

7

Who Is Jesus?

Grace

God's grace transforms us as we trust in Him.

POWER TEXT

"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).

KEY REFERENCES

- Matthew 16:13-20
- *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 45, pp. 410-418
- No corresponding story from *The Bible Story*
- Student lesson on page 82 of this guide

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 4, The Son
- No. 10, The Experience of Salvation
- No. 11, Growing in Christ

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** that thanks to God's grace Jesus can be Lord of our lives.
- **Feel** a desire to have Jesus be the Lord of their lives.
- **Respond** by inviting Jesus to be first in their lives.

POWERPOINT

We accept God's grace, acknowledging Jesus as Lord of our lives.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

When Jesus asks the disciples who they think He is, they respond by telling Him of the false beliefs of others. When He asks them directly for their opinion, Peter acknowledges Him as Lord. Jesus tells Peter that His church is founded on this truth.

This is a lesson about grace.

The Holy Spirit enables us to accept God's grace that is available to everyone through Jesus and empowers us to acknowledge that Jesus is Lord. By inviting Him to be Lord of our lives, we allow Him to be first in everything.

Teacher Enrichment

The question: "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" (Matthew 16:13).

The answers: The disciples gave four opinions of Jesus' identity. The problem with three of the answers is that although they recognized Jesus as a great man, they did not identify Him as God.

"Some say thou art John the Baptist"—They considered him "so great a figure that it might well be that he had come back from the dead" (William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew* [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975], vol. 2, p. 136).

"Others say Elijah"—This opinion indicates two perceptions of the people: (1) They saw Him as great as the greatest of the prophets. The Jews regarded Elijah as the greatest prophet. (2) They saw Jesus as the forerunner of the Messiah (Malachi 4:5). "To this day the Jews expect the return of Elijah before the coming of the Messiah, and to this day they leave a chair vacant for Elijah when they celebrate the Passover" (*ibid.*).

"Still others, Jeremiah"—"Jeremiah had a curious place in the expectations of the people of Israel. It was believed that, before the people went into exile, Jeremiah had taken the ark and the altar of incense out of the Temple, and hidden them away in a lonely cave on Mount Nebo; and that, before the coming of the Messiah, he would return and produce them, and the glory of God would come to the people again (2 Maccabees 2:1-12). . . . Jeremiah also was to be the forerunner of the coming of the Messiah, and his country's help in time of trouble" (*ibid.*, pp. 136, 137).

Who is Jesus to me? How does my life give evidence to my belief?

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson.

Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week. (The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

Program notes

LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at the door. Ask about their week.	
1 Readiness	10-15	*A. Survey Says!*	Bibles, paper, pens, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
		B. Who's Who?	Bibles
* Prayer & Praise	15-20	See page 77. Prayer & Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, world map, pushpins, wrapped gift box
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	
		Experiencing the Story	Bibles
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*Scenarios*	
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*The Keys*	Bibles, colored paper, pens/pencils, markers
* Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments B. Reminder to Parents C. Coming Up Next Week	

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pens
- ☐ white/chalkboard
- ☐ markers/chalk

Survey Says!

Before Sabbath School begins, set out paper and pens and write the following instructions where all can see:

Conduct a survey of at least 25 percent of the students in your class. Ask each person you survey who they think Jesus is, and why.

Debriefing

Ask: **Would a few of you please share your findings?** Give time for responses. **How might the way in which a person sees Jesus affect the way they relate to Him? Let's say together our power text, Philippians 2:9-11:**

"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).

If we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, then:

We accept God's grace, acknowledging Jesus as Lord of our lives.

Accommodations for students with special needs:
Allow students with special needs who experience difficulty with this activity to work with a partner who could assist them with surveying other students.

B

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles

Who's Who?

Ask three students who arrive early to sit at a table at the front of the room. They are to each give true answers about themselves though the rest of the students may think that two of them are pretending and giving incorrect responses. As other students enter the room, have them sit down and tell them that they will have to figure out which one of the people on the panel is giving correct answers and not just pretending. They will ask the panel members questions that are not too obvious to determine who the "real" person is. For example: "Where did you grow up?" "What's your favorite food?" "Where do you go to school?"

Debriefing

Ask: **Let's take a vote and see who you think gave right answers and who was pretending. You were right! Why did you choose _____ (person's name) as the truthful person? What did it have to do with knowing something about and having spent time with that person? Our Bible story today is about knowing who Jesus is and where we put Him in our lives. Let's say together our power text, Philippians 2:9-11:**

"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).

Once we believe that Jesus is the Son of God:

We accept God's grace, acknowledging Jesus as Lord of our lives.

Prayer & Praise

Notes

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"Jesus, Name Above All Names" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 54)
"You Are My Hiding Place" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 96)
"It's About Grace" (see music on p. 149 of this guide)

Mission

YOU NEED:
- ☐ world map
- ☐ pushpins

Use *Adventist Mission for Youth and Adults* (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. Using a world map, have the students mark with pushpins the location of the mission story.

Offering

YOU NEED:
- ☐ wrapped gift box (with a slot cut in the top)

Say: **The giving of tithes and offerings is one way in which we acknowledge our dependence on God and recognize that every blessing comes from Him. Offering is thus a form of worship. As a way of symbolizing the giving of offerings as a means of worship, we are collecting the offering in a festively wrapped gift box.**

Prayer

Pray for the students' joys and sorrows, for the birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors. Close with the following prayer:

Say: **Dear Jesus: We recognize You as our Lord and thank You for being who You are. We want to know You better. We ask You to always be first in our lives. Amen.**

2

BIBLE LESSON

Introducing the Bible Story

Ask: **If you were personally introduced to the leader of your country, what would you do? How do people in your culture show respect to the country leaders? How would you show Jesus respect if He were here today? Would you acknowledge Him as Lord of your life?**

Our Bible story is about recognizing Jesus as our Lord, as our power text, Philippians 2:9-11, states:

"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).

Once we acknowledge Him as our Lord and Savior,

We accept God's grace, acknowledging Jesus as Lord of our lives.

YOU NEED:

- ☐ Bibles

Experiencing the Story

Assign students the following parts:
Narrator, Jesus, Peter, and one other disciple. Have them read aloud Matthew 16:13-20, following their respective parts.

Ask: **What do you think the disciples thought about who Jesus was? Whom was Peter speaking for? Who do you think was the first to recognize Jesus for who He really was?**

How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus blessed Peter for recognizing His divinity? How do you think you would have reacted?

As the power point reminds us:

We accept God's grace, acknowledging Jesus as Lord of our lives.

YOU NEED:
□ Bibles

Exploring the Bible

Ask students to find and read Mark 11:27-33. Ask: **What do you think the chief priests, teachers of the law, and elders really believed about Jesus' authority? How did their answer show who they considered their Lord?**

Now ask students to find and read John 4:39-42. Ask: **What did these Samaritans, who were despised by the Jews, believe about Jesus? How different is the Samaritans' response from the Jewish leaders' response to this knowledge?**

Finally, have the students find Mark 15:39. Ask: **What did the centurion believe about Jesus? What made him believe Jesus was the Son of God? Let's say together our power text, Philippians 2:9-11:**

"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).

Because we recognize who Jesus is:

We accept God's grace, acknowledging Jesus as Lord of our lives.

Scenarios

Read the following scenarios to your students. At the end of each, ask who is the Lord of each person's life. Ask the students what helped them arrive at the conclusion they did.

1. **Jerome attends church and Sabbath School regularly. He believes his church's beliefs are true. He says he loves Jesus. But he also loves violent video games with a passion. He spends every spare moment he has playing them, sometimes neglecting to study, help at home, or spend time with Jesus.**
2. **Stephanie belongs to another religion that doesn't believe that Jesus is the Son of God. She has a friend who does believe Jesus is the Son of God, and Stephanie is curious about her belief. Stephanie's friend asks her if she wants to join a Bible study group to learn more and Stephanie says yes, because she wants to know the truth.**
3. **Andrea is a very independent young woman. She likes to do things on her own and without help. She loves Jesus very much, but she has a tendency often to leave Him out of the picture when she is making decisions for her life. She doesn't think He is very concerned with everyday decisions that she can make perfectly well on her own.**
4. **Bryan accepted Jesus Christ a few years ago when he and his parents attended a Revelation Seminar. Since then Bryan has been involved in a prayer group at his public school and has helped out at a homeless shelter. His friends, even though not always agreeing with his newfound values, will tell you he is the best friend anyone could want.**

Debriefing

Ask: **What could each of these people who do not have Jesus as the Lord of their lives do to accept Him as Lord of their lives? What changes do you think it would take for each of them? When did you ask Jesus to be your Savior? What place does He have in your life? How is your life different because of His place in it? When we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior, His grace changes us. Remember our power point:**

We accept God's grace, acknowledging Jesus as Lord of our lives.

4

SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ colored paper
- ☐ pens/pencils
- ☐ markers

The Keys

Allow time for students to tell the class if they had the opportunity last week to share with someone who doesn't know Jesus, the good news about Him.

Ask: **What did you share about Jesus? How was your message received? How can you continue building positive relationships with people who need to hear about Jesus?**

Say: **Let's read Matthew 16:19 aloud again. Now I would like everyone to design and draw a key on the piece of paper I will give you. Then cut it out.**

Debriefing

Ask: **What do you think the keys Jesus talked about represent?** (His words) **That's right, Jesus' words. The saving power of the gospel is the only thing that opens heaven to people. Now write the power text on your key. Who do you know that needs to know Jesus? How can you share Jesus with that person? Let's repeat once again the power point:**

We accept God's grace, acknowledging Jesus as Lord of our lives.

Global Youth Day: Take the opportunity to announce Global Youth Day. This event will happen on March 15, 2025. To learn more about Global Youth Day, you may visit www.sgcyouth ministries.org. You may also want to download the Global Youth Day app. You can start planning with your Sabbath School class ways to get involved and participate in a community service project or a mission initiative on that day. The possibilities for service are endless. Some examples may include: visiting a nursing home, hospital, orphanage, or prison to comfort, sing, and pray for those who are sick, needy, and destitute, feeding the homeless, inviting people from the community to an open-house event, and so forth.

Closing

Prayer and closing comments:

Thank Jesus for being our Lord, for being the rock on which we are built, for being the keys to the kingdom. Ask Him to help us make Him first in all we do in our lives.

Reminder to parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.**

Coming up next week:

Say: **Peter asks Jesus about forgiveness. Because God forgives us, we should forgive others.**

Notes

Student lesson

Who Is Jesus?

Perhaps you have been a Christian all your life. Your parents have taken you to Sabbath School and church regularly. You know many Bible memory verses and Scripture songs. You love Jesus very much. But now someone is asking you why you believe Jesus is the Son of God. How will you answer? Jesus asked His disciples a similar question.

Here they were, heading for Caesarea Philippi. Jesus and the disciples walked past the familiar sites of Galilee in Judea and entered foreign territory. They could see the signs of idolatry everywhere. Jesus longed to help His disciples understand their responsibility toward the surrounding nations who didn't believe in the true God. Would they be able to understand Jesus' mission to save everyone, including the Gentiles, whom the Jews despised? Would they understand that Jesus would suffer and die to save them from their sins? The time was fast approaching when their beloved Master would be taken away from them to be nailed to a cross and die. For this reason Jesus wanted to spend time with His disciples.

Jesus turned off the dusty road and led the way through a grassy field to some shade trees beside the stream. As Jesus and His disciples sat in the shade, He gave them an opportunity to affirm their belief in Him. He asked them a question:

"Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

Jesus knew that if the disciples acknowledged Him as the Messiah, their faith would be strengthened for the difficult times that were ahead.

"Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets," they answered.

Jesus sighed. All those answers showed that people believed Him to be a prophet. But they had failed to recognize that He was truly God. Jesus turned to His disciples and asked them, "But who do you say that I am?"

The disciples looked at one another. Peter felt impressed to give an answer. So he answered Jesus, saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

This answer met the reassuring response of Jesus' approval. "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven," Jesus told him (Matthew 16:13-17).

Although Peter stated his belief in Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God, the disciples didn't yet have a clear understanding of Christ's mission.

Their ideas about the mission of the Messiah were still rooted in the false teaching of the scribes and Pharisees. They still hoped that Jesus would declare Himself king and overthrow the Roman government.

How far from the truth were these hopes in light of the true purpose of Jesus' ministry. He didn't come to be served, but to serve. He didn't come to conquer through force, but to love unconditionally. He didn't seek revenge for injustice, but came to heal, forgive, and restore.

Jesus didn't want anyone to perish. His greatest desire was to save from the clutches of sin everyone who would believe in Him. To accomplish our salvation, Jesus was even willing to sacrifice His own life.

Jesus gazed into the distance. There was still so much to teach the disciples and His followers here on earth. They didn't understand yet what was going to happen. He had to go to Jerusalem, and there He would suffer and die on a cross. Then He would rise again on the third day.

Think of the disciples and how their life changed after they came to recognize that Jesus was the Son of God. Their entire life received a whole new meaning and purpose. Their life's mission became focused on sharing that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

Think about what it means to you that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God." How has knowing Jesus changed you? Are you willing to trust Him with everything in your life? When you choose to live for Jesus, you will want to share your joy of knowing Him with others. Then, like Peter, you will experience the meaning of Jesus' reassuring promise: "Blessed are you"!

KEY REFERENCES

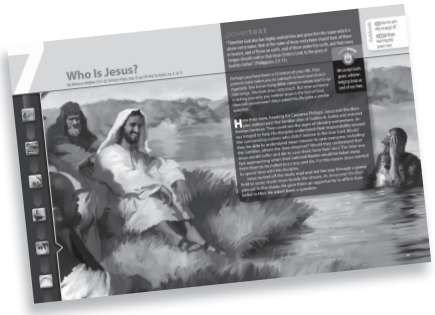
- Matthew 16:13-20
- *The Desire of Ages,* chap. 45, pp. 410-418
- No corresponding story from *The Bible Story*
- Our Beliefs, nos. 4, 10, 11

POWER TEXT

"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).

POWER POINT

We accept God's grace, acknowledging Jesus as Lord of our lives.







Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 60.

Sunday

READ Read Matthew 16:13–16 and this week's story, "Who Is Jesus?"

THINK If Peter answered correctly that Jesus is the Son of the living God, why do you think he denied Jesus three times during His trial (Matthew 26:69–75)?

REVIEW Review the power text, Philippians 2:9–11.

PRAY Ask Jesus to help you dedicate your life to Him.

Monday

READ Read Matthew 16:17–20.

ASK Ask some adults to describe who Jesus is to them. Make notes of the answers and then think about them. What is the best way you can explain to others who Jesus is to you?

REFLECT When and how did you come to recognize Jesus as your Lord?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank Jesus for being your Savior and Friend.

Tuesday

READ Read Acts 2:36.

THINK Think about how people conduct themselves at a sporting event. How do they show their support for their favorite team? Where is Jesus in your order of priorities? How do you acknowledge Him as your Lord?

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write an entry describing the events in Matthew 16:13–20 from the perspective of one of Jesus' disciples.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you to place Him first in your life.

Wednesday

READ Read Romans 8:38, 39.

THINK What keeps you from spending time with Jesus?

SHARE Think of someone who doesn't know who Jesus is, and find ways to share His love with that person.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask Jesus to help you put away anything that is keeping Him from being number one to you.

Thursday

READ Read 2 Peter 3:18.

LIST List ways that you can allow Jesus to be first in your life by spending time with Him. Do these today.

WALK While on a nature walk, observe how nature tells us that Jesus is the Creator and Lord of everything.

LOOK Locate Caesarea Philippi on a biblical map.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Commit your life to following Jesus as your Lord.

Friday

READ Read 2 Peter 1:16–18.

ACT Act out the story with your family for family worship tonight.

SING Sing or play your favorite praise song.

DRAW Draw a picture of the power text.

SAY Say the power text by memory.

PRAY Ask Jesus to prepare you to live in a way that will tell others that you know Jesus as a personal Savior and Friend. Pray that your life and words will be a witness of who Jesus is to you as you share Him with others.