



CREATION AND THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN HISTORY

#C2 - The Living Word
John 1:1-5, 10-14

PICTURES NEEDED

C2-1 Nativity scene

C2-2 Infinity symbol (eternal)

C2-3 Earth clip art (creator)

C2-4 Water droplet clip art (life)

C2-5 Sun clip art (light)

C2-6 Cross and empty tomb clip art (Savior)

REVIEW (Before Teaching Lesson)

- **Journal Review:** Ask students to share an important truth that they learned from their journal readings at home that week. Share some of your own insights.
- **Previous Lesson Review:** (Use the visual from the last lesson to aid in review)
What are five Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah that Jesus fulfilled?
 1. The Messiah would be from the line of David.
 2. A virgin would give birth to a son.
 3. The Messiah would come from Bethlehem.
 4. The child would be called Mighty God.
 5. The prophet Elijah would prepare the way.
- **The Big Question Review:** What does God's messenger do?
Let the students give their answers to the question.
- **Bible Verse Review:** Isaiah 52:7
God's messenger faithfully shares God's truth.
How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

LESSON CONTENT

(picture C2-1) What is this a picture of? At Christmas, many people set up a nativity (manger scene) as a reminder that Christmas is about Jesus, the Son of God, coming to earth as a baby.

What did Jesus come to do? Jesus came to save us and make a way for us to come back into a right relationship with God, by dying on the cross to take the punishment for all our sin. That is the good news of the Gospel.

The lesson for this week will focus on Jesus as the Living Word of God who became a human being. The first chapter of the Gospel of John explains who Jesus is.

Who was the disciple John? John was a fisherman who was one of the twelve disciples who followed Jesus. He was an eyewitness of the things Jesus did and said. There was another John, called John the Baptist, who prepared the way for Jesus' coming.

As we read verses from the first chapter of the Gospel of John, we will use different symbols to represent who the passage says Jesus is.

John 1:1-2 – *¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning.*

To whom does the Word refer? The Word refers to Jesus.

How do you know the Word refers to Jesus? We know that because it says that the Word was both with God and is God. The beginning was the point in time at which God created the material world. Because Jesus is eternal, he was already in existence at the beginning of creation.

Why is Jesus called the Word? Words reveal our thoughts. Jesus is the Word because he reveals the mind of God. He is the expression of God's thoughts and makes the reality of who God is visible and real to people.

How long has the Word existed? Jesus has always existed since he is God. He was in existence before creation. We use an **infinity symbol** to represent that Jesus is God and is eternal. **(picture C2-2)**

John 1:3 – *³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

What does this verse say Jesus did? He made all things.

Who does that mean Jesus is? Because Jesus is God he is the creator of all things. Nothing would exist without him. The truth that Jesus is the creator means he is the author and ruler over all creation. He is lord over all that exists. He watches over and takes care of what he has made. Because he is our creator, he has both the understanding and the right to tell us how we should live our lives. We belong to him. We use a picture of the **world** to represent that Jesus is the creator and the ruler over all creation. **(picture C2-3)**

John 1:4 – *⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of men.*

What is life? Life is hard to define but easy to describe. Anything that is alive grows and matures. It changes and reproduces itself. People can't make anything come alive. Life is an essence that only God can put into a material being.

What are the two kinds of life? There are two realities to human life: physical and spiritual. Physical life is the life of the body in the created, material world. Spiritual life is the part of life that has no material substance. It is related to man's relationship to God and the eternal aspect of his being.

How is life in Jesus? There is no physical or spiritual life apart from Jesus. He is the source of life itself. Since water is essential for life and every living thing is made up mostly of water we will use a **water droplet** to represent that life is found only in and through Jesus.

(picture C2-4)

What is light? Light is visible energy. It is the absence of darkness. Light enables us both to see and live.

How is Jesus light? The ability to see and understand who God is comes through Jesus and is given to all who seek him. Since stars are the source of physical light in the universe and our sun is a star, we will use the sun to represent Jesus as the light. **(picture C2-5)**

John 1:5 – *⁵The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.*

What does the darkness refer to? People who don't know Jesus and don't have his light in them. Darkness is the world without the light of Jesus.

Why isn't the darkness able to understand the light? People live in darkness because they don't look to God for understanding. They want to live their own way and do their own thing. They don't want to submit to God's authority. They think they can do what's right on their own, they don't think they need a Savior and can't understand who Jesus is.

John 1:10-13 – *¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-- ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.*

What does it mean that the world did not recognize Jesus? People couldn't see him for who he is. They only saw him as a man, not as the Son of God and their Savior.

What does it mean to believe in Jesus? We recognize him for who he is and see our need for his forgiveness. We understand all that he has done for us.

What happens when we believe in Jesus? Through believing in Jesus we come into a relationship with God. We are made right and can enter his eternal kingdom and dwell with him in heaven. We become new creatures, spiritually born children of God.

Why do we need to believe in Jesus? We were originally created in the image of God and have an eternal nature. Sin separates us from God. Christ overcomes our sin and enables us to be reconciled to God. Reconcile means to bring back into right relationship. Jesus is our Savior. If we want to do what we want and remain in our sin, we won't recognize who Jesus is and our need for him.

(picture C2-6) The **cross and the tomb** are the symbols of what Jesus came to do for us and show he is our Savior. What do the cross and tomb symbolize? On the cross he paid the penalty for our sins so that we can be right with God. The tomb was empty because Jesus rose from the dead, demonstrating that he is God and can overcome death.

John 1:14 – *¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

What did the Word become? The word became flesh.

What is flesh? Flesh is the muscle and skin that make up a material being. Since flesh is physical it has a beginning (birth) and an end (death). Flesh is finite; it is not infinite. Flesh is temporal, not eternal.

What does it mean that the Word became flesh? God, the infinite, spiritual and eternal being became a man, a finite, physical and temporal being. The one who created all things became part of his creation.

Why did Jesus do that? Jesus did this so we could gaze upon the glory of God, see into the spiritual realm, understand truth and have a relationship with him.

Because we are physical beings, it is hard for us to understand who God is. It is easier for us to relate to other people. Jesus came as a man to show us the nature of God, testify to the truth and pay the penalty for our sin, so that we might be able to enter God's presence.

What is Jesus full of? Jesus' nature is both grace and truth.

What is grace? Grace is the unmerited favor God shows to us. It consists of his love, mercy and forgiveness.

What is truth? Truth is the reality of what things are and how they work. Truth encompasses everything that is real.

God's truth revealed through the Bible shows us how much we need his grace. Jesus lived out God's truth and demonstrated his grace.

LESSON WRAP-UP

- **Overview Questions:** Review who Jesus is. Show each visual and have the children explain what each says about who Jesus is and what that means for us.
- **Thought Questions:** Why did the Word become flesh? What does the Word becoming flesh reveal about God? Why does God love all people, even those who reject him?
- **Prayer:** Thank Jesus for coming to earth to reveal the fullness of the glory of God and for dying for your sins so you could be reconciled (brought back into a right relationship) with God. Pray that your eyes would be open so that you would fully see the light of Jesus and know him more. Thank God that it is his nature to love and that he desires for all people to come to him through Jesus.
- **The Big Question: Who is Jesus?**
Let the students give their answers to the question. Share the memory verse. Ask how it answers the question.
- **Memory Verse:** John 1:14 Jesus is the Living Word who came to earth to reveal God's glory.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

ACTIVITIES (Completed after the lesson)

Any age appropriate activity can be included which fits into the class time. The activities with a star are included on the class notes.

- ★ **Lesson Notes:** Ask the students to summarize in one sentence what the lesson was about. Then have them give three main points covered in the lesson. An example is below.

Theme: Jesus is God and has always existed.

1. Jesus is the Living Word and speaks from God. He reveals the fullness of God's mind.
2. Jesus became a man and lived among men so they could know God and see his glory.
3. Those who live in darkness can't recognize who Jesus is.

- ★ **Memory Verse:** Read the memory verse on the cover of the class notes and then have the students fill in the blanks in the verse.

- ★ **Activity Page:** Fill in the blanks

Instructions: Unscramble the words that say who Jesus is and then use them to fill in the blanks on the chart.

1-2:eternal, 3:creator, 4a:life, 4-5:light, 10-13:savior

★ **Further Understanding:** Investigation/Reasoning Skills

1. Read the whole passage below to the students as they read along in their Bibles.
2. Read the passage verse by verse and have the students explain each verse.
3. Have the students extract one important truth from the passage. This can be done as an entire class or you can break into pairs or small groups.
4. Have the students answer the additional two questions: How can you apply this truth in your life? What will be the result of applying that truth?

Colossians 1:15-20 – Jesus is the image of the invisible God.

Discussion Questions: How is Christ the image of the invisible God? What does it mean that he is before all things? What does it mean that in him all things hold together? How does the fullness of God dwell in Christ? What does reconcile mean? What did Christ reconcile? How did he reconcile all things?

JOURNAL

The journal is passed out at the end of class for the students to complete at home. It has six readings that answer a digging deeper question. It would be beneficial for the teacher to work through the journal readings also.

Digging Deeper: What happened before Jesus was born?

Reading 1: Luke 1:5-25 – The Promise to Zechariah

Why was Zechariah serving in the temple? What happened to Zechariah when the angel appeared to him? What did the angel say to Zechariah? Why did Zechariah have trouble believing the angel? What happened to him because of his doubt? What happened to Elizabeth? What can you learn from what happened to Zechariah? How does this reading relate to Malachi 4:5?

Reading 2: Luke 1:26-38 – The Angel Appears to Mary

How did Gabriel greet Mary? How did Mary respond? What did Gabriel say would happen to Mary? (What did he say this Son would be like? What was Mary's response to this? How did Gabriel say Mary would conceive? What did Mary say then? What can you learn from Mary? How does this passage relate to Isaiah 7:14?

Reading 3: Luke 1:39-56 – Elizabeth and Mary Meet

What happened when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting? What did Elizabeth say to Mary? What does that show about Elizabeth? What did Mary say about God? What does this show she understood? What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? What showed that Elizabeth and Mary were filled with the Holy Spirit?

Reading 4: Luke 1:57-80 – The Birth of John

What happened when Elizabeth said the baby was to be named John? What did Zechariah do when they asked him? What happened after he wrote that? What did Zechariah say about John? What did he say about the coming Messiah? The name John (derived from the Hebrew) means "God is gracious." What does gracious mean? How does this name apply to John the Baptist and his ministry?

Reading 5: Matthew 1:18-25 – The Response of Joseph

What did Joseph plan to do when he found out Mary was pregnant? What did the angel say to him? What was Joseph's response? What shows you that Joseph was a righteous man? Why would obeying the angel have been difficult for him?

Reading 6: Luke 2:1-7 – The Fulfillment of Prophecy

Why did Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem? Why did Mary have to put the baby in a manger for a bed? How does the reading relate to Micah 5:2? What does the reading reveal about the sovereignty of God? Why do you think God had his Son born in a stable? What kind of Savior or King would most people have been looking for? Why?