



## LESSON 1: THE ANSWER

**WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN:** Our faith in Jesus is the means by which we find forgiveness and eternal relationship with Christ.

**WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO WITH WHAT THEY'VE LEARNED:** To really consider the significance of life through faith in Christ and death in separation from Him.

**Scripture Focus:** John 3:16-18

**Supporting Scripture:** John 5:24

**OVERVIEW:** Repetition can cause us to become immune to the very thing we encounter over and over again. This is true with Jesus' words to Nicodemus in John 3. It's such a familiar passage we miss the power of it. And yet, what discussion of faith is complete without it? It is the Gospel, encapsulated. And these words hold the key to life and purpose in Christ. As you kick off a four-week study of faith, it's only fitting that it starts with a definition of saving faith, and a challenge to consider the amazing impact a relationship with Christ, through faith, has made in your students' lives.

### TEACHER PREP VIDEO

The Jesus And Your Faith Teacher Prep Videos are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your "Jesus And Your Faith Lesson 1 Teacher Prep Video," click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/jesus-and-your-faith-teacher-prep>

### BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. The Details give you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what's happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by “context”?** In every ym360 Bible study lesson, you’ll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By “context” we mean at the very least helping students know who wrote the book, when it was written, and why it was written.
- **What’s The Big Deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don’t get a “big picture” understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God’s plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

## THE DETAILS

- **Author:** The Gospel of John was written by John, son of Zebedee, a fisherman who left his trade to follow Jesus. John also penned the book of Revelation as well as the three letters in the New Testament that bear his name.
- **Time frame:** The Gospel of John was probably written between 85 and 95 AD. John most likely wrote his gospel in Ephesus before he was exiled to Patmos.
- **Purpose:** John’s stated purpose for writing this book can be found in John 20:30-31, the last two verses in his gospel: “Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” John’s goal seems to have been to clearly communicate a full theology of Jesus as the Messiah, the promised Son of God.

## THE SETTING

As you can guess from its nearness to the beginning of John’s Gospel, the encounter with Nicodemus in John chapter 3 is near the beginning of Jesus’ earthly ministry. Jesus is encountering Nicodemus in Jerusalem, where Jesus had traveled with His disciples to observe the Passover. By the time Nicodemus sneaks out to meet Jesus, Jesus has already made quite the stir in Jerusalem. He had flipped the moneylender’s tables and run the cattle out of the Temple, leading to a tense interaction with the Pharisees. Nicodemus was one of these Pharisees, but apparently, Jesus had made an impression on him. He had sought out Jesus at night to learn more about Jesus’ identity and mission.

## THE MAIN POINT

The main point of John 3:16 is about as clear-cut as you can get. As we talk about what Jesus said about faith, this passage is at the forefront. It is a succinct explanation of both the Gospel and of Jesus’ purpose for coming to earth. Your students will see that their faith is the key that unlocks all that Christ has purchased for them through His life, death, and resurrection.

## LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains three elements: An introductory activity called The Lead-In; the Bible study section called The Main Event; an application-focused segment called The Last Word.

### THE LEAD-IN

- **Goal:** To help students begin thinking about the right way and the wrong way to do things.
- **Set-Up:** It would be great to accompany this lesson with images from any of the various “fail” blogs or websites. If you feel brave, you can search the Internet for images that denote specific “fails,” i.e., people riding bikes where the front wheel has come off, people overloading a car and all the tires puncture, and so on. The problem is that there seems to be a lot of relatively objectionable, or off-color material associated with these types of image searches. So, if you decide to try and locate and print images that show examples of how not to do something, exercise good judgment. Don’t do the search with your students present, just in case.

**FIRST**, introduce students to the idea of the right way and the wrong way of going about things. Explain that there are usually more than one way to go about doing a task. But, there are still some ways that are better than others. There are still right ways and wrong ways.

**(NOTE: If you ended up finding some images of people doing things the wrong way, show them as examples of the wrong way to go about a specific activity.)**

**THEN**, lead students in a discussion using the following scenarios and questions. Have fun with this and encourage students to be creative. **Ask:**

- **Let’s say you’re going to (unfortunately) break up with your boyfriend or girlfriend. What’s an example of the right way to do this? What are some examples of the wrong way?**  
Answers will vary.

Encourage students to be fun and creative in their responses. After students have shared, go on to the following scenarios **asking the same questions after each one:**

- **You have to tell your parents you got a D on your report card. Right way? Wrong way?**
- **You tell your best friend that you just got a new car for your birthday. Right way? Wrong way?**
- **You have to inform your neighbor that you lost their dog while you were taking it for a walk. Right way? Wrong way?**
- **You’re giving a report for your history class. Right way to end your presentation? Wrong way?**

**FINALLY**, after you’ve had some fun with this, transition to the Main Event by saying something similar to the following:

- **This is the first lesson in a four-week study on what Jesus has to say about our faith. We’re going to cover our faith from quite a few different angles. But in this first lesson, we’re going to start with the basics. You know, people try and find salvation and purpose through a lot of different ways. But only one way is the right way. Let’s see what Jesus had to say about the right way to salvation.**

## THE MAIN EVENT

- **Goal:** To help your students understand that their faith in Jesus is the means by which they find forgiveness and an eternal relationship with Christ.
- **Set-Up:** None needed.

**FIRST**, explain to students that you want to get on the same page regarding what you mean when you mention the concept of “faith.”  
**Ask:**

- **When we talk about our faith in general, what are we talking about?**

**Answer:** It could be that the word faith describes our overall belief system, as in the way we might describe Christianity as a whole.

- **But when we personalize it, when I talk about my faith in Christ, or you talk about your faith in Christ, what are we really saying?**

**Answer:** We’re talking about our personal belief in God.

Explain that though you might spend some time talking about the big-picture understanding of our faith as a whole, what you’re going to be focused on most is the intimate, personal faith we have in Christ. And you’re going to be talking a lot over the next few weeks about the quality and qualities of this faith. But for today, you’re going to start with the basics using a pretty familiar passage.

**THEN**, explain that you’re going to start by looking at what Jesus had to say in the Gospel of John. Instruct students to turn to John 3. While students are looking, make sure you take a few moments to provide the context for the passage using the Bible Background. Pay close attention to the Setting. Summarize it for your students so that they grasp exactly when this passage of Scripture occurs in Jesus’ ministry.

**NEXT**, read or have a student read John 3:16-18. When you’ve finished, lead students in a brief discussion **using questions similar to the following:**

- **This is one of the most familiar passages in the Bible. What do you think it is about this passage that makes it widely read and quoted?**

Answers will vary. But the idea is that it contains a very simple, yet powerful summary of the Gospel. It’s “short, but sweet” as the cliché goes.

- **As we think about our faith, our personal belief in God, these verses have a lot to say about it. Let’s start with the beginning. What reason does Jesus give for God sending Him to the world? What was the motivating factor?**

**Answer:** Love. Because God loved us, He sent His Son.

- **Think for a second about this love God had. What is remarkable about it? What strikes you as significant about Him loving our world?**

Answers may vary. But lead students to see that at least one of the main reasons this is significant is that the world wasn’t and isn’t a very lovable place. People are sinful. And while the world is full of God’s beauty, it’s also full of brokenness. That’s why God’s love as a motivating factor is amazing. We certainly didn’t deserve it.

- **In this verse, we see the means by which we can gain something pretty awesome. What do we gain, and what are the means by which we gain it?**

**Answer:** Jesus said we gain eternal life instead of death, and He said we gain it through believing in Him.



# THE JESUS STUDIES

You need to be reminded of the issues teenagers deal with as they try to live out their faith in a world that's often opposed to their core beliefs. Navigating these issues can be rough. Teenagers get so many mixed messages; the world says one thing, their friends may say another. And we hope they know enough about their faith to know how to make sense of it all. We hope...

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