

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

JOHN'S GOSPEL
(JOHN 1-11):

ONE WORD, ONE LIFE,
ONE WAY

QUICKSOURCE
FOR LEADERS • FALL 2013

LifeWay | Adults

The ABCs Of Salvation

Some people think a personal relationship with God is something only theologians can comprehend. Actually, God's plan of salvation is simple enough for everyone to understand. Here are the ABC's of salvation.

Admit

Admit to God that you are a sinner. All persons need salvation. Each of us has a problem the Bible calls sin. Sin is a refusal to acknowledge God's authority over our lives. Everyone who does not live a life of perfect obedience to the Lord is guilty of sin. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Since none of us is perfect, all of us are sinners (Romans 3:10-18).

The result of sin is spiritual death (Romans 6:23). Spiritual death means eternal separation from God. By God's perfect standard we are guilty of sin and therefore subject to the punishment for sin, which is separation from God. Admitting that you are a sinner and separated from God is the first step of repentance, which is turning from sin and self and turning toward God.

Believe

Believe in Jesus Christ as God's Son and receive Jesus' gift of forgiveness from sin. God loves each of us. God offers us salvation. Although we have done nothing to deserve His love and salvation, God wants to save us. In the death of Jesus on the cross, God provided salvation for all who would repent of their sins and believe in Jesus. "For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Confess

Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord to others. After you have received Jesus Christ into your life, share your decision with another person. Tell your pastor or a Christian friend about your decision. Following Christ's example, ask for baptism by immersion in your local church as a public expression of your faith. "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation" (Romans 10:9-10).



For God so
LOVED the world,
that he gave his
only begotten Son,
that WHOSOEVER believeth in him
SHOULD NOT PERISH,
but have everlasting
LIFE.

—JOHN 3:16 (KJV)

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Explore The Bible:
QUICKSOURCE

Creative Teaching Options for Engaging Adults in Bible Study

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REFLECTIONS

"The Word became flesh..."

Reassuring and powerful words from John 1:1. As we begin a six-month journey through the Gospel of John, we celebrate the truth that Jesus Himself—who was and is and is to come—came to earth to provide the way for our salvation! What a glorious truth!

John was one of three apostles in Jesus' inner circle, an eyewitness to Jesus' earthly ministry. Scripture confirms the close connection between Jesus and John, evidenced by the fact that Jesus entrusted John with the care of His mother Mary (John 19:26-27). Although an aged John wrote his Gospel 60 to 70 years after Jesus' resurrection, it is apparent that time increased, rather than diminished, his awe of and love for his Lord.

John wrote about poignant scenes in Jesus' life that included intimate conversations with individuals such as Nicodemus or the woman at the well. He also detailed seven of Jesus' miracles because they pointed to Jesus' power, authority, and deity.

The apostle acknowledged that Jesus performed far more signs than he recorded and stated the reason he chose to highlight the snapshots he did was so that "you may believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and by believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31).

As you examine John's lovingly and masterfully crafted portrayal of his Lord's life, allow the Word made flesh to take up residence within your heart and speak truth, light, and life to you and through you.

Blessings!



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Phillips—J. B. Phillips, "The New Testament in Modern English", 1962 edition, published by HarperCollins.

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Making the Most of QuickSource

Prepare yourself.

■ Read the **Bible text** from your own Bible and compare it with the translation printed in *QuickSource*.

■ Use **Key Words** and other study tools to clarify your understanding of the text.

Use Key Words to unlock the truths of God's Word and prepare for a rich Bible study experience.

God Revealed

John 1:1-5

1 **In the beginning** was the **Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 All things were created through Him, and apart from Him not one thing was created that has been created. 4 **Life** was in Him, and that life was the light of men. 5 That light shines in the darkness, yet the darkness did not **overcome** it.

John 1:9-11

9 The true light, which gives sight to **everyone**, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was created through Him, yet the world did not recognize Him. 11 He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. 12 But to all who did **receive** Him, He gave them the **right** to be children of God, to those who believe in His name, 13 who were born, not of blood, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God. 14 The **Word** **became flesh** and **took up residence** among us. We observed His glory, the glory as the **One and Only Son** from the Father. **Full of**

September 1 2013

Exploring Key Words

- John spoke of the beginning before the beginning referred to in Genesis 1:1. Jesus Christ is eternal and preexisted before the world's creation.
- divine self-expression **actively works in creation and sustains it.**
- grasp, comprehend, overtake
- Not promoting a doctrine of universal salvation. Eternal life through Christ is available to all, but not all accept it.
- "welcome" (AMP); "accept (NCV)
- "power, privilege" (AMP). We cannot be saved apart from what God does and allows.

Lesson Passages: John 1:1-5; 9-14; 16-18

Life Goal: To help adults show their appreciation for who Jesus is

Prepare a plan.

■ Begin **formulating a plan** to introduce the Bible passage, examine the Bible content, and move learners toward applying the Bible to their own lives.

■ Review **Discussions & Points**. Look for questions and ideas to challenge learners' understanding and application of Scripture.

■ Consider ways to connect the Scripture to the lives of class members using **Object Lesson** and **Dig Deeper** ideas.

■ Look for **Target Audience** suggestions that will help personalize the Bible truths for specific ages and interest groups.

Discussions & Points

God Revealed

INTRODUCTION

Can you see the full picture of a jigsaw puzzle just by looking at one or two pieces? Why not?

- This lesson begins a new unit of study about the eternal nature of Jesus Christ. We cannot understand His nature by looking at "one piece"

September 1 2013

Lesson Passages: John 1:1-5; 9-14; 16-18

Life Goal: To help adults show their appreciation for who Jesus is

Use these probing questions and content points to facilitate an in-depth discussion of God's Word.

- Note that the word "receive" also means "welcome." His own people, the Jews, rejected Him as the Messiah, despite His words and miracles.
- People today reject Jesus, viewing Him as another prophet or teacher, rejecting His call to obedience, following other gods and idols, or simply ignoring Him.
- John 3:16 contains the simple, familiar gospel message. But in John 1:12-13, John first described the gospel. The only right response is to believe the gospel message, receive the Savior, and accept this new birth into God's family.
- CLUE:** "Everyone" in verse 9 does not suggest that all people will be saved. The Christian faith is not exclusive; all who accept Jesus as Savior are adopted into the family of God.

4. What "rights" do you have as part of an earthly family? as part of God's family? How would you gain the life of becoming a child

Making Connections

God Revealed

OBJECT LESSON: SHELL GAME

Place a version of the shell game in which three disposable cups are placed side down on the table. Use permanent marker to label each cup with the numbers 1, 2, or 3. Visible to the class, place a small object (such as a rubber ball or an wrapped piece of hard candy) beneath one of the cups. As class members watch, shuffle the cups by sliding them around on the surface of the table. Invite a volunteer to guess which cup is hiding the object. Lift the cup to reveal whether or not the object is there. Give several adults opportunity to participate.

Indicate that we are beginning a new study of the Book of John. Challenge learners to read through the book in the next few weeks. It is easy to read and helps Christians make a stronger connection with Jesus. Print the title of this quarter's study on the markerboard: *John's Gospel: One Word, One Life, One Way*. Print each unit title as well and give a brief overview of upcoming sessions (September: *The Word from Eternity* will help adults strengthen their understanding of Jesus; October: *The Word with Power* has a goal of helping adults respond to people's needs on the basis of Jesus' power; and November: *The Word for Challenging Situations* offers adults the challenge of trusting Jesus when life gets tough).

Play one more round of the shell game. This time, instruct adults to imagine that the object hidden beneath the cup is Jesus. Ask: *Does Jesus hide from people today? Is it difficult for some people to "find*

September 1 2013

Lesson Passages: John 1:1-5; 9-14; 16-18

Life Goal: To help adults show their appreciation for who Jesus is

Be emphatic that Jesus is not hiding. The Bible stands today, as it has through generations of time, as a revelation about God's love for us and His gift of salvation through Christ. Some people have a hard time "finding" Jesus because they've never had the opportunity to learn about Him or attend church. They may be bound to a lifestyle that does not honor God. Or they simply have never been told about Jesus!

Invite adults to open their Bibles to the first chapter of John. Lead in prayer and ask God to reveal to each person in the room something new about Jesus today.

Dig Deeper

WORD

Our "words" might include all kinds of chitchat, dialogue, conversation, or chatter. Our words can carry great weight and gravity or be frivolous and silly. Be in the Bible. *Word From Home*

logos, it might refer to a "sentence" or "statement" in the context of language or grammar. When used regarding logic or knowledge, logos could mean "reason," "science," or "formula." And in English, we use a form of the word *logos* to

here in these verses, as an eternal and personal being. The Word, Jesus, in John 1 shows us what God had intended for His creation back in Genesis 1. It is only through Jesus that we can receive a life that will be pleasant to God.

■ **Develop, adapt, and refine** a teaching plan based on the unique needs, life-stage, and understanding of your group.

■ **Pray** for God's wisdom and power as you guide the Bible study experience.

Target Audience

Jesus Identified

WORLD CHANGERS

To supplement your study of John 1:29-36, remind the class about events of the first Passover, recorded in Exodus 12. Terrible plagues had occurred in Egypt, but still Pharaoh was not willing to let the Israelites go. One final plague was to come, the death of the firstborn male in each Egyptian household. God's people were spared when

September 8 2013

Lesson Passages: John 1:29-36; 40-42; 45-51

Life Goal: To help adults grasp the

Personalize Bible study and target specific ages and interests by using one or more of these ideas.

PEOPLE WHO KEEP PROMISES

To add insight to your discussion of John 1:40-42a, 45-46, ask young adults to consider any promise they have recently made. It might be a simple one, such as the promise to read a favorite bedtime story to a child tonight. It may be a much bigger promise, such as a vow to love and cherish a new spouse or a commitment to finish college. (Adults do not need to speak these promises aloud.)

Ask a volunteer to find and read Isaiah 9:6 and another to share Micah 5:2. These are familiar prophecies about Jesus. They were written hundreds of years before He was born. These Scriptures do not call Him by name, but they are promises made by God that the Messiah could indeed come.



God Revealed

John 1:1-5

1 **a** In the beginning was the **b** Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was with God in the beginning. **3** All things were created through Him, and apart from Him not one thing was created that has been created. **4** **➔** Life was in Him, and that life was the light of men. **5** That light shines in the darkness, yet the darkness did not **c** overcome it.

John 1:9-14

9 The true light, who gives light to **d** everyone, was coming into the world. **10** He was in the world, and the world was created through Him, yet the world did not recognize Him. **11** He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. **12** But to all who did **e** receive Him, He gave them the **f** right to be children of God, to those who believe in His name, **13** who were born, not of blood, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God. **14** The Word **g** became flesh and **h** took up residence among us. We observed His glory, the glory as the **➔** One and Only Son from the Father, **i** full of grace and truth.

John 1:16-18

16 Indeed, we have all received **j** grace after grace from His fullness, **17** for the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. **18** **➔** No one has ever seen God. The One and Only Son — the One who is **k** at the Father's side — He has **l** revealed Him.

September
1
2013

Lesson Passages:

John 1:1-5, 9-14, 16-18

Life Goal:

To help adults show their appreciation for who Jesus is



Whenever you see this icon, look for expanded details for this word or phrase on pages 59-61.

a John spoke of the beginning before the beginning referred to in Genesis 1:1. Jesus Christ is eternal and preexisted before the world's creation.

b divine self-expression that actively works in creation and people's lives

c grasp, comprehend, overtake

d Not promoting a doctrine of universal salvation. Eternal life through Christ is available to all, but not all accept it.

e "welcome" (AMP); "accept" (NCV)

f "power, privilege" (AMP). We cannot be saved apart from what God does and allows.

g Christ did not cease being God when He came to earth. The eternally preexistent Word chose for a time to take on the limitations of humanity, except He did not sin.

h Literally "pitched His tent," alluding to God's presence among the Israelites in the tabernacle. See Exodus 33:7-11.

i Jesus displayed the glorious goodness of God in human form. "Yahweh is a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and rich in faithful love and truth..." (Ex. 34:6).

j "one blessing after another" (CEV, GNT); "grace in place of grace already given" (NIV); "We all live off his generous bounty, gift after gift after gift" (Message)

k Literally reads "in the bosom of the Father." God literally pulled out His heart and sent His Son to hurting humanity.

l "brought Him out where He can be seen; He has interpreted Him and He has made Him known" (AMP); "he has shown us what God is like" (NCV)

For detailed commentary, see your September 1 Leader Guide or Adult Commentary.

God Revealed

INTRODUCTION

Can you see the full picture of a jigsaw puzzle just by looking at one or two pieces? Why not?

- This lesson begins a new unit of study about the eternal nature of Jesus Christ. We cannot understand His nature by looking at “one piece of the puzzle.” But by exploring the first three chapters of John, we gain a fuller picture.
- Today’s lesson is about the Deity of Jesus Christ.

JOHN 1:1-5

1. What do we learn about Jesus from these verses? Which statements give you hope and encouragement today?

- Jesus, the Word, is God. He was with God in the beginning and took part in creation. The words, “In the beginning. . .” remind us of Genesis 1:1. While Matthew and Luke tell of Jesus’ birth, John reaches further back in time to help us understand how Jesus is God.
- Jesus is fully God while also fully human, experiencing the range of emotions and struggles—laughter, tears, joy, fear, struggle, pain, excitement. Jesus understands.

2. How would you explain Jesus as God in a witnessing situation? In what ways is some people’s understanding of Jesus too narrow or small?

- Jesus is more than a great man or great teacher, more than the leader of the Christian religion. Jesus is the unique Son of God; He is God Himself. Some people focus on one aspect of Jesus’ nature, missing out on all that He is.
- Jesus is the Word of God. He reveals God to us.

JOHN 1:9-14

3. When Jesus walked on earth as a man, in what ways did people “not receive Him”? How do people today still “not receive Him”?

September
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Lesson Passages:

John 1:1-5,9-14,16-18

Life Goal:

To help adults show their appreciation for who Jesus is

For more
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see your
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Discovery
Study Guide.



Use these probing questions and content points to facilitate an in-depth discussion of God’s Word.

- Note that the word “receive” also means “welcome.” His own people, the Jews, rejected Him as the Messiah, despite His words and miracles.
- People today reject Jesus, viewing Him as another prophet or teacher, rejecting His call to obedience, following other gods and idols, or simply ignoring Him.
- John 3:16 contains the simple, familiar gospel message. But in John 1:12-13, John first described the gospel. The only right response is to believe the gospel message, receive the Savior, and accept this new birth into God’s family.
- **CLUE:** “Everyone” in verse 9 does not suggest that all people will be saved. The Christian faith is not exclusive; all who accept Jesus as Savior are adopted into the family of God.

4. What “rights” do you have as part of an earthly family? as part of God’s family? How would you explain the idea of becoming a child of God to someone who has never heard it?

- A healthy earthly family offers love, support, care, and encouragement. In God’s family, we have abundant life now and the promise of eternal life when we die. The phrase “right to be” in verse 12 translates a Greek word meaning “power” or “authority.”
- We have earthly examples of children being lovingly adopted into families. They are loved just like children born into the family through physical birth. Being born into God’s family has nothing to do with physical birth or ethnic descent; we become God’s children through faith in the Messiah.

5. Note “light” in verse 9. How does Jesus bring light into our lives?

- Jesus Himself is the light. When we accept Him into our lives we welcome His light. We don’t have to struggle or stumble with sin’s darkness any more.
- As His followers, we are able to reflect Jesus’ light into the world around us, pointing unbelievers toward Him.

JOHN 1:16-18

6. What is “grace after grace”? Why is grace a reason to be thankful?

- John expressed the generosity of God’s grace. See Key Words, page 7.
- Because of grace we can be saved from our sin. How could we be anything but eternally thankful for that grace?

7. What does Jesus teach us about God? How does Jesus reveal God?

- The *Holman New Testament Commentary* (vol. 4, p. 14) says: “John left no stone unturned, no argument unclarified. Jesus is the very essence of God and, according to this verse, his purpose in coming to earth was to exegete, to interpret, to explain the Heavenly Father.”

CONCLUSION

How can we show our appreciation for who Jesus is in daily living?

- We fall short if we simply note that Jesus reveals God to us. We should express our thanks for who Jesus is by taking the time to explore and study the ways Jesus reveals who God is to us.
- **Personal Challenge:** Evaluate your own attitudes, words, actions: Do they reflect your appreciation for who Jesus is? How can you more fully express your appreciation?

Make the connection between God's Word and the lives of the learners by using one or both of these ideas.



Making Connections

God Revealed

OBJECT LESSON: SHELL GAME

Play a version of the shell game in which three disposable cups are placed open side down on the table. Use permanent marker to label each cup with the numeral 1, 2, or 3. Visible to the class, place a small object (such as a rubber ball or an wrapped piece of hard candy) beneath one of the cups. As class members watch, shuffle the cups by sliding them around on the surface of the table. Invite a volunteer to guess which cup is hiding the object. Lift the cup to reveal whether or not the object is there. Give several adults opportunity to participate.

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Play one more round of the shell game. This time, instruct adults to imagine that the object hidden beneath the cup is Jesus. Ask: *Does Jesus hide from people today? Is it difficult for some people to "find"*

September
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2013

Lesson Passages:

John 1:1-5, 9-14, 16-18

Life Goal:

To help adults show their appreciation for who Jesus is



Him? Be emphatic that Jesus is not hiding. The Bible stands today, as it has through generations of time, as a revelation about God's love for us and His gift of salvation through Christ. Some people have a hard time "finding" Jesus because they've never had the opportunity to learn about Him or to attend church. They may be bound to a lifestyle that does not honor God. Or they simply have never been told about Jesus!

Invite adults to open their Bibles to the first chapter of John. Lead in prayer and ask God to reveal to each person in the room something new about Jesus today.

Dig Deeper



WORD

Our "words" might include all kinds of chitchat, dialogue, conversation, or chatter. Our words can carry great weight and gravity or be frivolous and silly. But in the Bible, "word" can have a very different meaning.

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew people viewed God's word as not just words, but as the way that God accomplished His purposes (see Gen. 1:3-3, Ps. 33:6, or Isa. 55:11). God spoke and by His word, our world was created.

For the early Christians, "word," or *logos*, was used to refer to an explanation or reason for something that was otherwise meaningless. Depending on how they were using the word

logos, it might refer to a "sentence" or "statement" in the context of language or grammar. When used regarding logic or knowledge, *logos* could mean "reason," "science," or "formula." And in English, we use a form of the word *logos* to describe a discipline or science like theology, psychology, or anthropology.

And here in John 1:1, John chose the Greek word, *logos*, or Word, and gave it a fuller, new meaning. He used *logos* to describe Jesus, the living Word. With its echo of Genesis 1:1 ("In the beginning. . ."), John placed Jesus in that beginning eternity with God, as a coequal of God. By repeating the words, "In the beginning," John connected the God of Genesis 1 with the Word of John 1. John was showing Jesus as the Word

here in these verses, as an eternal and personal being. The Word, Jesus, in John 1 shows us what God had intended for His creation back in Genesis 1. It is only through Jesus that we can pursue a life that will be pleasing to God.

By describing Jesus as *logos*, John was showing us that Jesus was more than just an angel, a prophet, some other created being, or even a word from God—Jesus was God Himself. That creative Word from Genesis 1:1 had become the Word made flesh in John 1:1. This verse and description of Jesus as the Word sets the stage for the rest of the Book of John. In this comparison, John stretched our imagination and helped us to see and understand Jesus as the eternal, Word-became-flesh Son of God.

For more teaching helps, see your September 1 Leader Guide, Leader Pack, or Discovery Study Guide.

God Revealed

SCULPTORS

To supplement your study of John 1:1-5, give each adult two chenille stems. Allow one or two minutes for each person to create something with the pipe cleaners. As adults work, read aloud John 1:1-5. Repeat it two or three times. After the allotted time, let the sculptors show their creations to people seated nearby. Ask: *Can anyone recognize and identify what a friend has made?*

Indicate that the verses you have just read from the Book of John are familiar to many. They introduce Jesus as the Word of God. He is God and was with God at the beginning of time. The Bible is indeed God's story. It is the story of Jesus. Much like the way adults tried to form a recognizable object from their pipe cleaners, God uses many methods to get people to recognize Jesus for who He is.

Suggest that adults have many choices about how to respond when they are introduced to Jesus through the Bible, through the witness of a believer, through Christian music, or by any other method. For today, encourage them to focus on expressing gratitude for who Jesus is by recognizing Him as the Word of God. Invite adults to continue to manipulate their pipe cleaners for the next few minutes. Ask: *Can anyone come up with a sculpture that introduces Jesus as the Word of God?*

NEW HOMEOWNERS

To add insight to your discussion of John 1:9-14, invite first-time homeowners to brainstorm a verbal list of some "must have" items that they were sure to have on hand on the first day and night they spent in their new house, condo, or apartment. When class members finish rattling off items, draw on the markerboard a rectangle with the word *Welcome* printed inside. Ask: *Did anyone*

September
1
2013

Lesson Passages:

John 1:1-5, 9-14, 16-18

Life Goal:

To help adults show their appreciation for who Jesus is

For more teaching helps, see your September 1 Leader Guide or Discovery Study Guide.



Personalize Bible study and target specific ages and interests by using one or more of these ideas.

mention that they would like to place a welcome mat on the front porch of their new home?

Comment that the imagery of Jesus as the true light in this passage is fascinating. Every person in the room can relate to the concept of light. When it is dark, a bit of light from any source brings comfort, relief, and a sense of security. Nobody wants to stand in a totally dark place for longer than a few seconds. Ask: *But what does verse 11 say?* His own people did not receive Him. No one put out the welcome mat for the Light of the world.

Light a candle or turn on a flashlight. Suggest that everyone within reach of the source of light cannot help but notice it. The darker the environment, the more welcome the light. Say: *Jesus is the light. Each person who welcomes Him and believes in Him receives the right to become a child of God.*

Play Chris Rice's song, "Welcome to Our World" (available on iTunes). Ask adults to close their eyes as they listen and to consider how they have personally welcomed Jesus into their world.

RETIREES

To supplement your discussion of John 1:16-18, find out if any class members have recently retired. Note that in some work places, the retiree is honored with a book of letters. This is a book of notes and cards provided by colleagues that offer congratulations and words of encouragement to the person who is leaving the company. Often the letters include references to things the retiree did well or simply relate a memory of a funny or meaningful experience the two coworkers shared together. Reading through a book of these fond remembrances would give any reader a glimpse into what made the retiree "tick" and what characteristics others notice and appreciate in him.

Emphasize that, in essence, the Bible is a book of letters, written to us to reveal what we need to know about God. Since none of us has ever seen God, we need something concrete to help us understand what God is like, what God can do, how we can worship Him, and how a relationship with Him changes the way we interact with others on this earth. Jesus is that "something." Christ alone reflects the Father, and the passages we will study in John this month help us gain a better grasp and deeper understanding of Jesus and the task He was sent to earth to accomplish.

As time allows, provide a sheet of paper and a pencil to each class member. Encourage them to write a letter to God, expressing gratitude for Jesus, whose life helps us know more about God.