

Life of Christ

The Truth Will Make You Free

John 8:31-59

Younger Verse

"If you obey my teaching you are really my disciples." John 8:31 (NirV)

Older Verse

Jesus spoke to the Jews who had believed him. "If you obey my teaching," he said, "you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth. And the truth will set you free." John 8:31-32 (NirV)

Bible Story

The following is a summary of the Bible story to help supplement your preparation. In your personal study time, use this summary as a guide, and make notes to help you remember your plans for the lesson. Please do NOT read to the children.

Have you ever told a lie or done something you should not have? I think all of us have done that before! Have you ever told a lie to cover up the wrong thing you did or to cover up the lie you told? And then, have you tried another lie on top of that? If you have, you know how trapped it can make you feel, like you cannot get free from the lie. Have you also seen that once you begin to tell a lie, it is easier to tell another lie? The way to get free from a lie is to tell the truth. That sounds real simple right now, but when you are trapped in a lie, telling the truth is the hardest thing in the world to do.

Remember, in our lesson from the Bible last week, we learned about Jesus being the Light of the World. As we look at the lesson today, Jesus is still in the same place. Who remembers where He was when He taught the crowd that gathered around Him? He was at the temple, in Jerusalem. Jesus is not only in the same place, but He is talking to the same people. Our story opens up with Jesus speaking to the Jews who had believed what He was saying. Jesus told them, "If you obey my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth. And the truth will set you free."

What is a disciple? Is it someone who just says they know who Jesus is? No! It is someone who believes in and learns from and follows a teacher and who tells others what they have learned. So, what really makes us Jesus' disciples or followers? Our verse tells us. It is to obey Jesus' teaching. Can we know what Jesus taught? Can we study His teaching and know what it says? YES! Then, where do we find it? In the Bible! The Bible is full of information about Jesus, including His teachings. You can read the Bible for yourselves, but you can also study the Bible here, with your friends every week. Studying Jesus' teachings is important, but that is not what makes us His disciples. We must obey what we study! We must do what we know the Bible says to do.

Lesson Goals

Introduce the concept of sin as slavery.
Introduce the devil as God's enemy.
Introduce Jesus as our liberator!

Once we obey what Jesus says, then we will know the truth. We will read later on, in chapter 14, that Jesus is the Truth. So, the more we listen to Jesus' teachings and obey what we hear, the better we get to know Jesus, the Truth! And the more we know Jesus, our verse tells us, we will be set free. When does someone want to be set free? Normally, a person wants to be set free if they are in jail, or if they are a hostage or even many years ago, when some people in the United States were slaves, they wanted to be set free. But what in the world do you and I need to be freed from? You and I need to be freed from . . . S-I-N, sin. The Bible talks about sin as slavery. It says that anyone who practices sin, or who sins over and over again, is a slave to sin, bound like they are in chains and unable to set themselves free. Those who are slaves to sin do not have God as their Father, because God is true. Those who practice sin act just like their "father," the devil. The devil is the father of lies. He is the enemy of God, even though he was created by God, and wants you to remain a slave. He wants you to be under His control. He wants you to keep doing bad things so that he can keep you away from God, who loves you and wants to spend time with you and who sent His One and only Son for you.

God sent Jesus to set us free from sin. Jesus left heaven and came to earth to live a perfect life—a life without sin. Because Jesus was free from sin, He could hang on the cross, carry all of your sin and all of my sin and the sin of everyone in the world, and He could die in my place and in your place. Jesus died in our place to make a way for us to be alright with God, because we cannot be alright with God when we are dirty with sin. And if Jesus, the Son of God, makes us free, we are really and truly free. Free from sin.

Who is your father? Before you answer that, think about the things you do. Does your life show a trail of following the One True God or does it leave a path of lies and bad living? If God is your Father, then you can tell others about Him, but if the devil is your father and if you have been acting like him, you can be free. Do you want to be set free? Do you want to turn from lies to the truth? Pray with me today.

**Memory Verse
Activities**

Make paper chains, to represent bondage and slavery. Before gluing the chains together, write phrases of the verse on each strip of paper.

Prayer Time

Pray for God's help to be obedient. Pray that others will know that we follow Jesus by the way we act and what we do.

Preparing for Next Week

Lesson 22
A Blind Man Sees
John 9:1-41

Preschool Lesson

O-B-E-Y!

Chant: Give me an “O” . . . “O”
Give me a “B” . . . “B”
Give me an “E” . . . “E”
Give me a “Y” . . . “Y”
O - B - E - Y, Every day I must try,
Obeying Jesus, Obeying Jesus!

Teach: (Bring large letters, cut from construction paper, to spell out “O-B-E-Y.” Use these with the lesson, even allowing your preschoolers to trace the large letters with their fingers as you say the letter.)

O-B-E-Y spells obey. What does it mean to obey someone? Do you only have to obey what someone has just told you? For example, if you know that your mom has said “No cookies before dinner!,” but she did not tell you today that you could not have cookies; is it okay to eat a cookie, if you want to, while your mom is preparing dinner? It is NOT okay, because you know that your mom has said no before, and she means no for every day, not just the day she said it! Sometimes we may understand the rules, like the rule about the cookies. We know that if we eat a cookie, or anything, before dinner we will fill up on something that is not very good for us and we will not want to eat the healthy food our mom is preparing! But there are times when we may not understand the rules.

Obedience is like that with God, too. We read many things in the Bible. There are rules that tell us things to do. There are also rules that tell us what not to do. God’s rules are for our protection, whether we understand them or not. Do you know what? We don’t have to understand a rule to obey it! Our moms, but especially God, know things that we do not. They understand what might happen to us if we do something, and so, they give us a rule that says “NO!” But they also know the kinds of things we should do all the time to make us better. What kinds of things do you know God says “No” to? (lying, stealing, saying unkind words . . .) And what kinds of things does God want us to do all the time? (obeying our parents, helping others, being kind to our brothers and sisters, . . .)

Jesus even told us that it is the people who obey Him that are His followers! Do you obey Jesus or do you do what you want to, thinking God cannot see you? Well, God sees everything you do and everywhere you go and it makes Him sad when you disobey. Will you make God happy today? What do you know He wants you to do, or not do? How can you make God happy today?

Pray: Thank you, God, for your rules which keep me safe. Help me to obey you.

Activities

- Provide coloring pages and word puzzles that will enhance what you have taught today.
- Give a True/False quiz from today's lesson.
- Sing some of the following songs. "Nothing But the Blood of Jesus," "I'm So Glad, Jesus Set Me Free," "Romans 16:19," "A Little Square Box" and "I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy," with the verses "If the devil doesn't like it, he can sit on a tack" and "If the devil doesn't like it, he can swallow a bomb."
- This would be a good time to talk about the Bible in detail. The Bible is made up of 66 books. It has two parts; the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament has 39 books; the New Testament has 27. It is subdivided into parts; Law, History, Poetry, Major Prophets, Minor Prophets, Gospels, History, Letters and Prophecy. There are many games available to practice the books of the Bible. Choose the one that is best for your students.
- Play "Books of the Bible Volleyball." Divide students into two groups. Have the groups sit opposite each other as well as facing each other. As students volley the ball back and forth, each one has to say a book of the Bible; beginning with Genesis and in order.
- Talk about temptation. Be sure that your students realize that being tempted is not sinful, even Jesus was tempted, but giving in to temptation is sinful. Present them with hypothetical situations and give them the opportunity to explain how they can be obedient.
- Have a sword drill and practice finding the truths of God's Word.