



JESUS' MINISTRY - PART 3

Life & Ministry of Jesus • U2#3 1st-3rd Grade • July 30, 2023

Concept

Jesus has the words of eternal life!

Goal

Students will learn about the context of the last months of Jesus' ministry. They will learn that Jesus taught many things that were challenging for people to understand, but we can listen to and trust his words since they are true.

Passage

John 6:22-69

Key Verse: "“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.” (John 6:68-69)

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jesus in His Land Perean/Judea map, 1/student• Pencils <p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>"Jesus in His Land" large laminated map</i>• <i>King-size sheet with map of Israel</i>• Styrofoam cups, 6/class	<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Magnets, 3 or more/ classroom

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information/Teacher Helps

Life & Ministry of Jesus • U2#3 1st-3rd Grade • July 30, 2023

At this point in Jesus' ministry, the emphasis changed distinctly as His public popularity waned and hostility and opposition increased.

"Jesus' message met a mixed response among first-century Jews, many of whom preferred the style of John the Baptist, with his insect diet and his stern message of judgment and wrath, to Jesus' message of grace and a banquet spread for all. I can understand this odd preference for the law because of the legalistic environment I grew up in. Grace was slippery, evanescent, hard to get my mind around. Sin was concrete, visible, any easy target to pounce on. Under law, I always knew where I ranked...
"... In truth we Christians, too, may find it easier to follow a God who simply says, 'Start obeying my commandments.'

"The society was, in effect, a religious caste system based on steps toward holiness, and the Pharisees' scrupulosity reinforced the system daily. All their rules on washing hands and avoiding defilement were an attempt to make themselves acceptable to God. Had not God set forth lists of desirable (spotless) and undesirable (flawed, unclean) animals for use in sacrifice? Had not God banned sinners, menstruating women, the physically deformed, and the other 'undesirables' from the temple?...

"In the midst of this religious caste system, Jesus appeared. To the Pharisees' dismay he had no qualms about socializing with children or sinners or even Samaritans...

"One of Jesus' stories, contrasting a pious Pharisee with a remorseful tax collector, captures the inclusive gospel of grace in a nutshell. The Pharisee, who fasted twice a week and tithed on schedule, piously thanked God that he was above robbers, evildoers, and adulterers—and far above the tax collector standing to the side. The tax collector, too humiliated even to raise his eyes to heaven, prayed the simplest prayer possible, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' Jesus drew the conclusion, 'I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God.'"[1]

[1] Yancey, Philip, *The Jesus I Never Knew*, ©1995, Zondervan Publishing House, various quotes from pp. 151-155.

Incorporation Lg. Group

Introduction Lg. Group

Activity Stations:

- **Geography – Jesus' Ministry Part 3 Map**
 - **Instructions:** Use a Bible to look up the verses in the box beside the map. Identify the location of the event and write its number on the map.
- **Activity - Magnets**
 - **Instructions:** Hold the negative side of a magnet to other negative sides and talk about how the magnets "run away". Hold the negative side of the magnet to the positive side and watch the magnets move toward the larger magnet. Use this example to talk about the different responses people have to Jesus.

Instructions: Have children stand around the edge of the big floor map. As you mention each location, have a teacher place the name and a child place a location marker and the picture on that location on the sheet map.

To say to the students: Jesus spent the first part of His public ministry in the regions of Judea and Galilee. Can anyone tell me anything about that first year? (People were curious about Jesus, Nicodemus asked Jesus questions; Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist.) The next year and a half of His public ministry was in mostly in the region of Galilee. Can anyone tell me about that next year and a half? (Jesus chose the disciples, was popular, did many miracles, turned water into wine.) At the end of the second part of His ministry, many of the religious leaders became more and more hostile toward Jesus. Many people quit following Jesus because they were afraid of the religious leaders. Jesus asked His disciples, "You do not want to go away also, do you?" Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life" (John 6:68). He went on to say, "And we have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God" (John 6:69).

Today we will talk about the third part of Jesus' ministry that lasted only a few months. Jesus spent His time in the regions of Perea and Judea. Let's find Perea on the map.

At the beginning of this last part, Jesus and His disciples left the city of Capernaum in Galilee to go to Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish Feast of Dedication, which today is called Hanukkah. In Jerusalem, the Jews tried to stone and arrest Him, but Jesus escaped and went across the Jordan River to the region of Perea. While in Perea, Martha and Mary sent word to Jesus that their brother Lazarus was very ill. Jesus returned to Bethany in Judea, where Lazarus had died, and Jesus raised him from the dead (John 11:1-46). This miracle made the Jewish leaders very angry so they began to plot to kill Him (John 11:45-53).

Introduction Continued

Lesson Lg. Group

The more Jesus taught the truth of God's grace during this last months of His ministry, the more people either chose to listen to Jesus or chose not to listen to him.

Listen as I read John 6:60-64,66-68. "Many of his disciples said, "This is very hard to understand. How can anyone accept it?" Jesus was aware that his disciples were complaining, so he said to them, "Does this offend you?... The Spirit alone gives eternal life. Human effort accomplishes nothing. And the very words I have spoken to you are spirit and life. 64 But some of you do not believe me." (For Jesus knew from the beginning which ones didn't believe, and he knew who would betray him.) At this point many of his disciples turned away and deserted him. Then Jesus turned to the Twelve and asked, "Are you also going to leave?" Simon Peter replied, "Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. 69 We believe, and we know you are the Holy One of God."

Many people were choosing to not believe what Jesus was saying and left, so He asked His disciples if they wanted to leave too. Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). This is our key verse. Peter knew that Jesus taught the truth about sin and God's grace. He knew that the truth was the only way to eternal life. Eternal life is living forever with God. (Expand some more on heaven and eternal life) Peter had followed Jesus for two and a half years. He watched Jesus heal people and love people. Peter was sure that Jesus was God and told the truth. Peter, the disciples and many people wanted to follow Jesus because they were humble and chose to trust him. They wanted to have a relationship with God and they knew they could never be good enough. They admitted that they were sinners and needed God's forgiveness. As Jesus showed them His life, Peter and the disciples were drawn more and more to Him. The more they saw Jesus' great love, the more they wanted to follow Him and be His friends. They knew He had the words of eternal life.

Let's get do an activity to show that there are different responses to Jesus.

"Responses to Jesus" Activity

Instructions: Have the students stand in a circle, have one in the middle saying things he/she thinks is the best (i.e. bacon, cheese, chocolate cake, etc.). If the children accept what the student is saying, or they agree, have them run toward the student in the middle. If they disagree with the statement, have them run away from the student. Allow them to vocalize disagreement if they want (within reason). Discuss how this is what happened to Jesus, He was saying statements that were actually TRUE, unlike our examples which were just opinions, and people either agreed with what he said and moved towards Jesus or disagreed and moved away from Jesus.

Transition

Learning Activity #1 Lg. Group

Transition

Learning Activity# 2 Sm. Groups

Let's get into small groups to talk about our lesson.

Discussion Questions:

- What do you think about these responses to Jesus? Why do you think some people were willing to listen to Jesus, and some people were unwilling to listen to Jesus?
- What was the difference between those who listened Jesus and those who didn't listen to Him?
- Those who listened to Jesus trusted what He had to say. What does it mean to trust what Jesus has to say?

Jesus says that everyone is a sinner and needs Jesus' death on the cross to be our replacement. God has to do something about the wrong things we have done, but we can ask for Jesus to pay the price for them for us! When we do this we get to be in a relationship with God, because all of our wrongs are paid for. The bible says, "There is no one good, not even one" (Paraphrased). So it doesn't matter if you are pretty good, or do some helpful things, Jesus says that we all need His help to be in a relationship with God, and we can ask for Jesus to pay for them for us! When we do this we get to be in a relationship with God, because all of our wrongs are paid for.

Does anyone know why being a pretty good person is not good enough for God? (allow for answers) God is perfect and only those who are perfect can have a relationship with him. But it's impossible for us to be perfect! When we have a relationship with God, you get to have God be with you at all times, God says to people who trust him: "I will never abandon (leave) you." (Hebrews 13:5)

After you start a relationship with God, do you quit sinning? NO! However because God will always be with you, He reminds you what it means to love him and other people. You will start to understand more and more what is true about God and about loving people. If you trust Him even after having a relationship with Him he will continue to lead you to love others, be a good friend, and trust Him to do even more scary or difficult things.

Jesus gives us so many reasons to trust what he is saying. If you aren't sure still if you trust His words, you can ask Him to help you trust Him!

Let's pray. If you are already a Christian, thank God for His grace and how he has the words of eternal life. Let's ask Him to help us to be willing to listen to him and trust what he says is true.

Extension

Game: "Where in Israel?"

Instructions: Refer to instructions from previous lesson. Use attached sheet.

WHERE IN ISRAEL QUESTIONS

1. In what regions did Christ and His disciples travel during the last four months of His public ministry?

A. Perea B. Cana C. Egypt **D. Judea**

2. Jesus and His disciples went to what city for the Feast of Dedication?

A. Capernaum B. Samaria **C. Jerusalem**

3. In what city did Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead?

A. Bethany B. Nazareth C. Bethlehem

4. What region is east of the Jordan River and near the Dead Sea?

A. Galilee **B. Perea** C. Samaria

5. What is the name of the river that separates the region of Samaria from the region of Perea?

A. Nile River **B. Jordan River** C. Yarmuck River

6. In what city did Jesus face the most intense opposition from the Pharisees?

A. Ephraim B. Capernaum **C. Jerusalem**