

JESUS REJECTED IN NAZARETH

LUKE 4



KEY PASSAGE: Daniel 4:3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why did Jesus perform miracles? Jesus performed miracles to glorify God, to show He is the Son of God, and to care for people.

CHRIST CONNECTION: All people sin and need a Savior, but not everyone will believe in Jesus. Only those who believe the good news about Jesus and repent will be rescued from sin and death.

STORY POINT: Jesus taught that He is the Messiah.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

At the beginning of this week’s Bible story, the people’s eyes were fixed on Jesus, hanging onto His every word. At the end of the story, however, they were so angry at Jesus they planned on throwing Him off a cliff to shut Him up. What happened to trigger such an abrupt change in the people’s attitude toward Jesus?

For Jesus’ neighbors in Nazareth, it was a mix of pride and disbelief. The Jews had no problem when Jesus followed their customs by reading a scroll in their synagogue on the Sabbath. But when Jesus began to show how the Old Testament pointed to Him, the people began to murmur and doubt. How could the man they had seen grow up on their streets be the expected Messiah?

What’s more, Jesus began sharing scriptural examples of times when God’s people rejected His blessings and when grace and mercy were applied to Gentiles (non-Jews). This was the tipping point for those listening to Jesus, as they were appalled at the idea that God’s blessings were not theirs by default due to their ancestry.

This story offers two lessons to today’s listeners. First, we are not in God’s family because we go to church, live in a certain area, or have family members who love Jesus. Help kids see that each person must respond to the gospel individually with faith and repentance. It is only by grace through faith that we are saved.

Secondly, Jesus is a polarizing presence in a lost world. In today’s story we quickly see a fascination with Jesus turn into hatred of Him. This echoes Jesus’ words elsewhere in Scripture that “anyone who is not with me is against me, and anyone who does not gather with me scatters” (Matthew 12:30). Help kids see that there is no neutral ground when it comes to considering Jesus. Every person must decide to either reject Him or worship Him as Lord.

Consider sharing with kids the turning point in your life when you saw Jesus for who He really is and responded in faith and repentance. Help kids see that Jesus really is the loving Messiah who came to redeem, forgive, and restore our relationship with God.



Scan the QR code to listen to The Gospel Project for Kids Weekly Leader Training Podcast.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "Who Does Jesus Say He Is?" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- masking tape



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- poster board

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- index cards

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "Jesus Rejected in Nazareth" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- picture of Jewish synagogue remains (optional)

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 22, Session 2" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- "South America Map" printable

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "From Generation to Generation (Daniel 4:3)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ Where is your hometown? What is your favorite thing about it? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the “Who Does Jesus Say He Is?” activity page.

| **SAY** “ By following the scrolls you were able to uncover a name that reveals more about who Jesus is. In today’s story, we’ll learn that **JESUS TAUGHT THAT HE IS THE MESSIAH** who the prophet Isaiah foretold. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: RESCUE MISSION

Before the session, mark a line across the middle of the floor using tape. Use more tape to create two 6x6 foot squares several feet away on either side of the line. Divide the kids into two teams with one team on each side of the line. Explain that the zone they are standing in is their team’s safe zone, they cannot be tagged in that area. Choose two or three kids from each team to stand in the opposite team’s square. Everyone else must try to rescue their teammates from the other side without getting tagged. Any kid not in the square can tag players from the other team. When a kid is tagged, they must freeze until a teammate taps their arm to unfreeze them. To rescue a teammate, the rescuer and the rescuee must link arms and not break apart until they make it over the line.

| **SAY** “ What was the hardest part about rescuing your teammates? [Allow responses.] God told the prophets that He would send the Messiah to rescue His people from sin. In today’s story, we’ll see that **JESUS TAUGHT THAT HE IS THE MESSIAH.** ”

OPTION 2: BUILD A STORY



Gather the kids on the floor in a circle. Explain that together you will be creating a story. Start the story by saying five or six words, such as *Cade was walking Monday morning when...* Call on one of the kids to continue adding to the story you began. Then she must call on another classmate. Repeat this until each kid has added words and the story is complete.

| **SAY** “ We each contributed part of one big story. All the stories in the Bible are part of one big story about our need for a Savior and Jesus coming to rescue people from sin. Today we will learn that **JESUS TAUGHT THAT HE IS THE MESSIAH.** ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, there! Thanks for joining us as we learn from God’s Word together! My name is [your name], and today we will be hearing more about Jesus’ early ministry as we read in the book of Luke. Can anyone remind me what we learned last week? [Allow responses.] Jesus showed His power by healing an official’s son. Today we will hear Jesus speak in His hometown of Nazareth. If you brought your Bible to class, go ahead and take it out. [Use this time to distribute a Bible to any kid who needs one.] Let’s pray together before we open God’s Word. ‘God, thank You for showing us who You are through Your Word and Your Son, Jesus. Help our ears and hearts to listen as we read together. Amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ Last week, we studied a new truth about Jesus through our big picture question: **Why did Jesus perform miracles?** Do you remember the answer we learned? [Allow responses.] Let’s say the answer together. **Jesus performed miracles to glorify God, to show He is the Son of God, and to care for people.** By healing the official’s son, Jesus revealed how great His power is. He spoke, and the boy was healed. But some people missed the point of Jesus’ miracles and did not believe. Today, we will learn that **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE HE IS THE MESSIAH.** ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ During Jesus’ early ministry, He began to show people why He had truly come. Through Jesus’ miracles, He demonstrated His great power and our great need for a Savior. Jesus taught that we are all dead in our sin and must be born again to enter into God’s kingdom. By healing the official’s son, Jesus revealed His glory and pointed toward His power to save those who believe in Him. Today, we will learn how Jesus taught those in Nazareth that He is the Messiah. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Luke 4. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Rejected in Nazareth.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JESUS REJECTED IN NAZARETH

“While Jesus was traveling through Galilee, He came to the city of Nazareth, where He had grown up. He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, as He did every week. He stood up to read and was given a scroll that contained the writings of the prophet Isaiah. Here is what He read:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because He has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me
to proclaim release to those in prison
and to give sight to the blind
to set free those in oppression,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Then Jesus rolled up the scroll and sat down. **Everyone in the synagogue was looking at Jesus as He said, “Today, this Scripture has been fulfilled.” Jesus was claiming that Isaiah was talking about Him!**

Everyone was amazed by the way Jesus was talking. But they also said, “Isn’t He Joseph’s son?” **The people had known Jesus since He was a boy, and they wondered how Isaiah’s words could be about Him.**

Then **Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in his own hometown.** But I say to you, there were many widows living during the time Elijah was serving God as a prophet. At that time, there was no rain for three years and six months, and many people were starving and in need of food. Yet Elijah was only sent to save one woman who was not from Israel.”

Jesus also said, “And in the time of the prophet Elisha, many people suffered from leprosy. But only one man was cleansed: Naaman the Syrian.”

This made the people in the synagogue very angry. They chased Jesus out of town and planned on throwing Him over a cliff! But Jesus passed through the crowd and went on His way.

Christ Connection: All people sin and need a Savior, but not everyone will believe in Jesus. Only those who believe the good news about Jesus and repent will be rescued

STORYTELLING TIPS

Read aloud: Consider printing the words of Isaiah onto a piece of paper and roll it up like a scroll. As you read, pick a kid to stand and read the scroll aloud as Jesus would have done.

Picture it: Use a search-engine image search to find a picture to show the kids of the remains of a Jewish synagogue that have been recovered by archaeologists in the town of Gamla.



| from sin and death. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ During Jesus’ earthly ministry, Jewish people went to the temple and to local synagogues to worship God together. As a Jew, Jesus visited the synagogue to participate in the reading of Scripture. What book in the Old Testament did Jesus read from? [Allow responses.] Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah was coming and that the Spirit of the Lord would be on Him. Jesus read words and said they were about Him. By doing this, Jesus was showing the people that He was the Messiah Isaiah was talking about. Jesus came to preach the good news of salvation to people who were powerless and poor in spirit.

How did the people respond when Jesus finished talking? [Allow responses.] When someone has known you for a long time, sometimes it’s hard for them to remember that you aren’t as young as you used to be! The people in Nazareth had known Jesus since He was a child, so it was hard for them to believe He was the Messiah. But Jesus used the examples of Elijah and Elisha to remind the people that if they rejected Him, God would send Him to share the message of salvation with other people. The crowd’s attempt to kill Jesus revealed that some people would reject Jesus. But because it was not time yet for Jesus to die, He passed safely through the crowd.

All people sin and need a Savior, but not everyone will believe in Jesus. Only those who believe the good news about Jesus and repent will be rescued from sin and death. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ **JESUS TAUGHT THAT HE IS THE MESSIAH**, God’s Son. Some people rejected Jesus, and eventually they crucified Him on a cross, fulfilling God’s plan to save believers from sin. Because of Jesus’ death and resurrection, those who trust in Him are saved. To learn more about what it means to trust your life to Jesus, talk to one of your parents or a church leader. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 22, Session 2” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why do some people believe in Jesus, but not others?
2. What does it mean to repent of our sin?



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Print the “South America Map” printable. Show the country of Chile on the map.

SAY “ Christians from churches in Kentucky are helping churches in the country of Chile in South America tell people about Jesus. One Kentucky pastor said the churches in Chile are doing a great job teaching people about Jesus and helping Christians there grow as followers of Jesus. But there were not enough churches to help all the people in Chile know about Jesus. The pastor said the churches in Chile need Christians to partner with them to start new churches because the city is so large. ”

The Kentucky missions team learned that Santiago, the capital of Chile, is full of many people, but very few of them are true believers in Jesus.

The Christians from Kentucky want to help the churches in Chile, whether it is going to train their church members, helping build a new church building, offering assistance with health clinics, or volunteering in their schools.

The Kentucky pastor said that the Christians in Kentucky also want to know what is happening in the churches in Chile so that they can pray for them each week.

Pray, thanking God for the Christians in Kentucky who want to help people know about Jesus in Chile. Pray for more churches to partner with the churches in Chile.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Daniel 4:3 together.

SAY “ Jesus revealed that He is the Messiah. Through His ministry, Jesus came to introduce a new kingdom that will never end! Let’s learn more about this in our key passage. ”

Select one kid to be the king or queen while the other kids recite the key passage aloud. The class must say the passage while following the actions of the king or queen. If the king or queen sits, the kids must sit and say the passage. If the king or queen spins around, the kids must spin around and say the passage. Allow the kids to take turns being the king or queen and creating actions.

Lead kids to sing “From Generation to Generation (Daniel 4:3).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ God, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, the Messiah, to save us from our sin. Give us the courage to share the good news of Your eternal kingdom with those who don’t know You. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Luke 4. Explain that the book of Luke is one of the four Gospels and records many of the events of Jesus' early ministry. The kind of synagogue Luke mentions would have been common in many of the towns in Israel, and the remains of several synagogues have been uncovered by modern archaeologists.

Consider pointing out the location of Nazareth [E5] on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Luke 4:28-30 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ Jesus shared the good news of the gospel with the people in His hometown of Nazareth. However, they chose not to believe this important truth. Like the people in Nazareth, we each get to make the decision of whether we choose to accept God’s gift of grace. Not everyone who hears the message of the gospel will choose to believe it. The punishment for our sin is death, but Jesus took the punishment sin deserves on Himself. Because of His death and resurrection, those who trust in Him have been given new life! ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ How does the attempt to kill Jesus point to His future death? ”

Remind kids that Jesus was not accepted by everyone, and that the people’s rejection of Jesus led them to crucify Him. The crowd’s attempt to kill Jesus points toward His death on the cross, which was part of God’s plan for salvation all along. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Acts 2:23.)

SAY “ How has Jesus fulfilled the prophecy in Isaiah? ”

Isaiah said that the Messiah would preach good news to the poor and set people free. Jesus brought the good news of salvation from sin to everyone through His death and resurrection. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Acts 10:38.)

SAY “ Do people still reject Jesus today? ”

Explain that we have all rejected God by sinning against Him. Jesus came to bring salvation from sin to everyone who trusts in Him. Those who do not believe in Jesus as God’s Son have rejected Him. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 John 2:23.)





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: PUZZLING PIECES

Prior to the session, write the big picture question and answer in large letters on a poster board. Cut the poster board into puzzle pieces. Hide all but one piece, holding that piece back until later. When it's time for the activity, challenge the kids to find all the pieces and work together to put the puzzle together. Once they realize they're missing a piece, hand it over to them, so they can complete the puzzle. Ask the kids to discuss what it was like to work the puzzle and realize they were missing the final piece.

SAY “ God had a plan to redeem His people from sin. **JESUS TAUGHT THAT HE IS THE MESSIAH.** Similar to how your puzzle came together when you put in the missing piece, God’s plan of salvation came together when Jesus, the Messiah, came to rescue believers from sin. ”

OPTION 2: GUESS WHO



Instruct the kids to sit in a circle. Write the names of each kid on index cards. Scramble the cards and hand out one to each kid. Remind the kids not to show his or her card to anyone. Go around the circle one at a time. Have each kid describe the classmate listed on his or her card. Encourage the kids to use kind descriptors and not just list physical attributes, but focus on describing their personality, favorite things, number of siblings, how they have contributed to the class today, etc. Allow the kids to continue offering clues until the correct person is guessed. Play until you've made it around the circle.

SAY “ By describing your classmate, others were able to guess who you were talking about. But we don’t need to guess who Jesus is! **JESUS TAUGHT THAT HE IS THE MESSIAH** who came to save us from sin. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.