

FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH: PREPARING FOR MINISTRY

(The Gospel Project Volume 7 Unit 19: Customized from the Preschool, Younger, and Older Leader Guides)

BIG PICTURE QUESTION FOR THIS UNIT:

What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

KEY PASSAGE FOR THIS UNIT:



The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

John 1:29

TODAY'S LESSON: Jesus Came to Be the Sacrifice for Sin (BIG TRUTH LESSON)

The phrase "take away" has many different connotations and applications. For a four-year-old, it means someone stole their toy. For a basketball player, it means a steal. For a math teacher, it means subtraction. So, what does it mean that Jesus came to "take away the sin of the world"?

In John 1:29, as John the Baptist saw Jesus coming along the banks of the river where he had been baptizing people and calling for repentance, John said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

This statement raises a question that's important for every person: What does it mean that Jesus came to take away the sin of the world? A look to Hebrews 10 brings clarity as we seek to allow Scripture to help interpret the question.

The writer of Hebrews reminds us that the Old Testament sacrificial system was good, but not enough. Though this system proved to be a faithful response to the call of God for His people prior to Christ's arrival, it was never intended to be a permanent means of atonement for the sin of God's people.

Hebrews 10:12-14 says, "But this man [Jesus], after offering one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God. He is now waiting until his enemies are made his footstool. For by one offering he has perfected forever those who are sanctified."

Jesus was the perfect sacrifice because He lived a sinless life and died once as a single offering for sins. All who trust in His death and resurrection are eternally forgiven as His sacrifice has satisfied the wrath of God on their behalf.

This is what it means that Jesus takes away the sin of the world: Jesus died once for all, that those who trust in Christ would no longer be held captive by their sin and that they would be able to stand before God, redeemed by the blood of Jesus shed for sins. This is the greatest "take away" the world has ever known.

TERMS TO KNOW:

Jesus' sacrifice: Hebrews portrays Christ as the sinless High Priest who offered Himself up as a sacrifice for sinners (7:27). With the death of Christ, animal sacrifice became unnecessary. As the temple and priest of God, the believer now has the

responsibility for offering acceptable spiritual sacrifices (Rom. 12:1–2; 1 Pet. 2:5; Heb. 13:15).

PREPARING YOUR CHILDREN FOR GOD’S WORD:

Make sure that your children have a Bible with them even if they are too young to read.
Have your kids sing along with the worship songs that are posted for this week.

THE BIBLE STORY:

JESUS CAME TO BE THE SACRIFICE FOR SIN

God first gave the Israelites His law through Moses so that they could understand that God is holy. The law showed that people are sinners. The law could not save the people, but it was like a shadow—hinting at something greater. Under the law, the people offered sacrifices for their sins. But they were still guilty. It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Jesus came to be the ultimate sacrifice for sin. He came to do God’s plan, ending the old way of sacrifices by offering Himself as the perfect sacrifice—once and for all.

Under the law, the priests stood day after day, offering the same sacrifices. But those sacrifices never took away sins. But Jesus came to offer Himself one time. Then He sat down at the right hand of God. With one sacrifice, Jesus takes away the sin of everyone who trusts in Him.

The Lord said, “I will never again remember their sins and the wrong things they have done.” Because God forgives our sin, we no longer need to make a sacrifice to pay for sins.

Because all this is true, God calls us to live in a way that honors Him. He invites us to come to Him with boldness and without fear. Jesus’ blood has made the way for us to have hearts that are clean and without guilt. Jesus makes us pure when we have faith in Him. He gives us hope, and we can tell the world about it. We can trust Him to do all He has promised.

We can help one another do what is right by loving others and doing good works. We can meet together and encourage one another because one day, Jesus will come again.

APPLICATION:

When Jesus came to save us, He came to be the perfect sacrifice for sin. Why was Jesus the perfect sacrifice? Jesus never sinned. He was fully human like us, except He never sinned. How many times did Jesus need to be a sacrifice for our sin? One time! Jesus died on the cross once and offers us forgiveness of our sin forever. His work is finished, and He sits at the Father’s right hand.

How does God want us to respond to Jesus’s sacrifice? He wants us to believe in Jesus and be saved! When we trust in Jesus, God changes us to be more and more like Him. We can ask God to help us obey Him and want the things He wants. We can encourage each other by telling people about Jesus and reminding them of what Jesus did to save them. One day, Jesus will come again.

Even though we struggle with sin, our faith in Jesus makes us righteous before God. God sees us as having been washed clean, and He does not count our sin against us. Jesus’ sacrifice is good news for sinners!

In the temple, a curtain separated the most holy place—where God dwelt— from the other areas in the temple where people could go. Only a priest could enter behind the curtain once a year to offer sacrifices for the people’s sins.

Hebrews teaches us that when Jesus died for our sins, the veil was torn. Now through Jesus, all who trust in Him are no longer separated from God because of their sin. The perfect sacrifice of Jesus washes away our sin when we trust in Him. God no longer lives in a temple, but lives in us through His Spirit.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus came to be the sacrifice for sin. He lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead. In Him, we have complete forgiveness once and for all.

TIMELINE MOMENT:

Over the last several weeks, we have learned about the beginning of Jesus' life on earth. An important truth we have learned is that Jesus never sinned. He perfectly obeyed God and was baptized and resisted the devil's temptations. He chose 12 disciples to follow Him, and they believed He was the Messiah. Today, we learn that everything Jesus did was because He had come to save sinners by becoming the perfect sacrifice for our sin.

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS:

2-5 Year Olds:

What was your favorite part of today's Bible story?

What did you learn about God in today's Bible story?

Why did God send Jesus to the earth?

What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead.

Kindergarten-2nd Grade:

Why is a sacrifice necessary to pay for sin?

Help your kids understand that the wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23) Tell your kids that we deserve to die for our sin. Remind your kids that God made animals a substitute sacrifice to pay for the people's sin in the Old Testament. Discuss how Jesus was the ultimate sacrifice because He paid for our sin once and for all.

Is there anything else we need to do to be forgiven by God? Why not?

Lead your kids to understand that Jesus' sacrifice is complete and is the only way for our sin to be forgiven. Help your kids understand that we do nothing to earn our salvation. Remind your kids that our faith does produce good works in us that

we are able to live out.

Do we ever need to be afraid to come to God with our sin? Why not?

Remind your kids that through Jesus we do not need to fear the punishment of God for our sin. Tell your kids that through Jesus we can boldly and freely come to God. Help your kids understand that God no longer sees our sin but instead sees that we have been made clean through our faith in Jesus.

3rd-5th Grade:

Why could the sacrifices required by the law never fully wash away sin?

Remind your kids that the sacrifices required by the law had to be offered continually because it is impossible for the blood of animals to take away sins. Explain that God sent His Son to become a human and live a perfect life in our place. Remind your kids that Jesus' perfect humanity was the perfect sacrifice required by God for our sin.

(Option: read Heb. 10:10.)

Is there anything we need to add to Jesus' sacrifice? Why not? Or is there anything else we need to do to be forgiven by God? Why?

Lead your kids to understand that Jesus' sacrifice is complete and is fully able to bring us salvation. Help your kids understand that we do nothing to earn our salvation. Remind your kids that good works do not save us, but our faith does produce good works in us that we are able to live out.

(Option: read Heb. 10:18.)

As we wait for Jesus to return, how can we live in a way that honors Him?

Remind your kids that we can continue to live by faith as we trust in God's promises. Encourage your kids to help one another do what is right by loving others and doing good works. Remind your kids that we can meet together and encourage one another to keep trusting Jesus.

(Option: read Heb. 10:23-25)

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask your 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 your kids.

God rules. Explain to your kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. 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 your 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. 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 your 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 your 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.