

INVESTIGATING GOD'S WORD...

JOHN | **YEAR FOUR** | SUMMER QUARTER



SUNDAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM
FOR MIDDLE ELEMENTARY CHILDREN

SS04SU-E

LESSON SEQUENCE

SUMMER QUARTER

The Lesson Sequence gives the teacher an overview of the entire quarter. The central goal of the *Investigating God's Word...* curriculum is to enable children the opportunity to read and study the entire Bible—from Genesis to Revelation—by the time they “graduate” from 6th grade.

LESSON ONE	John 1
LESSON TWO	John 2–3
LESSON THREE	John 4:1–5:15
LESSON FOUR	John 5:16–6:24
LESSON FIVE	John 6:25–7:24
LESSON SIX	John 7:25–8:59
LESSON SEVEN	John 9:1–10:21
LESSON EIGHT	John 10:22–11:57
LESSON NINE	John 12:1–13:17
LESSON TEN	John 13:18–15:17
LESSON ELEVEN	John 15:18–17:26
LESSON TWELVE	John 18:1–19:27
LESSON THIRTEEN	John 19:28–21:25

LESSON ONE | JOHN 1

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

WELCOME

Proverbs 16:1–3
2–3 mins.

DRILL TIME

In the beginning
5 mins.

W.O.W!

Word
5 mins.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Timeline
2–3 mins.

BIBLE INVESTIGATION

John 1
20–30 mins.

LESSON-AT-HOME

John 1:14
2–3 mins.

OVERVIEW

John's Gospel opens with the same three words as the Book of Genesis: "In the beginning..." In the beginning was the WORD—the Lord Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity. He is the Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer of His people. He became flesh and dwelt among us. The first eighteen verses of John's Gospel present these remarkable truths about Christ.

John the Baptist is also introduced here as the one who was called by God to prepare the way for Christ. Even though many thought he was the Messiah, John made it clear that his water baptism is only a sign of the baptism that is to come in Christ. After denying that he was the Christ, John had the amazing opportunity to baptize Jesus and recognize that He truly is the Christ, the Lamb of God.

Chapter One continues with the calling of the first disciples. Andrew, one of John's disciples, chooses to follow Christ—and he brings his brother Simon Peter along as well. Jesus next calls Philip to follow Him, and then Philip tells Nathanael that Jesus is the Messiah. Nathanael follows Christ because Jesus first "sees" him and calls him as His own.

PREPARATION

Read and meditate on John 1 this week.

TEACHING ENCOURAGEMENT

The beauty of studying each of the four Gospels separately is that each Gospel tells the story of Jesus in a unique fashion. When the life of Christ is told as a conglomeration of the four gospels, we miss the distinct emphasis that each Gospel writer intended. As you'll see today, John leaves out the story of the birth of Christ, choosing (under inspiration of the Spirit) to begin with intense theological descriptions of Christ. He shows us Jesus as eternal, co-existent and co-active with the Father at creation, as well as the sustainer of all life. More amazingly, this Christ came and dwelt among us in order to save sinners. For those who recognize and receive Him, He gives the grace to become children of God. As you begin this journey through John, take the time to teach these essential truths about our Lord and Savior!



WELCOME

THE WELCOME SERVES AS BOTH AN OPPORTUNITY TO GREET THE CHILDREN AS WELL AS AN EFFORT TO HELP THEM GET FOCUSED.

EACH WEEK, YOU WILL BEGIN WITH QUESTIONS OR AN ACTIVITY THAT WILL ENGAGE THE CHILDREN AND HELP THEM THINK ABOUT GOD AND HIS WORD.

DRILL TIME GIVES THE CHILDREN THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECALL AND REHEARSE WHAT THEY HAVE BEEN TAUGHT IN THE PAST—AT HOME, SCHOOL AND/OR CHURCH.

THIS ELEMENT ALLOWS THE INVESTIGATING GOD'S WORD... CURRICULUM TO COVER MUCH MORE BIBLICAL "GROUND," SINCE TIME IS NOT EXPENDED REPEATING THE SAME BIBLE STORIES OVER AND OVER AGAIN FROM YEAR TO YEAR.

Greet the students. Welcome visitors. To prepare the students for class today, read Proverbs 16:1-3.

¹ The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD. ² All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the spirit. ³ Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established.

Say: *You and I make plans every day. The question is: Do you commit your plans to the LORD? Do you seek to do His will with a heart that is focused on pleasing Him? As we study God's Word today, let's commit this time to Him!*



DRILL TIME

Next, let's move on to DRILL TIME—our weekly opportunity to review what we have learned in the past. Are you ready?

Today's questions: *When did God create the heavens and the earth? What did He create the heavens and the earth out of? How did God create the heavens and the earth? In how many days did God create the heavens and the earth? What did God do on the seventh day? Who was with God the Father "in the beginning?"*

Call on volunteers or select students to answer.

Answers:

1. In the beginning.
2. Nothing.
3. He just spoke and all things came into being.
4. In six days.
5. He rested.
6. God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Say: *The first three words in the Bible are "In the beginning." Did you know that those are the first three words in the Gospel of John as well? We will see them as we start studying today.*

THE **W.O.W!** IS THE WORD OF THE WEEK. THIS ELEMENT IS INCLUDED TO HELP THE CHILDREN BUILD THEIR THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL VOCABULARIES. THESE WORDS ARE VITAL TO THE CHRISTIAN'S UNDERSTANDING OF GOD AND HIS WORLD.

EACH WEEK, THE BIBLE LESSON WILL BE PLACED IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT BY USE OF A TIMELINE.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE CHILDREN LEARN HOW THE STORY OF REDEMPTIVE HISTORY FITS TOGETHER. BIBLE STORIES MUST NOT BE VIEWED AS DETACHED SCENES—THEY ARE TO BE SHOWN AS A PART OF A MUCH BIGGER PICTURE. THE TIMELINE IS A USEFUL TOOL TOWARD THAT END.



W.O.W!

Our W.O.W! (Word of the Week) this week is **WORD**. Write the word on the board. That's sort of funny that our Word of the Week is actually WORD, isn't it?

A WORD is something that is spoken. I just said seven WORDS, and now I'm saying even more! WORDS are formed by putting sounds together into a meaningful expression. WORDS always mean things! Sounds made without meaning are not WORDS.

Our WORDS reveal what is going on in our minds. It tells others what we are thinking, and something about who we are. God has given us the amazing ability to express ourselves in WORDS.

The Bible is called the WORD of God because it reveals to us who God is, and it is how God speaks to us.

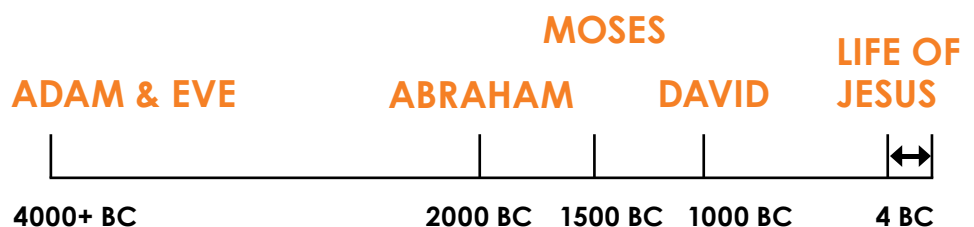
What you might not know about the word WORD is that it is also a special name given to Jesus Christ. He is called the WORD in only a few places in the Bible. This tells us something very important about who Jesus is. Watch for this Word of the Week as it describes our Lord and Savior!



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

As you begin this new quarter, put this timeline on the board to give your students some historical context.

This Week's Timeline





BIBLE INVESTIGATION

THE BIBLE INVESTIGATION TIME IS THE HEART AND SOUL OF THE WEEK'S LESSON. IT PLUNGES THE STUDENT DIRECTLY INTO GOD'S WORD, NOT SIMPLY A PARAPHRASE OF A BIBLE STORY.

ALL SCRIPTURE TEXT INCLUDED IN THE CURRICULUM IS FROM THE ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION (ESV).

THE BIBLE READING IS TAKEN IN SHORT SECTIONS, SEPARATED BY TIMES OF DISCUSSION, QUESTIONS, AND APPLICATION POINTS.

THIS FORMAT ALLOWS AMPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO STOP, THINK ABOUT AND DISCUSS WHAT IS BEING READ.

Have the students turn in their Bibles to John 1.

Introduction: *This quarter, we move to the New Testament and the Gospel of John. Who can tell me what a Gospel is? [Good News about Jesus Christ.] This Gospel was written by John, the brother of James, one of the twelve disciples. He was a witness to all He wrote, inspired by the Holy Spirit. Let's start investigating this New Testament Gospel together!*

Read John 1:1-2.

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God.

Discussion: *As we said earlier, the Gospel of John starts out with the same three words as the Book of Genesis. And, we see here our Word of the Week! Who is the WORD? [Jesus.] These two verses tell us three things about Jesus. What are they? **Allow answers.** These verses tell us that Jesus is ETERNAL (He was in the beginning), that Jesus is a distinct PERSON of God, and that Jesus is GOD! The WORD was with God and He is God.*

*Let's read more. **Read verses 3-5.***

³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Discussion: *Now John tells us more about the WORD. What else do we learn about Jesus, the WORD? **Allow answers.** John tells us that the world was created by Jesus and in Jesus is life and light. Jesus is the creator and sustainer of life.*

Application: *Just as our WORDS reveal our thoughts to others, Jesus the WORD reveals to us the heart and mind of God. Only Jesus can show you God and give you eternal life with God!*

*Let's continue. **Read verses 6-9.***

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. ⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.



THE GREY SIDEBAR FOUND ON ALL PAGES IS FOR THE TEACHER TO WRITE NOTES AS HE OR SHE PREPARES THE LESSON.

OTHER TEACHING TIPS OR IMPORTANT EXEGETICAL INFORMATION WILL ALSO APPEAR ON THE SIDEBAR.

APPLICATION POINTS ARE WOVEN INTO THE FABRIC OF THE DISCUSSION, RATHER THAN BEING LEFT TO THE END OF THE LESSON.

Discussion: *Who is John talking about now? [John the Baptist.] Was John the Baptist the WORD? [No.] Many people thought John the Baptist was the Messiah, the light of the world. But, as John tells us, John was only a witness to the light. He pointed the way to Jesus.*

Now, on to verse 10. Read verses 10-14.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Discussion: *What else does John tell us about the WORD? [That the world didn't recognize Him and they rejected Him; The WORD became flesh and lived among us.] John is making it clear that Jesus is both God and man, fully God and fully man. Even though the world rejected Jesus, what happens to those who receive Jesus? [They become the children of God.]*

Application: *The rest of the Gospel of John will tell us how Jesus came and dwelt among us. As we read about the life of Jesus, receive Him as your Lord and Savior—and you will become a child of the living God!*

Let's read on. Read verses 15-18.

¹⁵ (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

Discussion: *John introduces his Gospel with more truths about Jesus. John the Baptist knew that Jesus actually came before him because He has always been! And, Jesus brought grace and truth with Him, as well as a visible picture of God. No one can see God, but many saw the WORD, God's Son, in the flesh!*

Now, more about John the Baptist. Read verses 19-23.

¹⁹ And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and



Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰ He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” ²¹ And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” ²² So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” ²³ He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”

Discussion: *Did John the Baptist make it clear that he was NOT the Messiah? [Yes.] Who was John the Baptist, then? [A prophet called by God to prepare the way for Jesus.] John the Baptist was just a man who had a high calling from God.*

Listen to more. Read verses 24-28.

²⁴ (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) ²⁵ They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” ²⁶ John answered them, “I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, ²⁷ even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” ²⁸ These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Discussion: *The Pharisees still didn’t understand who John the Baptist was. John baptized with water to call people to repent of their sins and follow God’s ways. Jesus will baptize another way.*

Listen. Read verses 29-34.

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ ³¹ I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” ³² And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. ³³ I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁴ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”

Discussion: *John the Baptist had the privilege of preparing the way for Jesus and baptizing Jesus. Did Jesus need to be baptized in order to repent of sin? [No.] Jesus’ baptism was a sign that He was the Christ, the one who would baptize with the Holy Spirit. Water*



doesn't change anything; the Holy Spirit is the one who changes hearts. John the Baptist could now testify that Jesus is the one He was to point people to. Jesus is the Lamb of God who will take away the sins of the world!

*Let's continue reading. **Read verses 35-42.***

³⁵ The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶ and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" ³⁷ The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸ Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What are you seeking?" And they said to him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" ³⁹ He said to them, "Come and you will see." So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ). ⁴² He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas" (which means Peter).

Discussion: *Two of John's disciples believed that Jesus was the WORD, the Lamb of God—so they followed Him. What was the name of one of those first two disciples of Jesus? [Andrew.] Andrew was so convinced that Jesus was the Messiah that he told his brother to follow Jesus too. What was his brother's name? [Simon Peter.]*

*Let's read more about Jesus' disciples. **Read verses 43-44.***

⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." ⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

Discussion: *Who was the next disciple? [Philip.] Why did Philip follow Jesus? [Because Jesus called him.]*

*Let's continue. **Read verses 45-48.***

⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." ⁴⁶ Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." ⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" ⁴⁸ Nathanael said



to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

Discussion: *Nathanael is now the fourth disciple to be called by Jesus. Just as Andrew told his brother, Philip confidently told Nathanael that Jesus was the Messiah that Moses and the prophets talked about. Most importantly, Jesus chose Nathanael as His disciple out of love for him.*

*Let’s read the end of our chapter. **Read verses 49-51.***

⁴⁹ Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” ⁵⁰ Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” ⁵¹ And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

Discussion: *Wow! Nathanael puts his faith in Jesus as His King because Jesus called Him as His own. Nathanael was going to see amazing things as a disciple of Christ!*

Conclusion: *You and I will only follow Jesus, the WORD, if Jesus “sees” a heart that loves Him. How do we receive a new heart? We need the Holy Spirit to change our hearts so that we will follow Jesus. Aren’t you glad God sent the WORD to live among His people? Aren’t you glad this WORD is the Lamb of God who saves sinners?*

We’ll read more about the WORD next time!



LESSON-AT-HOME

THE LESSON-AT-HOME SECTION IS THE CLOSING TIME EACH WEEK. BOOKMARKS ARE GIVEN TO THE STUDENTS THAT INCLUDE THE SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE AND A LESSON REVIEW. THE LESSON REVIEW CONTAINS WORDS AND PHRASES THAT CAN SPARK MEMORIES AS WELL AS CONVERSATION WITH PARENTS.

Distribute the “Lesson-At-Home” bookmarks. Read the Scripture Memory verse (John 1:14) together.

John 1:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Say: *Say: This verse has our Word of the Week in it. More importantly, it reminds us that Jesus came to earth to live among His people and to bring the Father’s grace to us. That’s the good news of the gospel!*

Review the verse several times.

Direct the students’ attentions to the bottom half of the bookmark. It includes reminder points of today’s lesson that can be discussed with their parents and reviewed during the week.

Close in prayer and dismiss the students.