



Use Week of:

Unit 21 • Session 2

Jesus Taught in Nazareth

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Luke 4

STORY POINT:

Jesus taught that He is the Messiah.

KEY PASSAGE:

John 3:16

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What makes people special?
People are special because we are
made in God's image, as male
and female, to know Him.

INTRODUCE THE STORY

(10–15 MINUTES)

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TEACH THE STORY

(25–30 MINUTES)

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APPLY THE STORY

(25–30 MINUTES)

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Additional resources are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit MinistryGrid.com/thegospelproject.

LEADER Bible Study

Jesus was about thirty years old when He began His earthly ministry. After John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River, Jesus was tempted in the desert. Jesus traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover. Then He headed north to Galilee. He went through the region of Samaria, stopping at Jacob's well to talk to a Samaritan woman.

After, Jesus went to the town of Nazareth, where He had grown up. Nazareth was a small village in the hills between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean Sea. On the Sabbath day, Jesus went into the synagogue to teach. He read aloud the words of the prophet Isaiah. (See Isa. 61:1-2.) Jesus sat down. Everyone's eyes were on Him as He explained, "Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled." Jesus was saying, *It's Me*. The words Jesus read were coming true. Some people remembered Jesus from His youth. They asked, "Isn't this Joseph's son?"

Jesus knew their thoughts; Jesus had performed miracles in Capernaum, and the people wanted Jesus to do miracles in His hometown too. Jesus reminded them of two Old Testament accounts. Many widows lived in Israel when the prophet Elijah was there, but God sent Elijah to help a widow in another country. And Elisha likely encountered Israelites who had leprosy, but he healed Naaman the Syrian.

Jesus wanted the people to understand that His miracles were an act of grace—a gift. No one deserves God's grace, so God may show grace to whomever He pleases—even Gentiles. The people were angry about that last part. They drove Jesus away, intending to kill Him, but Jesus escaped through the crowd.

As you teach, explain that Jesus came to give sight to the blind and to set the captives free. He came preaching good news to all the people groups. Finally, the Messiah had come! Jesus was God's plan to save sinners.

The BIBLE Story

Jesus Taught in Nazareth

Luke 4

Jesus went to the town of Nazareth where He had lived when He was a boy. Now Jesus was grown. He traveled all around, teaching people about God. **On the Sabbath day, Jesus went to the synagogue in Nazareth.** The synagogue was a special building where Jews met together to pray, worship, and learn about the Scriptures.



Jesus stood up to read Scripture. He unrolled the scroll of the prophet Isaiah and read: “The Spirit of the Lord is on Me. He has chosen Me to tell good news to the poor. He has sent Me to tell the captives that they are free, to tell the blind that they can see, to free people who have been treated badly, and to announce that the Lord’s favor is on us.” Then Jesus rolled up the scroll. He gave it to the attendant and **sat down.**

Everyone in the synagogue stared at Jesus. **Jesus said, “Today as you listened to Me reading these words, they came true.”**

The people said good things about Jesus, and they were amazed at Him. But some of the people in Nazareth had known Jesus from His youth. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked. Jesus said, “No prophet is accepted in his hometown.” Jesus told

the people about times when God used prophets to help people who were not Jews. He reminded them of Elijah and Elisha. When there was a terrible famine in Israel and no rain fell there for three and a half years, plenty of widows in the country needed help. But the prophet Elijah did not help the widows in Israel. Instead, God sent Elijah to help a widow in another land.

And when Elisha was a prophet, many people in Israel had leprosy. They wanted to be healed, but Elisha did not heal them. Instead, he healed a man named Naaman (NAY muhn), and Naaman was from Syria—a country that hated God's people.

The people in the synagogue were angry. They forced Jesus out of town. They wanted to throw Him off a cliff, but Jesus walked right through the crowd and went on His way.

Christ Connection: Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah wrote about God's plan to send a Messiah. The Messiah would bring good news and redeem people who were broken and hurting. Jesus read Isaiah's words and announced that He is the promised Messiah.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Stand and sit:** Begin the story seated. Stand when Jesus stands and sit back down when He sits.
- **Vary tone:** Speak boldly when speaking Jesus' words. Whisper the questions of the crowd.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus Taught in Nazareth

BIBLE PASSAGE: Luke 4

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KEY PASSAGE: John 3:16

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to discuss a time they felt accepted, welcomed, or loved.

SAY • We all enjoy feeling accepted and loved. Jesus accepts us as we are and loves us despite our sin. Today, we will learn about a time Jesus was not accepted, but rejected! People did not believe the truth about Him and used force to make Him leave.

Activity page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the “Rejected” activity page. Encourage kids to scan the Bible story picture and circle all the silly items that do not belong in the picture.

SAY • Good job finding the things that don't belong. You rejected those items from the picture because they should not have been there. Today we will hear about a time people rejected Jesus. Why do you think people might reject Jesus?

- “Rejected” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Accept or reject

Direct kids to sit in a circle. Select a kid to go first. She will turn to the kid on her left and make a silly offer. He must say “accepted” or “rejected” based on how he feels about her offer. Then he will make a silly offer to the kid on his left. Play passes in this way until each kid has made an offer.

Suggested offers:

- I'll let you high-five my cactus.
- I'll shave your pet.
- I'll tie your shoes together.
- I'll let you wear my sunglasses at night.

SAY • Those were some silly offers. I don't blame you for rejecting most of them. Today we will learn about a time Jesus was rejected, even though His offer was wonderful and true. Who do you think rejected Jesus?

OPTION 2: Sort it out

Provide each kid with a small handful of buttons. Ask kids to sort the buttons by color, size, and shape. Then instruct the kids to count their buttons and reject all the buttons that have a given trait, such as those that are red, have two holes, or are not round. You may instead use coins, plastic gems, or other small objects.

• buttons, coins, or
plastic gems

SAY • You may have a good reason to remove certain objects. For example, if you are replacing a button, you might reject buttons that are the wrong size or color. Today we will learn about a time people rejected Jesus because of what He taught.

Transition to teach the story

TEACH the Story



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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.

Countdown

• countdown video

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

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire
• first aid kit

[Leader enters wearing navy blue cargo pants and a short-sleeve white button-down. He or she is carrying a first aid kit.]

LEADER • Hey, everyone! It's very nice to see you again. To those of you who are new, I'm glad to meet you. I'm an Emergency Medical Technician—an EMT—so I spend a lot of time either in an ambulance or in a hospital. I really enjoy my job because it's a great way to help people. If someone calls for an ambulance, I might show up on the scene to provide medical care until we reach a hospital, where doctors and nurses can take over.

That is, of course, assuming you agree to come with me in the ambulance. If someone calls an ambulance for you, you can choose whether or not you want to go with the EMTs. I recently met a man who had just been in a car collision. Another driver on the road called 911, and I happened to be

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

working that shift. When I arrived, the driver in the accident was up, walking around, and had called a friend to come pick him up. We offered to take him to the hospital to get checked out just in case, but he said he didn't want to. Thankfully, he was not hurt.

In a way, that reminds me of a Bible story. Jesus was explaining to some people who He is and how He can help them, but they rejected Him and His help. I'll tell you all about it.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • We know that Jesus helped many people. That leads us to our big picture question: *What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.* God created us and loves us. He sent Jesus to save us because we are special to Him. Nothing else God created is described as made in God's image. Human beings—men, women, and children—are unique in that way. It sets us apart from all other created things.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

• Giant Timeline

LEADER • After Jesus was baptized and tempted in the wilderness, He called disciples and began His public ministry. We learned last week that Jesus traveled around teaching amazing things about God. **People came to Jesus, and He healed them.** This week, we will learn what happened when Jesus went back to where He grew up to teach people about Himself.

Our story is called “Jesus Taught in Nazareth.”

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Luke 4. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Taught in Nazareth.”

LEADER • One of my favorite things about the Bible is how it all fits together to tell one story. Jesus proved this when He read from the scroll of Isaiah. The prophecy talked about captives being set free. It said that there would be someone anointed by God to bring good news. Jesus explained that He is the One Isaiah had written about 700 years earlier.

Jesus taught that He is the Messiah. At first, the people seemed pretty impressed—and maybe a little confused. But when Jesus reminded them of how Elijah and Elisha helped people from outside Israel, the people in the synagogue became angry. To understand why, we need to understand what Jesus was teaching them.

God’s plan all along was to use the nation of Israel. God promised to bless them to bless the world. Over time, many of the Jewish people began to see God’s blessings as something only for them, not for other nations. Jesus was reminding them that God’s love doesn’t stop with Jewish people, but extends out to all people. All people are special to God. ***What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God’s image, as male and female, to know Him.***

Jesus was teaching them that His role in God’s plan was not to make Israel powerful again, but to bring

- Bibles
- “Jesus Taught in Nazareth” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

salvation to all nations—to everyone who believes in Him. This was God’s plan all along.

Christ connection

LEADER • Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah wrote about God’s plan to send a Messiah. The Messiah would bring good news and redeem people who were broken and hurting. Jesus read Isaiah’s words and announced that He is the promised Messiah.

Many of the religious leaders rejected Jesus because they did not want to believe that their sin was very bad. Even today some people reject Jesus because they believe they do not need a Savior. They may not believe that Jesus is who He said He is. But that should not stop us from teaching the truth.

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 21, Session 2” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about who rejects Jesus. Guide them to discuss what they love about Jesus or any questions they have about following Him.

• “Unit 21, Session 2” Questions from Kids video



Missions moment (3 minutes)

Display the “Las Vegas Photos” printable in the room or prepare to pass copies of it around for kids to see. As they examine the pictures, ask them to comment on some of the sites they see.

• “Las Vegas Photos” printable

LEADER • Las Vegas, Nevada, is a busy city and a popular spot for tourists. It’s also a city where many people ignore Jesus and live without hope. **Jesus taught that He is the Messiah**, but many people still don’t have

faith in Him. Some Christians have chosen to live in Las Vegas to teach people the truth about the gospel and the hope that Jesus gives. God wants the people in this popular city to turn away from sin and turn to Him.

Key passage (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- “In This Way (John 3:16)” song

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together John 3:16. Then sing “In This Way (John 3:16).”

LEADER • Our key passage reminds us of the gospel. God showed His love for people by sending Jesus. Jesus is God’s Son, and everyone who believes in Him will live forever with God.

Sing (4 minutes)

- “Take It to the Lord” song

LEADER • Jesus loves even those who reject Him. We must call on Him to be saved, but He loves even those who refuse to accept the gift of salvation. He is the best friend we could ever have.

Sing together “Take It to the Lord.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Thank You, Lord, for sending Jesus to be the Messiah. Thank You for loving us even in our sin. We know that we need You. Help us obey You out of love. Give us courage to tell others about You and protect us from feeling discouraged when others reject Jesus. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

APPLY the Story



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KEY PASSAGE: John 3:16

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What makes people special? People are special because we are made in God's image, as male and female, to know Him.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- "Key Passage Flip Cards" Printable
- pencils

Print the "Key Passage Flip Cards" printable double sided onto heavyweight paper using the translation of your choice. Then cut them apart. Help the kids fold the cards in half so that only one level is visible at a time. The kids will start on level one and fill in the missing words. After completing each level, kids will flip the card and fold back the completed levels to work on the next level without peeking at the completed levels.

SAY • This key passage, recorded by John, is words spoken by Jesus Himself. Jesus explained that God showed His love by sending a Rescuer to save people from sin. We can have eternal life with God by believing in Jesus' death and resurrection for our sin. That is the good news of the gospel. God loves us in this way because all people are special to Him.

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970, optional)

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help kids find Luke 4. You may use the New Testament Israel Map to show the kids where Nazareth is located. (E5) Remind kids that Luke is part of the Gospels, along with Matthew, Mark, and John.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Where did Jesus grow up? (*Nazareth, Luke 4:16*)
2. From whose scroll did Jesus read? (*the prophet Isaiah's, Luke 4:17*)
3. How did the people react to Jesus? (*amazed and confused at first, then angry; Luke 4:22,28*)
4. How do we know Jesus really is the Messiah? *Guide kids to discuss the overwhelming evidence that Jesus is the Messiah. Remind them of all the prophecies that Jesus fulfilled, such as His birth in Bethlehem. Point out His power to heal people and remind them that God called Jesus His Son. Jesus' claim in this story is well supported by other evidence.*
5. What does it mean to accept Jesus rather than reject Him? *Help kids see that when our faith is in Jesus, we are doing more than admitting that He is the Messiah, we are also saying that He is the Lord of our lives. When we believe in Jesus, we are saying that we want Him to guide and control our lives. We want to obey Him out of love and serve Him to glorify God.*
6. What can we do if we know someone who rejects Jesus? *Remind kids that we cannot save anyone. Our job when we believe the gospel is to teach other people about Jesus. Help kids understand that God is the One who saves people. Discuss the importance of prayer in leading others to Jesus. Make sure they know that we treat everyone with kindness and respect, even if they don't yet believe the gospel.*

SAY • Jesus taught that He is the Messiah. Jesus loves people and wants to see everyone rescued from sin. We cannot make people believe, but we can tell them the good news so they can believe and be saved.

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

Activity choice (10 minutes)



OPTION 1: Bright signs

Provide each kid with a brightly colored sheet of heavyweight paper. Help the kids use brightly colored chenille stems to form the letters *J*, *E*, *S*, *U*, and *S*. Kids will then glue the chenille stem letters to their heavyweight paper. Allow time for kids to cut their signs into interesting shapes. You may provide markers for kids to write additional words to add to the sign messages.

SAY • Las Vegas is full of neon signs that mark popular tourist spots, restaurants, and hotels. Missionaries go into this busy city with all the neon lights to tell people about Jesus and start churches. Hang your sign somewhere you will see daily to remind you to shine brightly for Jesus.

OPTION 2: Along the line

Use tape to mark a line down the center of the room. Designate one end as “good” and the other as “not good.” Ask the kids to stand somewhere along the line based on how they feel about themselves in regards to different criteria, such as their skill at dancing, their ability to draw, or their feelings about eating vegetables. End by asking them how they feel about their spiritual life. Ask them where along the line a person would be to need Jesus to rescue him or her.

SAY • We sometimes make the mistake of thinking certain sinful choices are worse than others. Some people may think they are good enough and don't need a Rescuer. Some people may think they are so bad that they cannot be rescued. The truth is, everyone who is on the line needs rescuing. There's no such thing as

· brightly colored
heavyweight paper

· brightly colored
chenille stems

· glue

· scissors

· markers

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment found in Teach the Story.

LOW PREP

· masking tape

being “too good to need Jesus” or “too bad for Jesus to save you.” We all need to be rescued.

Jesus taught that He is the Messiah. He alone can save us when we ask Him to. And He wants to see all people saved!

Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)

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

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

Make sure to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.

· pencils and crayons
· paper
· Bible Story Coloring
Page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.