4) If you are not sure what course to begin, you may create a group first, invite and decide what to study together later.

Definition of Terms

Mathetis is built to be user-friendly and access to the videos is free. You can learn to use it one simple step at a time. As you learn, you will encounter new terms. We define these terms here for future reference. Don't feel that you must understand everything right now. Rather, consider these definitions as a resource for use when needed.

Member

Anyone with a registered account on Mathetis. Anyone can browse the content, but courses can only be completed as part of a group effort. (Note that "member" in this context does not necessarily refer to a member of the church. In fact, Mathetis members will come from many different backgrounds.)

Friend or Connection

Similar to Facebook "friends" but merely a convenient way to keep in touch with your closest contacts on Mathetis and invite them to a group.

Learner

Anyone who registers on Mathetis with the intent to learn from a course and joins a group.

Group Leader

Creates the group and manages the size and the content that will be studied by the group. Anyone can become a group leader

Standard Group

Listed privately on the website and you can choose to place on the study request board so any registered



Conclusion

member can join if the study board request is open.

Personal Group

Will not be listed on the study request board but will be listed on the Mentor request board. This group is intended for someone who wants to have a **one-on-one** study with a Mentor. All communication is private between the Mentor and Learner.

Unlimited Group

An unlimited group is a Mathetis group with no restrictions to the number of people who can join the group. These are perfect for Bible classes, youth groups, home study groups, and any other reason you

might want to create a group larger than 9 people. This group type requires a subscription or lifetime activation purchase. You can learn more about those options at mathetis.org/shop.

Study Board

Group leaders have the option to post an invitation on the study board. Members who are looking to join a group based on common interests may browse the study board and request to join.

The member can join the group if the group leader approves the request to join.



The question rests with you! What are you doing to reach your Jerusalem? Are you drawing attention to give glory to God and share the Gospel? Are you different enough that people see Jesus in how you act? Are you living a life of hospitality toward others?

Over the next weeks you will be learning about reaching those in need of a savior. Whether or not you use the Mathetis social network, be thinking about how you will share Jesus in everyday life. Mathetis provides you

a tool you can use to reach those in need. You can be confident seekers will engage with high quality and truth-filled content. At the same time, they will have an opportunity to request a mentor who can help guide them to full knowledge of the truth.

The task of going into all the world is not as daunting when you realize that it starts with you and how you reach your Jerusalem. Be like the early apostles and be like Kella who does everything possible to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Week Three:

Who is Jesus?

SAMPLE USE ONLY

Introduction

Kaitlyn's Story

Kaitlyn attends a Bible-believing church. Now in her mid-twenties, she is wondering if the things that she hears in church are the only way to know God. She tells some friends that she is looking into other worldviews to see what they teach. Chris hears her express doubts about her faith and her desire to explore other religions.

Chris listens for a while and then says, "Kaitlyn, I know that you are intellectually honest and want the truth. I am the same way. I guess all of us at one time or another wonder, 'Why be a Christian? Can other world religions offer something that I am not getting now?'"

"That's me," Kaitlyn responds. "I grew up in church and never looked at anything else. I am curious about what others believe and why."

Chris nods. "That's O.K., Kaitlyn. God

can handle all your questions. One time I also started thinking, 'What is unique about the Christian faith?' I knew that the other religions also teach love, kindness, helping others, praying and worshiping. But I found one thing that is different that makes all the difference."

"What's that?" Kaitlyn asks.

"Jesus," Chris answers. "I find that Jesus is the difference. He makes claims that no other leader makes. He claims to give His life so that we can be forgiven. He claims to be the Son of God, raised from the dead, and that he will judge the world in the end. No one else ever made such mind-blowing claims."

Kaitlyn asks, "So, you are saying that Jesus is what makes the Christian faith different?"

"That's right," replies Chris. "There is no one else like Jesus. Our faith

Teaching Suggestions

stands or falls with Him. I encourage you to read afresh the four Gospels—the accounts of Jesus’ life. That’s where you meet the real Jesus. I did that and my faith in Jesus is stronger than it’s ever been.”

Thinking it over, Kaitlyn sees a way forward: “I’ll do that. I got so wrapped up in religion that I forgot Jesus. I want to get to know the real Jesus. Then I can make an educated decision for my life.”

Chris agrees, “I find the Gospels intriguing. They moved my faith from quicksand to concrete. The answers are there. I just have to look for them.”

Kaitlyn’s questions may be yours, too. Why should you trust and follow Jesus? What’s different about Him? Why, after 2,000 years, are we still talking about Jesus? Who is Jesus? That’s the focus of this discussion.

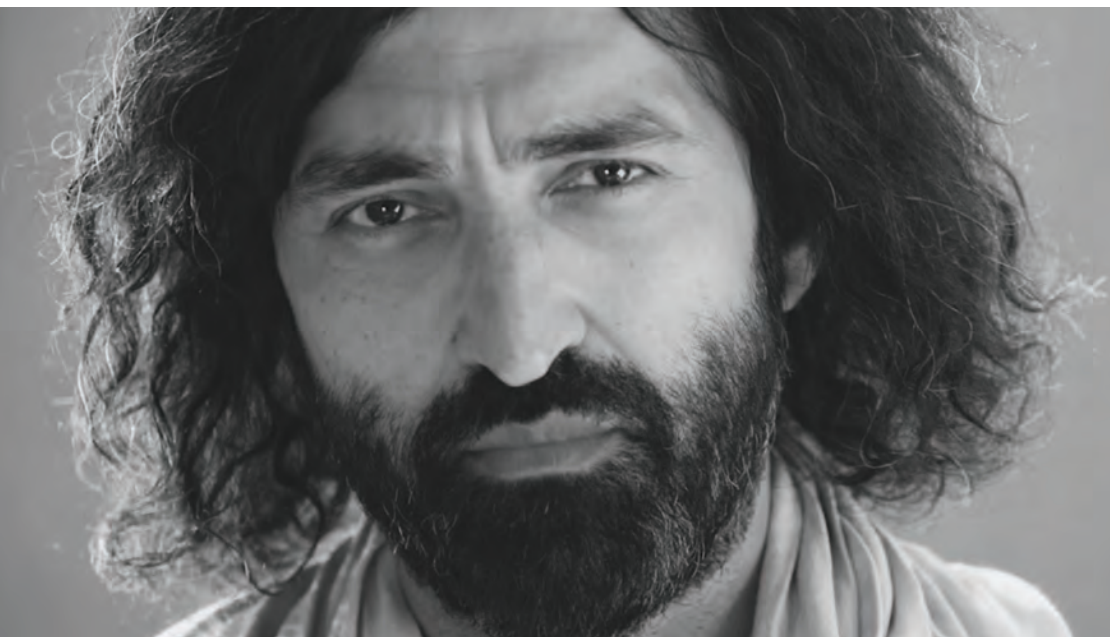


To the teacher:

People today are wondering why they should follow Jesus, especially when other religious leaders seem to offer similar values and virtues. The identity of Jesus is the most critical question in the quest for faith. Prayerfully, gently and thoughtfully guide your students. Examine your own faith. Search

for answers by intently studying the Gospel accounts—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Many Bible-believing scholars have researched the historical reliability of the Gospels. Accurate, appropriate responses for every inquiry are readily available.

Courtesy www.lumoproject.com



To the mentor:

Listen with your heart to your students. That way you'll find what's really troubling them or any doubts they may have. Know what you believe and why you believe it. Don't feel threatened when others present opposing views or disagree with you. Kindly and patiently reason with them using the Gospel accounts, history and relevant answers. The truth has nothing to fear from open and honest investigation.

Unfortunately, many people today view Christianity as a "system" or an "institution" with a mixed, even dark, history. Such misconceptions fuel skepticism in Western societies and hostility in cultures oppressed by so-called Christians. On the other hand, many of the same people respect Jesus and His values. Help seekers to distinguish between that uniquely attractive Person and later systems and institutions that wrongfully claim to represent Him.



The video introduces Jesus by going back long before His birth, to the prophet Isaiah. Is there a New Testament precedent for that approach? Class members may wish to research when

Isaiah was written and the date of the earliest known copy of Isaiah. What do those dates say to us about Isaiah's seemingly "Christian" concepts and ways of speaking?

Courtesy www.lumoproject.com

Watch video at:
www.mathetis.org/q2w3



Discussion Questions

1

What does it mean when we call Jesus “Immanuel”? What does it say about His nature and person? Consider reading John 1:1-3, 14.

The Hebrew name or title “Immanuel” means “God with us.” Scripture first uses this name in Isaiah 7:14, which the New Testament quotes about the child to be born of the virgin Mary (Matthew 1:20-23). The name signifies that the child who was named Jesus represents God in a very special way. As the New Testament unfolds, we learn that the name is literal—this human baby is deity who has come from heaven to

us. The body of Jesus, growing within Mary’s womb, was generated by the Holy Spirit of God. The amazing, stupendous truth was that Jesus was both God and man, two natures in one person. John’s Gospel describes Him as both “God” and “with God”—the source of everything ever created. The wording refutes any idea of Him being a product of creation.

“ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. ”

(John 1:1-3)

He already “was” when creation began. Later, He “became flesh” and joined us in the realm of time and space.

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

This sounds like the strangest science fiction story imaginable. Who can get

their minds around it? For that matter, who can comprehend God Himself? He is one and yet everywhere, overflowing what we perceive as infinity (1 Kings 8:27; Isaiah 45:5-6). We know only what God has chosen to reveal about Himself, and He has chosen Jesus as His ultimate self-revelation.

“ No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, He has made Him known. ”

(John 1:18)

2

Jesus is described by the prophets as being the mighty Lord over all things; but he was born in a manger to a family with no royal significance at the time. What does this say about Jesus’ purpose on earth?

Peter emphasized that Jesus was not just another good man or a prophet. He was and is much, much more. He is the divine-human person. Later, Peter declared that God raised Jesus up from the dead and enthroned Him as “Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:22-36). Christ or Messiah literally means “Anointed One”—the promised Leader of God’s people who reigns “at the right hand of God.” This is the highest position possible, literally having “all authority” (Matthew 28:18).

In Hebrew, “son of” often means that the person shares in the nature of what is named. Believers in Christ are called in the plural “sons of God.” But Jesus is uniquely “the Son of the living God” (cf. John 3:16). Like John 1:1-3, this term reflects Jesus’ divine nature and His connection to the Father. Colossians 2:9 says it this way: “For in Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.”



1) Read Isaiah 53 and make two lists. First, list the characteristics of the Servant described in the passage. Second, list God’s purposes accomplished through the Servant. Then share your two lists with the group.

2) Jesus is called both the “Son of Man” and “Son of God.” Is it possible for Him to be both? Read Daniel 7:13-14 and Matthew 1:18-23, then explain your answer to the group.

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Conclusion

The real question is Jesus. Is He who He claims to be? If so, trust in Him as the way to life, peace, joy and purposeful living. Others may offer some of the same teachings and values that Jesus does, but that is because these ideals are universally true and God has planted them in human hearts (Romans 2:14-15). However, the way of Jesus has all of these truths and

the power for genuine change that aligns our lives with truth. Our faith focuses on the historical, unique God-Man who died but lives forever because God the Father raised Him from the dead. The basis of our faith is a living Lord. That makes all the difference now, on a daily basis and into the eternal future.

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