Teacher Notecards Level 3, Quarter A—Follow the King

Use these Teacher Notecards as a reference when teaching *Explore Scripture*. Choose the outline form or narrative form based on your teaching style and preference.*

Print on paper or cardstock. Fold in half, then fold again along the gray line. This will create a two-sided, notecard-sized piece for you to hold in your hand.

*The narrative form has been edited to fit on these cards. Please see the full *Explore Scripture* sections of each lesson for more interactivity, application, and content.

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Big Idea: **Jesus is the most important Person ever!**

Luke 1:1-38; John 1:1-14 [outline form]

Intro: *Who is Jesus and what makes Him important?* (picture 3A.1)
Ask: *How might our world be different if Jesus had never been born?*

1. Gabriel (an angel) startled Mary with an important announcement. She would bear a son, Jesus, who would be both human and God (divine) (picture 3A.2).

- *Human—Jesus would be born of Mary, a woman* . . . . . *Luke 1:31*
- *Human—David is one of Jesus' ancestors* *1:32*
- *God—Jesus would be the Son of the Most High* *1:32*
- *God—Jesus' kingdom will never end* *1:33*

2. Many ancient Bible prophecies announced Jesus' coming. Only God could cause all these prophecies to be fulfilled.

- *David's kingdom (via Jesus) will endure forever* . . . . . *1 Samuel 7:15-16*
- *The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem* . . . . . *Micah 5:2*
- *A virgin will bear a son named "God With Us."* . . . . . *Isaiah 7:14*

3. John's Gospel opens with a poetic prologue affirming that Jesus is 100% God and 100% human.

- *100% God—Jesus existed in the beginning and is God* . . . . . *John 1:1-2*
- *100% God—Jesus created the world* *1:10*
- *100% human—Jesus became "crude" flesh* *1:14*
- *100% human—Jesus lived among people who knew Him well* *1:14*

Conclusion: *Consider who Jesus is, and what God did to send His Son. Respond in amazement, humility, and praise!*

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Level 3A—Follow the King *Lesson 1: Who Is Jesus?*

Big Idea: **Jesus is the most important Person ever!**

Luke 1:1-38; John 1:1-14 [narrative form]

Intro: *Who is Jesus and what makes Him important?* (picture 3A.1)
Ask: *How might our world be different if Jesus had never been born?*

Read Luke 1:26-38 aloud and show picture 3A.2. *How does this proclamation show that Jesus would be more than an ordinary man?* (Announced by an angel, born of a virgin, called Son of the Most High, etc.) In verse 32 Gabriel calls Jesus "Son of the Most High." *Who is that?* Encourage responses. Yet the angel also calls David the baby's father. *Who was David?* (Famous king of Israel.)

What promises had God made to David about his kingdom? Read 2 Samuel 7:15-16. *Why is it important that Jesus was related to King David?* God's promises to David were given almost 1000 years before Christ's birth. Other prophets predicted that the promised Messiah-King would be born in Bethlehem (read Micah 5:2) and be born of a virgin (read Isaiah 7:14). *Could even these three prophecies come true by chance? Who caused them to be fulfilled?* Encourage responses. *How does this make Jesus different from any other person ever born?*

Emphasize the fact that Jesus was both God and human. *Why did Jesus have to become human?* (To fulfill God's plan; to show us who God is.) This makes Jesus the most important Person ever! Read John 1:1-14. *How much is 100%?* Talk about what kids know about percentages. Explain that only Jesus could be fully God and fully human.

God did a most amazing thing when He sent His Son to earth. As a human being, Jesus was truly able to understand people. As a divine being, Jesus was able to pay for our sins through His death. No one else who ever lived is like Jesus–fully human, and fully God.

Conclusion: *Consider who Jesus is, and what God did to send His Son. Respond in amazement, humility, and praise!*

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Big Idea: **God sent Jesus and John to fulfill His wonderful plan for the world.**

Luke 1:39—2:7 [outline form]

Intro: *God used Jesus and John in unique ways to accomplish His plan for the world.*
Ask: *How were the births of two special babies—John and Jesus—celebrated?*

1. Both Elizabeth and John (the baby in her womb) rejoiced when they heard the greeting of Mary, the mother of the Messiah.

- *John jumped for joy in his mother's womb* . . . . . *Luke 1:44*
- *Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit* *1:41*
- *Mary's song of praise* *1:46-56*

2. After John was born and named, Zechariah regained his speech and prophesied of John's role in God's plan (picture 3A.3).

- *His parents named him John, just like the angel told them* *1:59-63*
- *John will be a prophet* *1:76*
- *John will prepare the way of the Lord* *1:76*

3. Jesus was born.

- *Mary gave birth to Jesus in Bethlehem* (picture 3A.4) *2:4-7*
- *Jesus is Lord* *1:43*
- *Jesus will bring salvation* *1:69*
- *Jesus forgives our sins* *1:77*

Conclusion: *Both Jesus and John are special babies who God used to fulfill His plan. Rejoice that God has a special purpose for every baby.*

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Level 3A—Follow the King *Lesson 2: Miracle Babies*

Big Idea: **God sent Jesus and John to fulfill His wonderful plan for the world.**

Luke 1:39—2:7 [narrative form]

Intro: *God used Jesus and John in unique ways to accomplish His plan for the world.*
Ask: *How were the births of two special babies—John and Jesus—celebrated?*

Before class, prepare paper strips with the following sentences written on them. Include one sentence on each strip:

My mother visited her cousin for three months—I jumped in my mother's womb when the Messiah's mother came to visit—My mom sang a song of praise to God when she found out I was going to be born—I was almost named after my father. But Mom and Dad gave me the name that the angel told them to give me—My mom was pretty old when she gave birth to me—My father sang a song of praise to God after I was born—When I grow up I will help prepare people for Jesus—When I grow up I will save people from their sins—My father is Zechariah—My Father is God.

Today we are going to learn about the births of John the Baptist and Jesus. Both of these babies were miracles! God was beginning an important new chapter in the future of the world when they were born.

Read Luke 1:39-80 aloud and have your children follow along in their Bibles (pictures 3A.3 and 3A.4). Discuss Mary and Elizabeth and the babies they were expecting.

Now, read Luke 2:1-7. Just six months after John was born, Jesus was born. Set up two dolls representing Jesus and John in front of the class. Take out the strips of paper you prepared ahead of time and allow children to place the sentences that tell about Jesus on or near the baby labeled "Jesus." Place the sentences that tell about John on or near the baby labeled "John." If necessary, review the passages with the children. Emphasize the similarities and differences between these two babies. Be sure to emphasize that Jesus was unique in that He was fully God and fully Man. Although John was special, he was only a man.

God helped these special babies grow up and do amazing things! Jesus and John were born to fulfill God's wonderful plan for the world. Although only Jesus can save the world from sin, you have a very special role to play in God's plan too. He made each baby unique and special on purpose, and we can be happy that He made us just the way we are.

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Big Idea: **As a boy, Jesus honored God and grew wise and strong.**

Luke 2:21-52 [outline form]

Intro: *As Jesus grew up He became wise and honored God and His parents.*
Ask: *How was Jesus obedient to His parents?*

1. Joseph and Mary took the baby Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem. When Simeon and Anna saw Jesus, they praised God for sending the Savior.

- *Simeon and Anna were faithful servants of God* . . . . . *Luke 2:25, 37*
- *The Holy Spirit revealed to Simeon that Jesus is the Messiah* (picture 3A.5) . *2:26-27*
- *Anna shared how Jesus will bring redemption* *2:36-38*

2. When Jesus was twelve, his parents took him to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover Feast.

- *After the Passover, Jesus stayed in Jerusalem* *2:43*
- *Jesus talked with the teachers in the Temple* (picture 3A.6) *2:46*
- *The teachers were amazed at Jesus' understanding* *2:47*
- *Jesus' parents were worried and found Him after three days* *2:48*

3. Jesus grew up. Even as a young boy, Jesus obeyed God, as well as His parents.

- *Jesus obeyed His Heavenly Father* *2:49*
- *Jesus obeyed Mary and Joseph* *2:51*
- *Jesus grew in wisdom and stature* *2:52*
- *Jesus grew in favor with God and people* *2:52*

Conclusion: *Jesus is our example. We can live like Him by seeking wisdom and honoring God and our parents.*

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Level 3A—Follow the King *Lesson 3: And Jesus Grew*

Big Idea: **As a boy, Jesus honored God and grew wise and strong.**

Luke 2:21-52 [narrative form]

Intro: *As Jesus grew up He became wise and honored God and His parents.*
Ask: *How was Jesus obedient to His parents?*

Today we are going to learn about two times Jesus visited the Temple in Jerusalem. The first time He was a baby, and the second time He had grown up to be a big kid.

Read the story of Jesus as a baby in the Temple (Luke 2:21-39), and have children follow along in their Bibles. Explain that an Old Testament commandment from God required the parents to bring an offering after a baby was born. Mary and Joseph were obeying God's laws. In Jerusalem they met two faithful servants of God, Simeon and Anna. *How did Simeon know that this baby was God's promised Messiah?* (Verses 26-27—God revealed it to him (picture 3A.5).)

Now read verses 40-52. *Why had Mary and Joseph taken Jesus to Jerusalem?* (Verse 41—To celebrate the Passover Feast.) Explain that a boy would first participate in the Passover Feast at around twelve years of age. This was probably Jesus' first trip to the Temple in Jerusalem for the Passover.

1

Why didn't Mary and Joseph realize that Jesus was missing right away? (Verse 44—They thought He was going home with friends or relatives.)

How long did it take to find Him? (Verse 46—three days.) *How do you think His parents must have felt?*

Where was Jesus for those three days, and what was He doing? (Verse 46—He was in the Temple talking with the teachers (picture 3A.6).) *Why did Jesus have this amazing knowledge when He was only twelve years old?* (He was the Son of God.)

What did Jesus mean by "My Father's House?" (God was Jesus' Father, and the Temple was God's House.)

What did Jesus do after Mary and Joseph came for Him? (Verse 51—He obeyed them and went home with them.) Emphasize the fact that although God was His real Father, Jesus lived with and obeyed Mary and Joseph, His earthly parents.

Even as a little child, Jesus gave us a good example of how to live, didn't He? I know that with God's help, I will see all of you grow up so much this year. It will be exciting to see all the ways we can become more and more like Jesus.

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Big Idea: **John shows that repentance and baptism prepare people to serve God.**

Luke 3; John 1:19-34 [outline form]

Intro: *John prepared the way for the Lord by calling people to repent of their sins and be baptized.*

Ask: *Jesus is the Lamb of God. What do you think this means?*

1. John preached a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

- *John told people to repent and be baptized* (picture 3A.7) . . . . . *Luke 3:3*
- *Baptism and repentance prepare people to serve God* *3:8-14*
- *John baptized people with water* *3:16*
- *Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire* *3:16*

2. Jesus is our example.

- *John baptized Jesus* (picture 3A.8) *3:21*
- *The Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of a dove* *3:22*
- *After baptism, Jesus began His ministry* *3:23*

3. Jesus is the Messiah.

- *John freely said he was not the Christ* . . . . . *John 1:20*
- *John announced Jesus as the Lamb of God* *1:29*
- *The Lamb of God takes away the sin of the world* *1:29*
- *John testified that Jesus is the Son of God* *1:34*

Conclusion: *John taught that repentance, baptism and the Holy Spirit are important in preparing us to serve God. How prepared are* you *to serve Him?*

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Level 3A—Follow the King *Lesson 4: Prepare the Way*

Big Idea: **John shows that repentance and baptism prepare people to serve God.**

Luke 3; John 1:19-34 [narrative form]

Intro: *John prepared people for the Lord by calling them to repent of their sins and be baptized.*

Ask: *Jesus is the Lamb of God. What do you think this means?*

Today we are going to learn what it means to be prepared. John the Baptist spent many years living in the desert preparing himself and the people around him for the coming of Jesus.

Invite a guest speaker to dress up as John the Baptist. Have your guest present a dramatic, first-person account of the events of the above passages. Ask this person to be prepared to answer questions about baptism according to your church traditions. Encourage your special guest to include the following events:

- Isaiah the prophet told about me long ago. He called me "the voice of one calling in the desert" (John 1:23).
- I preached that people should be baptized to show they had turned away from their sins and had turned to God (picture 3A.7) (Luke 3:1-3).
- I warned the crowds not to be baptized for the wrong reasons (Luke 3:7-14).

- I told everyone that I was not the Messiah (Luke 3:15-20 and John 1:19-27).
- When I saw Jesus, I said, "Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).
- I baptized Jesus (picture 3A.8). The Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove. God announced His favor for His Son. Jesus was ready to begin His ministry (Luke 3:21-23).

Why did the Lamb of God need to take away the sins of the world? Ask your students to consider why sin is such an important issue to God. *Why does He care? Why doesn't He simply overlook some of the small things people do?*

Discuss the holiness and perfection of God. When you repent, you turn from sin, toward God. You show you are prepared for God and He is truly welcome in your lives. God, then, shows you His love and forgiveness. It's the beginning of a great relationship.

Jesus and John both showed us that repentance and baptism prepare people to serve God. Make sure you are ready when you decide to serve God. It is the best choice you can make!

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Big Idea: **Jesus helps His followers resist Satan's temptations to sin.**

Luke 4:1-13 [outline form]

Intro: *Jesus is our example of how to resist the devil when he tempts us.*
Ask: *How did Jesus use Scripture to overcome temptation?*

1. Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness for forty days.

- *The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness* (picture 3A.9) . . . . . *Luke 4:1*
- *Satan tempted Jesus to look to food as the source of life* *4:2-4*
- *Satan wanted Jesus' worship and tempted Him with power and glory* . . . *4:5-8*
- *The devil wanted Jesus to test God, His Father* *4:9-12*

2. Jesus overcame temptation (picture 3A.10), and He is our example of how to respond to temptation.

- *Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit* *4:1*
- *Jesus quoted Scripture* *4:4-12*
- *Memorizing God's Word is important*

3. Temptation does not equal sin (Hebrews 4:14-16). We sin when we give in to temptation.

- *Jesus was tempted in every way, but He did not sin* . . . . . *Hebrews 4:15*
- *Jesus helps us when we are tempted* *4:16*

Conclusion: *Like Jesus, let's walk in the Spirit and memorize God's Word. Jesus will help us when we are tempted.*

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Level 3A—Follow the King Lesson 5: *It Is Written*

Big Idea: **Jesus helps His followers resist Satan's temptations to sin.**

Luke 4:1-13 [narrative form]

Intro: *Jesus is our example of how to resist the devil when he tempts us.*
Ask: *How did Jesus use Scripture to overcome temptation?*

Did you know Jesus used a sword to fight off Satan? Jesus fought Satan in the desert, and the sword He used was His Father's Word. Read the account of Jesus' temptation as students follow along in their own Bibles (picture 3A.9).

Remind the children as you read that Satan knows us and customizes his temptations to fit us. Jesus was hungry, so of course He was tempted by food. He was the King, and it was important that He remain under God's authority. Even as God's Son, Jesus was not to put His Father to the test (picture 3A.10). Consider these and other questions:

Why did Satan want Jesus to sin?

What would have happened if Jesus had followed Satan?

Why was Jesus able to overcome the temptations?

Let children give their own ideas as answers, but be sure that they understand that Jesus did not sin because He is God, and He is perfect. If Jesus had sinned Himself, He would not have been able to take the punishment for our sins.

Each time that Satan tempted Jesus, Jesus responded by quoting Scripture. His response in verse 4 is from Deuteronomy 8:3, verse 8 is from Deuteronomy 6:13, and verse 12 is from Deuteronomy 6:16. After Satan was finished, he left Jesus for the time being (verse 13). However, he would continue to bother Jesus throughout His ministry in the form of demon-possessed people, and all the way to Gethsemane tempting Jesus not to make the sacrifice on the cross.

Explain to your children that temptation does not equal sin. When we give in to temptation we sin, but being tempted is not a sin. Emphasize the importance of studying the Bible and memorizing verses so that they can follow Jesus' example and fight off Satan when he tempts them.

Jesus gave us a very clear example of how to respond to temptation. Many Bible verses will help us resist temptation. We can always turn to Jesus in prayer to help, too. The more you turn to Jesus and His Word, the easier it becomes to resist temptations to sin.

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Big Idea: **Jesus invites everyone to follow Him.**

John 1:35—2:25 [outline form]

Intro: *Jesus showed He was God by His miracles and many believed in Him.*
Ask: *What does it mean to be a disciple?*

1. Just as Jesus called His 12 disciples, Jesus invites us to follow Him and to be His disciples (picture 3A.11).

- *A disciple leaves everything to follow Jesus* . . . . . *John 1:37*
- *A disciple brings family and friends to Jesus* *1:41-42*
- *A disciple recognizes who Jesus is:*
  - *Christ, the Messiah* *1:41*
  - *The Son of God* *1:49*
  - *The King of Israel* *1:49*

2. Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding celebration in Cana. It was a joyous and exciting time to be a follower of Jesus.

- *Mary, Jesus' mother, believed He was God* *2:3-5*
- *Jesus' first miracle revealed His glory* *2:11*
- *The disciples put their faith in Jesus* *2:11*

3. Jesus was passionate for His Father's house and the worship God deserves. When Jesus cleared out the Temple, it was probably a tense time for Jesus' disciples.

- *Greedy money-makers had turned God's Temple into a market* *2:14*
- *Jesus drove the merchants and animals out of the Temple* (picture 3A.12) . *2:15*
- *Jesus prophesied of His resurrection* *2:18-22*
- *People saw Jesus' miracles and many believed in Him* *2:23*

Conclusion: *Jesus' miracles and actions show His power and authority are from God. Like the disciples, we can put our faith in Jesus and follow Him.*

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Level 3A—Follow the King Lesson 6: Follow Me

Big Idea: **Jesus invites everyone to follow Him.**

John 1:35—2:25 [narrative form]

Intro: *Jesus showed He was God by His miracles and many believed in Him.*
Ask: *What does it mean to be a disciple?*

Choosing the right friends is important, don't you think? You want friends who will stand beside you in good times and in bad times. Today we will see Jesus choose His disciples. Just like you would, Jesus wanted friends who would stand with Him. These men would be very important to God's plan for the whole world.

Read John 1:40-49 aloud while your children follow along (picture 3A.11). Emphasize the willingness of these men to leave everything to follow Jesus. What's the first thing Andrew did? What's the first thing Philip did? Encourage responses. Based on that, what's one thing disciples do? Disciples tell their family and friends what they have seen and heard. Jesus invites everyone to follow Him.

Next, read the account of Jesus' first miracle, turning water into wine (John 2:1-11). Jesus changed something ordinary (water) into something special (wine).

Changing water into wine was not hard for Jesus because He is God. *But what other ordinary thing did Jesus really come to earth to change into something special?* (Our lives.) *How did Jesus' disciples respond to Jesus' first miracle?* (Verse 11.) They put their faith in Jesus.

Following Jesus was fun and exciting, but sometimes it could be a little scary. Let's look at what happened next. Read John 2:13-16 (picture 3A.12). Why did Jesus do that? Explain how the Temple had become a place where people made money off of the ones who came to worship. Also explain that while the disciples might have approved of what Jesus did, they still would have been afraid of getting in trouble with the authorities.

Have any of you ever been to a wedding? Weddings are fun times. *On the other hand, can you think of a time when you watched someone else get in trouble? How did you feel?* I'm sure the disciples felt those same things when they saw Jesus clearing the Temple.

"Following Jesus first" means responding to His call like His disciples did. You should rely on Jesus in the good times like they did at the wedding, and in harder times like in the Temple. You will still have good and hard times as a follower of Jesus, but how wonderful it is to know He will always be leading you.

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Big Idea: **Jesus gives new life to everyone who believes in Him.**

John 3 [outline form]

Intro: *The Holy Spirit gives us new life when we believe in Jesus Christ.*
Ask: *What does it mean to be born again?*

1. When Nicodemus, a Pharisee, visited Jesus at night, Jesus told him he must be born again (picture 3A.13).

- *To be born again means being born of the Spirit* . . . . . *John 3:5*
- *Everyone who is born again receives eternal life* *3:16*
- *God sent Jesus to save the world* *3:16-17*
- *Salvation is found only in the name of Jesus Christ* *3:18*

2. In the time of Moses, many Israelites complained against the Lord and were bitten by deadly snakes, but God provided a way for them to live.

- *Moses lifted up a bronze snake onto a pole* . . . . . *Numbers 21:9*
- *Jesus also would be lifted up—onto the cross* . . . . . *John 3:14*
- *Every Israelite who looked up to the bronze snake lived* . . . . . *Numbers 21:9*
- *Everyone who looks to Jesus' work on the cross will live eternally* . . . *John 3:15*

3. Some people thought John would be upset that his disciples were leaving him to follow Jesus, but John himself followed and believed in Jesus (picture 3A.14).

- *John knew his purpose was to prepare people for the Messiah* *3:27-28*
- *John declared it his joy to serve Jesus* *3:29-30*
- *John echoed Jesus' words to Nicodemus—everyone who believes in the Son of God has eternal life* *3:31-36*

Conclusion: *The only way to have eternal life is through God's Son Jesus Christ. Is it time for you to take the important step of believing in Jesus?*

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Level 3A—Follow the King Lesson 7: Born of the Spirit

Big Idea: **Jesus gives new life to everyone who believes in Him.**

John 3 [narrative form]

Intro: *The Holy Spirit gives us new life when we believe in Jesus Christ.*
Ask: *What does it mean to be born again?*

Open your Bibles to John 3:1-36. Remember that the concept of being born again may be very difficult for children to grasp. Your students are still mostly concrete thinkers, and this is an abstract concept. Your children may be much like Nicodemus in their understanding of being born again.

Read John 3:1-15 as your children follow along in their Bibles (picture 3A.13). Ask the children, *Why did Nicodemus come to Jesus at night?* (Jesus was in disfavor with the Pharisees and Nicodemus was afraid to be seen with Him.) Let's see what this passage says about being born again. Read, or have a child read, verses 3-9. *Can you tell me what it says about being born? Being born again?*

When you read verses 14-15, explain to the children that many years before, when God's people wandered through the desert, they began to complain against Him. He sent poisonous snakes that bit some of them. Many Israelites died. God told

Moses to make a bronze snake and to place it on a tall pole. Any Israelite who had been bitten could look at the bronze snake to be healed (Numbers 21:4-9). In the same way, Jesus would be lifted up on a pole (cross) when He was crucified. All who looked to Him for forgiveness would receive eternal life.

Read John 3:16-21. *Why did God send His Son into the world?* (verse 17) *What happens to people who believe Jesus is the Son of God?* (verse 18) *What happens to people who don't believe?*

Did Nicodemus believe? Turn to John 7:50-52 and John 19:39 for possible clues. *Did Nicodemus get his questions answered? What were the answers? What do you think about being born again?* When you ask Jesus to forgive your sins and receive His gift of eternal life—this is your spiritual birthday!

Focus on the second part of the passage, verses 22-36 (picture 3A.14). People came to John the Baptist and expected him to be upset that someone was "stealing" his disciples. *How did John respond to this news?* Look at verse 30 and 36. Point out that John the Baptist was humble and wise, and he understood his own purpose. John even repeated Jesus' words—that whoever believes in Jesus has eternal life! Maybe it is time for some of you to take this important step.

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Big Idea: **Jesus loves people—regardless of their ethnic or social background.**

John 4 [outline form]

Intro: *All people thirst for living water—the new life found only in Jesus Christ.*
Ask: *How can we tell people who are different from us about Jesus?*

1. Jesus, a Jewish man and religious leader, ignored ethnic, social, and cultural barriers in order to offer God's gift of eternal life.

- *Jesus crossed an ethnic barrier by speaking to a Samaritan* . . . . . *John 4:9*
- *Jesus crossed a social barrier by speaking to an adulteress* *4:18*
- *Jesus crossed a cultural barrier by speaking to a woman* *4:27*

2. Jesus offered the Samaritan woman living water which would satisfy her thirst and become a fountain springing up to eternal life (picture 3A.15).

- *Living water is the gift of God through Jesus Christ* *4:10*
- *God desires us to worship Him in spirit and in truth* *4:24*
- *Jesus told the woman He is the Messiah* *4:26*
- *The Samaritans believed in Jesus as the Savior of the world* *4:42*

3. A royal official had a son who was sick and dying in another city. He came to Jesus and begged Him to come and heal his son.

- *The official believed Jesus' word that his son would live* (picture 3A.16) . *4:50*
- *The next day, news came that the official's son was better* *4:51*
- *The official realized his son recovered at the exact time Jesus spoke* *4:52-53*
- *The official and all his household believed in Jesus* *4:53*

Conclusion: *Jesus loves all people. We can follow Jesus' example by crossing our own cultural and social barriers to share the message of new life in Jesus Christ.*

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Level 3A—Follow the King Lesson 8: Living Water

Big Idea: **Jesus loves people—regardless of their ethnic or social background.**

John 4 [narrative form]

Intro: *All people thirst for living water—the new life found only in Jesus Christ.*
Ask: *How can we tell people who are different from us about Jesus?*

Everybody gets thirsty, right? No matter who we are—rich, poor, black, white, old, young—we all get thirsty. Let's look at this passage about thirst. Open your Bibles and read John 4:1-42 as your children follow along (picture 3A.15).

As you discuss the Samaritan woman, point out that Jews did not like Samaritans because they offended their beliefs. *How did Jesus show He was different?* Men and women also did not normally speak with each other in public. *How did Jesus show He was different?*

The woman was a seeker. She knew about God. She wanted more. She was waiting for the Messiah. Jesus knew this woman had a heart that needed Him, just like every other person He met. He explained to her about living water and worshiping in spirit and truth. The Samaritan woman was very glad to learn the truth. Out of her joy, she ran to tell the people in her village about Jesus.

Read John 4:43-54 (picture 3A.16). The royal official was possibly of a non-Jewish background, also. *Did this stop Jesus from helping him? Did this stop the man from having faith in Jesus?* Remind your children that Jesus had never met this man or his son. Only because Jesus was divine would He have known the boy was sick and would have been able to heal him.

The Samaritan woman and the royal official were very different from one another. She was a woman and he was a man. She was poor; he was well off. She was an outcast of society; he was a respected member of his community. She was a Samaritan; he was probably a Gentile. But they both needed Jesus, and He showed love to them both. Because He reached out to both of them, many others also came to believe in Jesus.

Who in your world is different from you who doesn't know Jesus? Is there someone in your neighborhood, in your class, on your sports team who needs Jesus? Think of one name. Now think of one thing you could do to begin to reach out to that person. Jesus loves people—regardless of their ethnic or social background.

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Big Idea: **Jesus welcomes everyone who is ready to believe the truth.**

Luke 4:14-44 [outline form]

Intro: *Jesus has power to free and heal all people. He invites everyone into His kingdom.*
Ask: *What do you think "the kingdom of God" means?*

1. Jesus preached in Nazareth, His home town, but the people rejected Him (picture 3A.17).

- *Jesus proclaimed the year of the Lord's favor* . . . . . *Luke 4:17-22*
- *God's blessings are for people in every nation* *4:23-27*
- *The people of Nazareth became upset and tried to kill Jesus* *4:28-29*
- *Jesus miraculously escaped* *4:30*

2. Jesus cast out a demon, and the people of Capernaum responded with amazement (picture 3A.18).

- *Jesus set a man free from demonic oppression* *4:33-35*
- *Jesus showed His power and authority over evil spirits* *4:36*
- *The people of Capernaum were amazed and told others about Jesus* . . . *4:36-37*

3. Jesus healed many people and preached the news of the kingdom all over Judea.

- *Jesus rebuked a fever and healed Simon's mother-in-law* *4:38-39*
- *Many people came to Jesus to be healed* *4:40*
- *Demons were silent and fled at the authority of Jesus* *4:41*
- *Jesus traveled all Judea—the news of God's kingdom is for everyone* . . . *4:42-44*

Conclusion: *Let's respond like the people of Capernaum and come to Jesus with all our needs. He is the loving King with power and willingness to give healing and freedom to us—His people.*

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Level 3A—Follow the King *Lesson 9: A Split Decision*

Big Idea: **Jesus welcomes everyone who is ready to believe the truth.**

Luke 4:14-44 [narrative form]

Intro: *Jesus has power to free and heal all people. He invites everyone into His kingdom.*
Ask: *What do you think "the kingdom of God" means?*

Does anyone remember where Jesus grew up? Yes, Nazareth. That was Jesus' hometown. As we've seen on the maps in our lessons, Jesus started His ministry by traveling to other places. After He was well known, He returned to Nazareth.

Read verses 14-22 while children follow along. At first, the people in Nazareth enjoyed having Jesus there. Let's look at verse 22. As Jesus was teaching, they were saying things like, "He's turned out to be such a good teacher! Listen to those gracious words! Can you believe this is the son of Joseph the carpenter?"

But now the trouble begins. Jesus said some things His hometown people didn't like. Read verses 23-27. Jesus knew that they would want Him to heal people there, and He told the story of two prophets from the Old Testament who didn't do what the Jews wanted them to do but went to the Gentiles instead. This made the people very angry because they hated the Gentiles. Remember the Samaritan woman? Let's see what happened next. Read verses 28-30 (picture 3A.17).

This was a terrible way to treat Jesus. They tried to kill Him! *How did Jesus get away safely?* Read verse 30. *How could He do that?* Remind the children that Jesus was fully God and fully human. *As a human, how do you think Jesus felt when this happened?* (Very sad and rejected.) *How did Jesus respond when He was rejected?* Let's see what Jesus did next. Read verses 31-44 (picture 3A.18). Jesus went to Capernaum where His teaching was well received. The people believed in Him. Here Jesus performed healings and cast out demons. The people recognized His authority and power over the sick and the demon-possessed.

How do you feel when you have been rejected? Jesus' response to rejection set a great example for us. You see, Jesus didn't let rejection distract Him from what He came to do. He knew His Father loved Him and had a purpose for Him, so He went on His way. He took some time to be alone in prayer. Jesus continued His important work of teaching, healing, and preaching.

Everyone responds to Jesus differently, but Jesus welcomes everyone who is ready to believe the truth. We should respond like the people in Capernaum and not like the people in Nazareth. Accept Jesus as God's Son and believe what He tells you in His Word.

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Big Idea: **Jesus heals peoples' bodies and souls.**

Luke 5; 6:12-16 [outline form]

Intro: *Jesus is our healer, forgiver, and friend. He invites us to follow Him.*
Ask: *What does it mean to "leave everything" to follow Jesus?*

1. The disciples left everything to follow Jesus. Jesus sought God's wisdom in choosing the 12 disciples.

- *Simon (Peter), Andrew, James and John left their boats on the shore and followed Jesus* . . . . . *Luke 5:11*
- *Levi (Matthew) left everything to follow Jesus* *5:27-28*
- *Jesus spent all night praying to God* *6:12*
- *Jesus chose 12 disciples to be apostles* (picture 3A.20) *6:13-16*

2. Jesus healed a man with leprosy.

- *The leper believed Jesus was able to heal him* *5:12*
- *Jesus was willing and healed the leper immediately* *5:13*
- *Jesus sent the leper to testify to the priests* *5:14*
- *One of Jesus' priorities was frequent prayer with His Father* *5:16*

3. Jesus heals the body and soul of a paralyzed man.

- *The friends of the paralytic had faith in Jesus* *5:18-20*
- *Jesus shows He is God by forgiving sins* (picture 3A.19) *5:20-24*
- *Jesus also physically healed the paralytic; he rose up and walked* *5:25*
- *Everyone was amazed and praised God* *5:26*

Conclusion: *Jesus calls us to leave everything and follow Him. In Jesus, we find everything we need—including healing for our bodies and souls.*

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Level 3A—Follow the King *Lesson 10: Healer, Forgiver, and Friend*

Big Idea: **Jesus heals peoples' bodies and souls.**

Luke 5; 6:12-16 [narrative form]

Intro: *Jesus is our healer, forgiver, and friend. He invites us to follow Him.*
Ask: *What does it mean to "leave everything" to follow Jesus?*
Today let's watch Jesus at work. Let's look at Luke 5:1-11. In your own words, tell the story of Jesus borrowing Peter and Andrew's boat so he could speak to the crowds. When Jesus finished speaking, He told Peter and Andrew to try to catch some fish. *What did Peter say when Jesus told him to go fishing?* (Verse 5.) *What happened when Peter started fishing again? Then what did Peter say and do?*

Read Luke 5:12-13. Now picture Jesus and His first disciples walking from town to town. They came to a town, and along came a man who had leprosy. *Does anyone know what leprosy is? How do you think you would feel if everywhere you went you had to yell out, "Unclean! Unclean!" so people would stay away from you?*

Go on to the story of the paralytic (Luke 5:17-26) (picture 3A.19). Discuss the importance of what the man's friends did by bringing him to Jesus. *How can we introduce our friends to Jesus?* Invite responses. *When the paralyzed man appeared right in front of Jesus, did Jesus heal him right away? What did Jesus do? What did the Pharisees think of that?* (The Pharisees were amazed to hear Jesus forgive sins. A person could forgive someone who had sinned against him or her, but in their minds, to forgive a stranger's sins was something only God could do.) Jesus knew what the Pharisees would think, so He waited to heal the paralyzed man until after He forgave him. Everyone was amazed.

Right after this, Jesus left that house and met Levi, a tax collector. Levi did just what Peter and Andrew did. He left everything to follow Jesus. Let's look at the roster of Jesus' disciples. They are all listed in Luke 6:12-16. What did Jesus do the night before choosing the rest of the twelve? (He prayed all night long.) Having close friends was important to Jesus, and He selected them very carefully (picture 3A.20).

What did all the men in these accounts have in common? They knew that they couldn't heal or forgive themselves. The leper wanted to be touched by Jesus. The paralytic wanted his friends to bring him to see Jesus. Their hearts were ready for Jesus' healing touch. The men who followed Jesus left everything behind because they knew He would have all they needed. You too can have all you need in Jesus, your healer, forgiver, and friend.

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Big Idea: **Jesus judges people by what they believe and how they live.**

John 5; Luke 6:1-11 [outline form]

Intro: *Jesus honored God on the Sabbath by actions that were pleasing to God.*
Ask: *How can we love others and be eager to please God with our actions?*

1. Jesus healed a man who had been an invalid—unable to walk—for 38 years.
- *Jesus healed the man on the Sabbath* . . . . . *John 5:1-9*
- *The man obeyed Jesus and carried his mat on the Sabbath* *5:8-11*
- *The Jews were angry that Jesus ignored their religious traditions* *5:9-15*

2. The Father has given Jesus authority to judge. Whoever honors the Son, honors the Father.
- *The Jews persecuted Jesus for disobeying traditions on the Sabbath.* *5:16*
- *Jesus judges people by whether they listen to His word and believe in the Father who sent Him* *5:24*
- *The Scriptures testify about Jesus.* *5:39*
- *Everyone must come to Jesus to have life* *5:40*

3. Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath. Showing God's compassion and love for people honors Him more than following religious traditions.
- *Jesus' disciples picked grain on the Sabbath* (picture 3A.21) . . . . . *Luke 6:1*
- *Jesus healed a man's hand on the Sabbath* (picture 3A.22) *6:6-10*
- *Doing good is better than following man-made rules* *6:9-10*

Conclusion: *We can honor Jesus every day, including the Sabbath, by demonstrating God's compassion and love for others through our actions.*

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Level 3A—Follow the King *Lesson 11: Keeping the Sabbath*

Big Idea: **Jesus judges people by what they believe and how they live.**

John 5; Luke 6:1-11 [narrative form]

Intro: *Jesus honored God on the Sabbath by actions that were pleasing to God.*
Ask: *How can we love others and be eager to please God with our actions?*

Today we are going to find out what Jesus had to say about one of God's Ten Commandments. Ask a student to read Exodus 20:8-10 aloud. Discuss what this commandment says to do (and not to do) and write it down.

Jesus came to earth many hundreds of years after God gave this commandment to the Israelites. By that time, Jewish teachers had added their own rules and restrictions to God's laws. For example, on the Sabbath it was illegal for a Jew to:

- Wear false teeth. (This was considered "carrying a burden.")
- Pull out a gray hair.
- Tie or loosen certain kinds of knots.
- Write two or more letters of the alphabet side-by-side.
- Bandage or wipe a wound—unless life was endangered.
- Gargle. (Unless you swallowed afterwards!)

Now let's look at what Jesus had to say about keeping the Sabbath. Read Luke 6:1-11 to the class (pictures 3A.21 and 3A.22). Twice in these verses Jesus did things Jews didn't do on the Sabbath. He allowed His disciples to pick grain and He healed a person. You see, Jesus was not breaking God's Law, because what He did on the Sabbath brought honor to God. The rules that He broke were the Pharisees' man-made rules. The Jewish leaders were upset because Jesus wouldn't obey them.

This wasn't the only time they were upset. Read John 5:1-15. When Jesus healed people on the Sabbath, He was not throwing away the Ten Commandments. God gave us the Ten Commandments to keep us safe and healthy and so that we could live to honor Him. It's just that God wants us to obey these rules because we love Him and want to please Him.

Lead children in a discussion regarding keeping the Sabbath. *How do you keep the Sabbath? What is your family tradition? Why do you think God says the Sabbath is important?* (For physical and spiritual rest and renewal. To be refreshed by the study of God's Word. For fellowship at Sunday school and church with other believers. Worshiping, honoring, praising and focusing on the one true God. Spending time with the family.) *Is it still important for us to obey this law? What can you do to be sure and keep the Sabbath?*

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Big Idea: **Jesus satisfies everyone's spiritual hunger.**

John 6 [outline form]

Intro: *After feeding the crowds, Jesus taught that He is the bread of life.*
Ask: *What do you think "bread of life" means?*

1. Jesus provided food for those who followed Him. His miracle brought glory to God and taught a spiritual truth.

- *A young boy gave his five loaves of bread and two fish* . . . . . *John 6:9*
- *Jesus gave thanks for the five loaves and two fish* *6:11*
- *Jesus miraculously fed 5,000 men, plus women and children* (picture 3A.23) . . *6:12*
- *The disciples collected twelve baskets of bread left over* *6:13*

2. Jesus left the crowds and withdrew to the mountain by Himself.

- *The disciples sailed across the Sea of Galilee* *6:16-18*
- *Jesus walked on water to join them* (picture 3A.24) *6:19-22*
- *The crowds traveled to Capernaum to seek more food from Jesus* *6:22-24*

3. Jesus is the bread of life. He satisfies everyone's spiritual hunger.

- *Jesus instructed the crowd to seek eternal life rather than food that spoils* *6:27*
- *Whoever comes to Jesus and believes in Him will never hunger or thirst* . . *6:35*
- *No one can come to Jesus unless the Father draws him* *6:44*
- *Whoever eats the bread of life will live forever* *6:51*

Conclusion: *People can spend their whole lives eating bread, but they will still die. However, if we come to Jesus, the bread of life, He will satisfy our spiritual hunger and we will live forever.*

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Level 3A—Follow the King Lesson 12: The Bread of Life

Big Idea: **Jesus satisfies everyone's spiritual hunger.**

John 6 [narrative form]

Intro: *After feeding the crowds, Jesus taught that He is the bread of life.*
Ask: *How do we know that God thinks learning is important?*

Imagine that a huge crowd of about five thousand people surrounds you and all of them are really hungry, and you are the only one who packed your lunch. Then a man, one of the leaders, comes up and asks you to come with him and bring your lunch. Read John 6:1-13 and have children follow along (picture 3A.23). *Now suppose you are that boy—what are you thinking?*

Now turn back to the Bible text. Jesus had a very busy day. After everyone saw this great miracle, they were so excited they wanted to force Him to become their king. But it wasn't time for that yet, so Jesus went away to a mountain by Himself. Meanwhile, His disciples took a boat back across the Sea of Galilee.

Have the children look at verses 16-21 (picture 3A.24). Ask the following questions. *What time of day was it? What was the weather report? How far did the disciples row the boat? How long do you think that might have taken?* According to

Matthew 14:25, by the time Jesus met them on the water, it was the fourth watch of the night (between 3 and 6 a.m.). They had had a long day, themselves. *How do you think they felt by this time? Then they looked out into the darkness on the water, and what did they see? What did Jesus say to them? Why did Jesus say that?*

The next morning, the crowds realized that Jesus and His disciples had returned to the other side of the Sea, so they all rushed over to find Jesus. In the rest of this chapter Jesus taught them about Himself.

Have the children skim verses 25-69 and name some things that Jesus said about Himself. Point out that Jesus also said some difficult things that some of His followers didn't understand and didn't like, such as verses 41-42 and 53-54. Be sure to explain these difficult verses, especially relating them to what the disciples learned later at the last supper. After that, many followers decided to leave Jesus.

When some of the crowds were leaving Jesus, He asked His twelve disciples, "You don't want to leave Me too, do you?" But Peter reassured Jesus. He said, "Lord, where else can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We know that You are the Holy One of God." You see, even when it might be hard to follow Jesus, and other people turn away, because we know that Jesus is the only source of life, we continue to follow Him.

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