



New Testament

Seminary Teacher Manual



New Testament

Seminary Teacher Manual

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Introduction to the New Testament

Seminary Teacher Manual

Our Purpose

The Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion states:

“Our purpose is to help youth and young adults understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ, qualify for the blessings of the temple, and prepare themselves, their families, and others for eternal life with their Father in Heaven” (*Gospel Teaching and Learning: A Handbook for Teachers and Leaders in Seminaries and Institutes of Religion* [2012], 1).

To achieve our purpose, we teach students the doctrines and principles of the gospel as found in the scriptures and in the words of the prophets. These doctrines and principles are taught in a way that leads to understanding and edification. We help students fulfill their role in the learning process and prepare them to teach the gospel to others.

To accomplish these aims, you and the students you teach are encouraged to incorporate the following Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning as you study the scriptures together:

- Teach and learn by the Spirit.
- Cultivate a learning environment of love, respect, and purpose.
- Study the scriptures daily, and read the text for the course. [Charts for tracking scripture reading of the entire New Testament can be found with the New Testament Scripture Mastery Cards on LDS.org and on store.lds.org (item no. 10480).]
- Understand the context and content of the scriptures and the words of the prophets.
- Identify, understand, feel the truth and importance of, and apply gospel doctrines and principles.
- Explain, share, and testify of gospel doctrines and principles.
- Master key scripture passages and the Basic Doctrines” (*Gospel Teaching and Learning*, 10).

In addition to accomplishing these aims, you are to help students be faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ and learn to discern truth from error. Students may have questions about the Church’s doctrine, history, or position on social issues. You can

prepare students to address such questions by helping them to “seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118) and by using the resources in the Seek Truth section of si.lds.org.

This teacher manual has been prepared to help you be successful in accomplishing these aims.

Lesson Preparation

The Lord commanded those who teach His gospel to “teach the principles of my gospel, which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in the which is the fulness of the gospel” (D&C 42:12). He further instructed that these truths should be taught as “directed by the Spirit,” which “shall be given . . . by the prayer of faith” (D&C 42:13–14). As you prepare each lesson, prayerfully seek the guidance of the Spirit to help you understand the scriptures and the doctrines and principles they contain. Likewise, follow the promptings of the Spirit as you plan how to help your students understand the scriptures, learn to be taught by the Holy Ghost, and feel a desire to apply what they learn.

In this course, the New Testament is your primary text as you prepare and teach. Prayerfully study the chapters or verses you will be teaching. Seek to understand the context and content of the scripture block, including the story line, people, places, and events. As you become familiar with the context and content of the scripture block, seek to identify doctrines and principles it contains, and decide which truths are most important for your students to understand and apply. Once you have identified what your focus will be, determine which methods, approaches, and activities will best help your students learn and apply the sacred truths found in the scriptures.

This manual is designed to aid you in this process. Carefully review the lesson material corresponding to the scripture block you will teach. You may choose to use all or part of the suggestions for a scripture block, or you may adapt the suggested ideas to the needs and circumstances of the students you teach.

It is important that you help students study the entire scripture block in each lesson. Doing so will help students grasp the

full message the scripture writer intended to convey. However, as you plan your lesson, you may discover that you do not have enough time in a class period to use all the teaching suggestions in the manual. Seek the direction of the Spirit and prayerfully consider the needs of your students as you determine which portions of the scripture block to emphasize in order to help students feel the truth and importance of gospel truths and apply them in their lives. If time is short, you may need to adapt other portions of the lesson by briefly summarizing a group of verses or by guiding students to quickly identify a principle or doctrine before moving on to the next group of verses.

As you consider how to adapt lesson materials, be sure to follow this counsel from Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“President Packer has often taught, in my hearing, that we first adopt, then we adapt. If we are thoroughly grounded in the prescribed lesson that we are to give, then we can follow the Spirit to adapt it” (“4.3.4 Decide through Inspiration,” from “A Panel Discussion with Elder Dallin H. Oaks” [Seminaries and Institutes of Religion satellite broadcast, Aug. 7, 2012], LDS.org).

As you prepare to teach, be mindful of students who have particular needs. Adjust activities and expectations to help them succeed. Communication with parents and leaders will help you be aware of students’ needs and help you succeed in providing a meaningful and edifying experience for the students.

During your lesson preparation, you might choose to use the Notes and Journal tools on LDS.org or in the Gospel Library for mobile devices. You can use these tools to mark scriptures, conference addresses, Church magazine articles, and lessons. You can also add and save notes for use during your lessons. To learn more about how to use these tools, see the Notes and Journal Help page on LDS.org.

Some materials in this manual were adapted from the *New Testament Student Manual* (Church Educational System Manual, 2014).



Using the Daily Teacher Manual

Book Introduction

Book introductions provide an overview of each book. Among other things, they explain who wrote each book, describe some distinctive features of each book, and provide a summary of the content of each book.

Scripture Block Introduction

Scripture block introductions give a brief overview of the context and content of the scripture block for each lesson.

Verse Grouping and Contextual Summary

Scripture blocks are often divided into smaller segments or groups of verses that focus on a particular topic or action. The reference for each verse grouping is followed by a brief summary of the events or teachings within that group of verses.

Teaching Helps

Teaching helps provided in sidebars explain principles and methods of gospel teaching. They can assist you in your efforts to improve as a teacher.

Lesson Body

The body of the lesson contains guidance for you as you study and teach. It suggests teaching ideas, including questions, activities, quotations, diagrams, and charts.

Doctrines and Principles

As doctrines and principles naturally arise from the study of the scripture text, they are emphasized in bold to help you identify and focus on them in your discussion with students.

Pictures

Pictures of Church leaders and events from the scriptures represent visual aids you could display, if available, as you teach.

INTRODUCTION TO

The Gospel According to St. Mark

Why study this book?

The book of Mark relates the ministry, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ in a fast-moving account that often focuses on the powerful deeds of the Savior. Foremost among these is the Atonement, which Mark emphasized as central to Jesus's mission as the long-promised Messiah. By studying Mark's account and testimony of how the Savior fulfilled His atoning mission, students can become more converted to the gospel and find courage to follow the Savior.

Mark may have been with Peter in Rome during a period marked by severe trials of faith for many members of the Church in locations throughout the Roman Empire.

One-third of Mark's Gospel recounts the Savior's teachings and experiences during the last week of His life. Mark bore witness that the suffering Son of God ultimately triumphed over evil, sin, and death. This testimony meant that the Savior's followers did not need to fear, when they faced persecution, trials, or even death, they were following their Master. They could endure with confidence, knowing that the Lord would help them and that all His promises would ultimately be fulfilled.

Outline

Mark 1–4 Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist and begins preaching, calling disciples, and working miracles. As opposition against Him increases, He teaches in parables.

Mark 5–7 The Savior continues to work many miracles, demonstrating His compassion for others. After John the Baptist is killed, Jesus feeds more than five thousand people and walks on water. Jesus teaches against false traditions.

Who wrote this book?

Mark (and John Mark) is the author of the Gospel of Mark.

LESSON 46

Luke 5

Introduction

After miraculously catching a multitude of fish with the Savior's help, Peter, James, and John forsook all to follow the Savior and become fishers of men. Jesus healed a leper and a paralyzed man. He called Matthew to be

a disciple and taught that He came to call sinners to repentance. Jesus also taught the parable of new wine in old bottles.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 5:1–11

The Lord calls Peter, James, and John to become fishers of men

Write the following question on the board: *When have you been asked to do something without knowing all the reasons for doing it?* Ask students to ponder the question, and invite a few to share their experiences.

- Why can it be difficult to follow instructions without understanding the reasons for them?
- What commandments or counsel from Church leaders might some youth find difficult to obey if they don't fully understand the reasons for them? (Consider listing students' responses on the board.)

Invite students to look for a principle in Luke 5:1–11 that can help them when they don't fully understand why they are asked to follow the counsel or commandments of the Lord. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Luke 5:1–5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior asked Simon (Peter) to do after He had finished preaching. Ask students to report what they find. (If necessary, point out that verse 4, footnote a clarifies that *draught* refers to a catch or haul of fish.)

- What did Simon tell the Savior about their previous efforts to catch fish?
- What might Simon's own fishing experience have led him to think when the Savior told him to let down the nets again?

- What did Simon say that showed he trusted the Lord?

Invite a student to read Luke 5:6–9 aloud, and ask the class to look for what happened when Simon did what the Lord asked.

- What happened when Simon did what the Lord asked?
- What principle can we learn from Simon's willingness to do what the Lord asked even if he didn't understand why? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we do what the Lord asks even when we do not understand why, He can provide greater blessings than we could have anticipated.** Using students' words, write this principle on the board.)
- In what ways does living this principle require us to trust Jesus Christ?

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Consider providing students with a copy of the statement:



"This life is an experience in profound trust—trust in Jesus Christ, trust in His teachings, trust in our capacity as led by the Holy Spirit to obey those teachings for happiness now and for a purposeful, supremely happy eternal existence. To trust means to obey willingly without knowing the end from the beginning (see Prov. 3:5–7). To produce fruit, your trust in the Lord must be more powerful and enduring than your confidence in your own personal feelings and experience" ("Trust in the Lord," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 17).

- How can we develop this kind of trust in the Savior?

Help students identify implied principles

Many principles are not stated directly in the scriptures but are instead implied. Implied principles can often be discovered by asking, "What is the moral or point of this story?" Help students analyze the actions, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals or groups in the scriptural account and identify the blessings or consequences that came as a result. Studying scriptural accounts in this way can help make implied gospel principles more apparent.

Scripture Mastery

The 25 scripture mastery passages found in the New Testament are highlighted in context in the lessons in which they appear. Each of these lessons also contains a teaching idea for these passages. To help you be consistent in teaching scripture mastery passages, scripture mastery review activities are scattered throughout the manual. For additional scripture mastery teaching ideas, see the appendix of this manual or the Seminary Student Resources on LDS.org.

Column Space

Column space in the printed teacher manual can be used for lesson preparation, including writing notes, principles, experiences, or other ideas, as you feel prompted by the Holy Ghost.

Commentary and Background Information

Additional quotations and explanations are provided at the end of some lessons to add to your understanding of historical context, specific concepts, or scripture passages. Use the information in this section to prepare to answer questions or give additional insights as you teach. Additional commentary items can be found in the digital versions of this manual on LDS.org and in the Gospel Library app.

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Supplemental teaching ideas appear at the end of some lessons. These provide suggestions for teaching doctrines and principles that may not be identified or emphasized in the body of the lesson. They may also provide suggestions on using visual media, such as DVD presentations and videos on LDS.org. Additional teaching ideas can be found in the digital versions of this manual on LDS.org and in the Gospel Library app.

LESSON 59

Scripture Mastery—Luke 24:36–39

To help students memorize Luke 24:36–39, divide the class into four groups. Assign a different verse from this passage to each group, and instruct the students in each group to work together to memorize their assigned verse. After a few minutes, ask each group to recite their assigned verse in order of the verses. You may want to invite students to recite their verses again for the next few class periods until the entire passage becomes familiar to everyone.

Commentary and Background Information

Luke 24:11. “They believed them not”

Luke indicates that it was difficult for the eleven Apostles to believe the women who testified that Jesus had risen from the grave. Although other individuals had been temporarily revived from death but would eventually die again as mortals, Jesus Christ was the first person to be resurrected. President Gordon B. Hinckley explained:

“Never had this occurred before. There had been only death without hope. Now there was life eternal. Only a God could have done this. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ was the great crowning event of His life and mission. It was the capstone of the Atonement. The sacrifice of His life for all mankind was not complete without His coming forth from the grave, with the certainty of the Resurrection for all who have walked the earth.

“Of all the victories in the chronicles of humanity, none is so great, none so universal in its effects, none so everlasting in its consequences as the victory of the crucified Lord, who came forth from the tomb that first Easter morning.

“Those who were witnesses of that event, all who saw and heard and spoke with the Risen Lord, testified of the reality of this greatest of all miracles. His followers through the centuries lived and died in proclamation of the truth of this supernal act.

“To all of these we add our testimony that He who died on Calvary’s cross arose again in wondrous splendor as the Son of God, the Master of life and death” (“Special Witnesses of Christ,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2001, 15, or *Liahona*, Apr. 2001, 16–17).

Supplemental Teaching Idea

Luke 24:39–51. Video presentation—“The Savior Suffers in Gethsemane”

Instead of inviting students to read about the Savior’s experience in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 24:39–51), consider showing the video “The Savior Suffers in Gethsemane” (8:31) from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos*. This video can be found on LDS.org. (Note: You may have shown a portion of this video in a previous lesson. If so, you may want to stop the video at time code 5:52.)

Before showing the video, write the following incomplete statement on the board: *Jesus Christ’s suffering caused Him to . . .*

Invite students as they watch the video to consider how they would complete the statement on the board. After the video, invite students to report how they would complete the statement. Then invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 19:18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what they could add to the statement on the board.

Daily Seminary Program (Released-Time and Early-Morning)

This manual contains the following elements for daily seminary teachers: 160 daily teacher lessons, teaching helps, book introductions, and resources for teaching scripture mastery and Basic Doctrines.

Book Introductions

Book introductions are placed before the first lesson of each book of scripture. The book introductions provide an overview of each book by answering the following questions: Why study this book? Who wrote this book? When and where was it written? To whom was it written and why? and What are some distinctive features of this book? The introductions also briefly outline the content of each book. Teachers should integrate the context and background information from the book introductions into the lessons as needed.

Daily Teacher Lessons

Lesson Format

Each lesson in this manual focuses on a scripture block rather than on a particular concept, doctrine, or principle. This format will help you and your students study the scriptures sequentially and discuss doctrines and principles as they arise naturally from the scripture text. As students learn the context in which a doctrine or principle is found, their understanding of that truth can deepen. In addition, students will be better able to see and understand the full scope of the messages the inspired scripture writers intended to convey. Teaching the scriptures in this way will also help students learn how to discover and apply eternal truths in their personal scripture study.

In each lesson, not all segments of a scripture block are emphasized. Some segments receive less attention because they are less central to the overall message of the inspired writer or because they might be less applicable to youth. You have the responsibility to adapt these materials according to the needs and interests of the students you teach. You might adapt lesson ideas in this manual by choosing to give greater emphasis to a particular doctrine or principle than is given in the lesson material or by choosing to give less emphasis to a segment of the scripture block that is developed in depth in the manual. Seek the guidance of the Holy

Ghost to help you make these adaptations as you prepare and teach.

Doctrines and Principles

In the body of each lesson, you will find that several key doctrines and principles are emphasized in bold. These doctrines and principles are identified in the curriculum because (1) they reflect a central message of the scripture block, (2) they are particularly applicable to the needs and circumstances of the students, or (3) they are key truths that can help students deepen their relationships with the Lord. Be aware that the New Testament teaches numerous truths beyond those identified in the curriculum. President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that the scriptures contain “endless combinations of truths that will fit the need of every individual in every circumstance” (“The Great Plan of Happiness” [CES Symposium on the Doctrine and Covenants/Church History, Aug. 10, 1993], si.lds.org; see also *Teaching Seminary: Preservice Readings* [2004], 69, LDS.org).

As you teach, consistently provide students with opportunities to identify doctrines and principles in the scriptures. As students express the truths they discover, they may often use words that differ from how a doctrine or principle is stated in this manual. They may also discover truths that are

not identified in the lesson outline. Be careful not to suggest that students’ answers are wrong simply because the words they use to express these truths differ from those used in the manual or because they identify a truth that is not mentioned in the curriculum. However, if a student’s statement is doctrinally incorrect, it is your responsibility to gently help the student correct his or her statement while maintaining an atmosphere of love and trust. Doing so may provide an important learning experience for the students in your class.

Pacing

This manual contains 160 daily seminary lessons. You may adapt the lessons and pacing as needed for the length of time you have to teach this course. See the appendix of this manual for a sample pacing guide. The pacing guide is based on a 36-week or 180-day school year and includes 20 “flexible days” that you may use to adapt daily lessons, help students master key scripture passages and Basic Doctrines, review previous material, administer and review required learning assessments, and allow for schedule interruptions.

Makeup Work

The *New Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* can be used in the daily seminary programs as a resource to provide students with makeup work. The lessons in the study guide for home-study students parallel those presented in this manual. Students who have excessive absences could be assigned to complete





the assignments in the study guide that correspond with the content they missed in class. Assignments can be printed from LDS.org, so you do not need to provide the entire manual to students who need to do makeup work. More information concerning the *New Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* is provided in the section titled “Home-Study Seminary Program” in this manual.

Teaching Helps

Teaching helps appear in the margins of this manual. These teaching helps explain and illustrate how you and the students you teach can apply the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning in your study of the New Testament. They also offer suggestions on how to effectively use a variety of teaching methods, skills, and approaches. As you come to understand the principles contained in the teaching helps, look for ways to practice and apply them consistently in your teaching.

Scripture Mastery and Basic Doctrines

To help students treasure up eternal truths and to increase their confidence in learning and teaching from the scriptures, Seminaries and Institutes of Religion (S&I) has selected a number of scripture passages for students to master during each course of study. In addition, a list of Basic Doctrines has been included to highlight key doctrines that students should come to understand, believe, and live throughout their four years in seminary and for the rest of their lives. The manual for each seminary course was prepared to highlight the Basic Doctrines as

they emerge during a student’s sequential study of the scriptures. Many of the scripture mastery passages were chosen with the Basic Doctrines in mind, so as you teach the scripture mastery passages to students, you will teach the Basic Doctrines as well.

As students treasure up eternal truths in their minds and hearts, the Holy Ghost will bring these truths to their remembrance in times of need and give them courage to act in faith (see John 14:26). President Howard W. Hunter taught:

“I strongly encourage you to use the scriptures in your teaching and to do all within your power to help the students use them and become comfortable with them. I would like our young people to have confidence in the scriptures. . . .

“ . . . We want the students to have confidence in the strength and truths of the scriptures, confidence that their Heavenly Father is really speaking to them through the scriptures, and confidence that they can turn to the scriptures and find answers to their problems and their prayers. . . .

“ . . . We would hope none of your students would leave your classroom fearful or embarrassed or ashamed that they cannot find the help they need because they do not know the scriptures well enough to locate the proper passages” (“Eternal Investments” [address to CES religious educators, Feb. 10, 1989], 2, si.lds.org; see also *Teaching Seminary: Preservice Readings* [2004], 20, LDS.org).

See the appendix of this manual for more information about scripture mastery and the Basic Doctrines.

Using the Home-Study Lessons

Summary of Student Lessons

The summary will help you familiarize yourself with the context and the doctrines and principles students studied during the week in the student study guide.

Lesson Introduction

The introduction to the lesson will help you know which portions of the scripture block will be emphasized in the lesson.

Verse Grouping and Contextual Summary

Verses are grouped according to where changes in context or content occur throughout the scripture block. The reference for each verse grouping is followed by a brief summary of the events or teachings within that group of verses.

Lesson Body

The body of the lesson provides guidance for you as you study and teach. It suggests teaching ideas, including questions, activities, quotations, diagrams, and charts.

Doctrines and Principles

As doctrines and principles naturally arise from the study of the scripture text, they are emphasized in bold to help you identify and focus on them in your discussion with students.

Introduction to the Next Unit

The last paragraph of each lesson provides a glimpse into the next unit. Share this paragraph with your students at the conclusion of each lesson to help them look forward to studying the scriptures during the coming week.

Home-Study Lesson

Mark 4–9 (Unit 8)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of events, doctrines, and principles your students learned as they studied Mark 4–9 (unit 8) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Mark 4–5)

Students learned that if we seek the Lord's help in times of trouble or fear, He can bring us peace. They also learned that when we experience the Savior's power in our lives, we can testify to others of His blessings and compassion. From the stories of Jairus's daughter and the woman with the issue of blood, students learned that if we demonstrate our faith in Jesus Christ through our efforts to come to Him, He can make us whole and that exercising faith in Jesus Christ requires us to continue believing in Him even in times of uncertainty.

Day 2 (Mark 6–8)

From the miracle of feeding more than 5,000 people, students learned that when we offer the Savior all that we have, He can magnify our offering to accomplish His purposes. Students also learned that we can follow the Savior's example by perceiving the needs of others and then helping to fulfill those needs.

Day 3 (Mark 9:1–29)

From the account of Jesus casting an evil spirit out of a boy, students learned that if we believe in Jesus Christ, we will be able to do things that were once thought impossible to us. Other

Introduction

This lesson can help students understand that seeking to please others instead of doing what we know is right can lead to wrong choices, sorrow, and regret.

Suggestions for Teaching

Mark 6:1–29

Jesus is rejected in Nazareth and sends forth the Twelve Apostles; John the Baptist's death is recounted

Begin class by inviting students to think about the last time they felt pressure to do something that they knew was not right.

Write the following statement on the board (this statement is found in "Making the Right Choices," *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 37):

"Individuals who do wrong want you to join them because they feel more comfortable in what they are doing when others do it also" (Elder Richard G. Scott).

- What are some examples of how others may try to pressure you to do something that you know is wrong?

Invite students to look for a truth as they study Mark 6 that can help them avoid giving in to negative peer pressure.

Invite a student to read Mark 6:17–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Herod had done to John the Baptist. Have students report what they find.

- What had Herod done to John and why?

Herod had divorced his wife and married Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. This act was a blatant violation of Jewish law (see Leviticus 18:16), and John the Baptist had vocally condemned it. John's opposition to this marriage angered Herodias, so Herod imprisoned John to appease her.

Invite a student to read Mark 6:19–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Herod had done to John the Baptist.

HOME-STUDY LESSON

- What did the Savior do after He rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees?
- What can we learn from this experience about the improper way to seek spiritual truth? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **We do not receive spiritual truth by seeking for signs.**)

Summarize Matthew 16:5–12 by explaining that the Savior warned His disciples of the Pharisees' and Sadducees' false teachings.

Matthew 16:13–20

Peter testifies of Jesus Christ and is promised the keys of the kingdom

Explain that after Jesus rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees for seeking a sign, He taught His disciples how to receive a testimony of the truth. Invite a student to read Matthew 16:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the question Jesus asked and the response His disciples gave.

- What did the Savior ask His disciples? How did they answer? (You may need to explain that Elias and Jeremiah are the Old Testament prophets Elijah and Jeremiah.)
- What can their response tell us about how well people understood who Jesus was at this point in His ministry?

Note: In the lesson for day 4, students studied the scripture mastery passage Matthew 16:15–19. Consider spending a few minutes reviewing the passage with them.

Invite a student to read Matthew 16:15–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the second question the Savior asked.

- What was the second question the Savior asked? How did Peter respond?
- According to verse 17, how did Peter know that Jesus is the Son of God? (Point out that Heavenly Father had revealed this truth to him through the Holy Ghost.)
- What truth can we learn from these verses about how we can gain a testimony of Jesus Christ? (Students may use different

words, but they should identify the following truth: **We gain a testimony of Jesus Christ through revelation from the Holy Ghost.**)

- Why do you think it is important for us to receive a testimony through revelation from the Holy Ghost rather than by some other way?

To help students further understand the role of the Holy Ghost in helping us gain a testimony of the Savior, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith:



"The Spirit of God speaking to the spirit of man has power to impart truth with greater effect and understanding than the truth can be imparted by personal contact even with heavenly beings. Through the Holy Ghost the truth is woven into the very fibre and sinews of the body so that it cannot be forgotten" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Fielding Smith* [2013], 183–84).

- What are some things we can do to prepare ourselves to receive revelation through the Holy Ghost?
- How did you come to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and your Savior? What did you do to prepare to receive that witness from the Holy Ghost?

Invite students to ponder how they might strengthen their testimonies or what they may need to do to receive a testimony through the Holy Ghost. Encourage them to act on any impressions they receive.

Next Unit (Matthew 18–22)

Ask students to consider a time when it was difficult for them to forgive another person. Invite them to consider the following questions: Why did you feel justified in not forgiving this person? Why should we forgive others of their trespasses even if we feel justified in not forgiving them? Invite students to look for answers to these questions as they continue their studies in the coming week.

Home-Study Seminary Program

Under the direction of local priesthood leaders and the S&I representative, home-study seminary classes can be organized in places where students cannot attend a daily class because of distance or other factors (such as a disability). Home-study seminary classes are generally not available where daily (weekday) classes are provided through early-morning or released-time seminary.

The home-study program allows students to receive credit in seminary by completing individual lessons at home rather than by attending weekday classes. These lessons are found in a separate manual called the *New Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students*. Once a week, students meet with a seminary instructor to submit their work and participate in a classroom lesson. The student study guide and weekly classroom lessons are further explained below.

Study Guide for Home-Study Students

The *New Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* is designed to help the home-study student receive an experience in studying the New Testament similar to that of the seminary student who attends weekday classes. Therefore, the pacing of the student study guide as well as the doctrines and principles it emphasizes parallel the material in this manual. The student study guide also includes scripture mastery instruction. Scripture mastery passages are addressed in context as they appear in the scripture text, and often writing activities are provided in the lessons in which the passages are covered.

Each week, home-study seminary students are to complete four lessons from the student study guide and participate in a weekly lesson given by their seminary teacher. Students complete the numbered

assignments from the study guide in their scripture study journals. Students should have two scripture study journals so they can leave one with their teacher and continue working in the other. As students meet with their teacher each week, one journal is turned in to the home-study teacher and the other is given back to the student to use for the next week's lessons. (For example, during one week, the student completes assignments in journal one. The student then brings this journal to class and gives it to the teacher. During the next week, the student completes assignments in journal two. When the student hands in journal two, the teacher will return journal one. The student then uses journal one to complete the next week's assignments.)

All seminary students are encouraged to study the scriptures daily and read the text for the course, but home-study students should understand that they are expected to spend an additional 30 to 40 minutes on each of the four home-study lessons in each unit and attend the weekly home-study lesson.

Weekly Home-Study Teacher Lessons

Each unit in the *New Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* corresponds to five lessons in the daily teacher manual. After every fifth lesson in this manual, you will find one weekly home-study teacher lesson. The home-study lessons will help students review, deepen their understanding of, and apply the doctrines and principles they learned as they completed the lessons in the student study guide during the week. These lessons may also explore additional truths not covered in the student study guide. (For help in planning your lesson schedule, see the pacing guide for home-study teachers in the appendix of this manual.)

As a home-study teacher, you should have a thorough understanding of what your students are studying at home each week so you can answer questions and create

meaningful discussions when you meet with them. Ask students to bring their scriptures, scripture study journals, and student study guides to the weekly class so they can refer to them during the lesson. Adapt the lessons according to the needs of the students you teach and according to the guidance of the Holy Ghost. You may also want to refer to the daily teacher lessons in this manual as you prepare and teach. A study of the teaching helps and methods used in the daily lessons can help enrich your weekly teaching. Accommodate any particular needs of the students you teach. For example, if a student has difficulty writing, allow him or her to use a voice-recording device or dictate thoughts to a family member or friend who can write down his or her responses.

At the end of each weekly lesson, collect students' scripture study journals and encourage them in their continued study. Provide them with a scripture study journal for the next week's assignments, as explained previously in the section called "Study Guide for Home-Study Students." (Under the direction of priesthood leaders and parents, stake [called] seminary teachers may communicate electronically with seminary students enrolled in home-study seminary.)

As you read through assignments in students' scripture study journals, respond periodically to their work by writing a small note or commenting the next time you see them. You may also want to seek other ways to provide support and meaningful feedback. This will help students know that you care about their work and will help motivate them to be thorough in their answers.

Most of students' efforts to master key scripture passages will be made as they complete their home-study lessons. Home-study teachers can follow up on students' efforts during the home-study lessons by inviting students to recite or review scripture mastery passages that arise in the text for that week's unit of study.

Other Resources

LDS.org

The *New Testament Seminary Teacher Manual* (nttm.lds.org) and the *New Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* are available on LDS.org and in the Gospel Library for mobile devices. The digital versions of the teacher manual contain additional Commentary and Background Information, Supplemental Teaching Ideas, and media resources that are not included in this printed manual because of space limitations.

si.lds.org

Teachers can visit the Seminaries and Institutes of Religion website (si.lds.org) for help in preparing lessons and to find additional teaching ideas.

Notes and Journal Tools

Teachers and students may use the online and mobile Notes and Journal tools to mark and add notes to the digital versions of these manuals as they prepare lessons and study the scriptures. Teacher manuals and student study guides are also available on LDS.org for download in alternate formats (such as PDF, ePub, and mobi [Kindle] files).

Additional Items

The following resources are available online, through your supervisor, through local Church distribution centers, and through the Church's online store (store.lds.org):



New Testament DVD Presentations 1–25 (item no. 54014)



True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference (item no. 36863)



Media Library on LDS.org



Gospel Topics on LDS.org



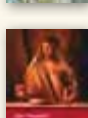
Gospel Art Book (item no. 06048)



For the Strength of Youth booklet (item no. 09403)



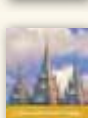
Scripture Study Journal (item no. 09591)



New Testament Student Manual (Church Educational System manual, 2014) (item no. 10734)



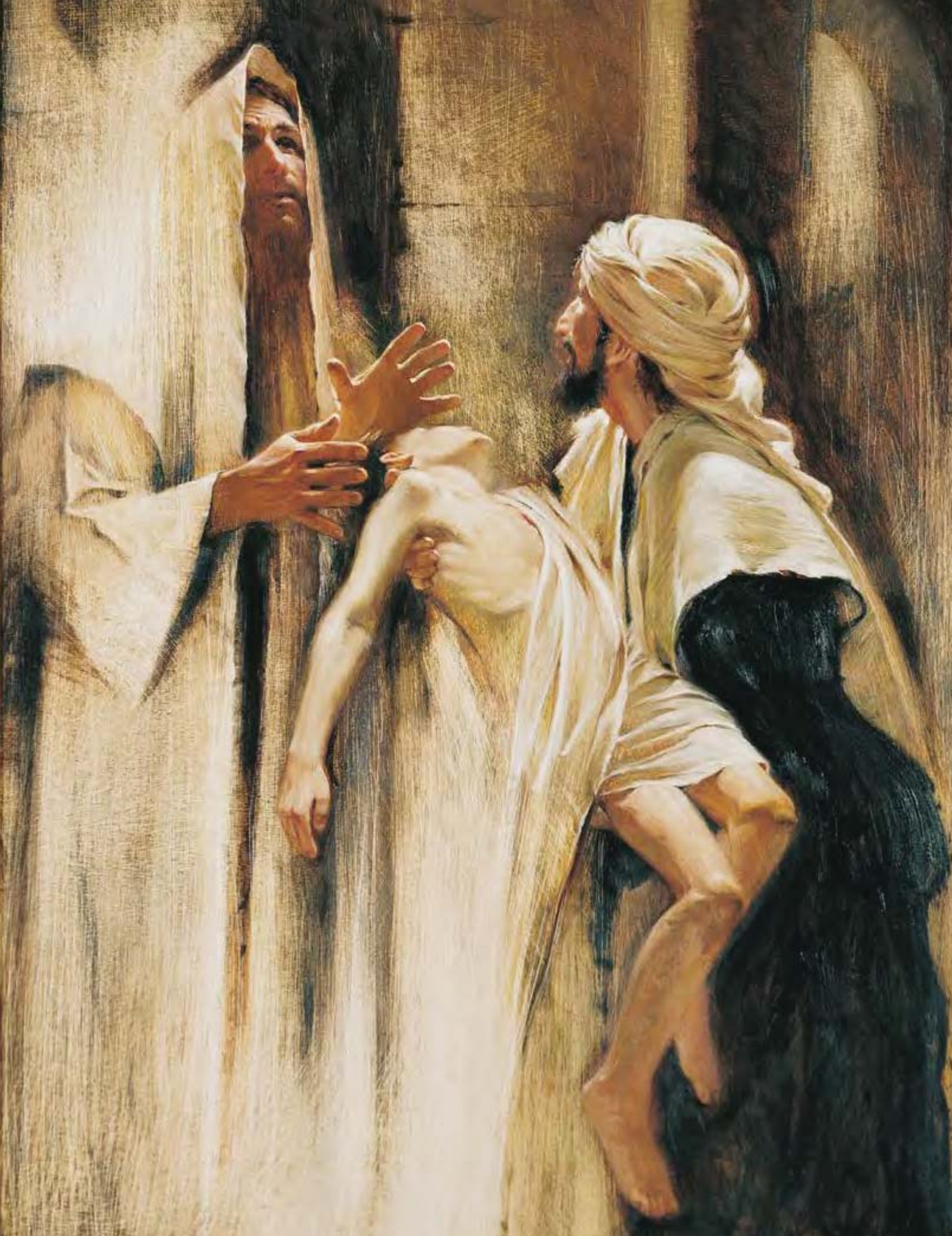
New Testament Bookmark (item no. 10460)



Seminary Folders (for students to keep handouts and other loose items) (item no. 09827; English only)



New Testament Scripture Mastery Cards and Scripture Reading Charts (item no. 10480)





LESSON 1

Introduction to the New Testament

Introduction

The New Testament is primarily a record of the mortal life, teachings, and Atonement of Jesus Christ, the establishment of His Church, and the ministries of His early disciples as He continued to guide them after His Ascension into heaven. This lesson is intended to prepare

and motivate students to study the New Testament by introducing them to two major themes found in the teachings of Jesus Christ and His ancient Apostles: the Savior's repeated invitation to come unto Him and the responsibility of His disciples to assist others to do the same.

Suggestions for Teaching

The New Testament helps us come unto Jesus Christ

Before class, write the following question on the board: *What are some difficult burdens that youth experience in our day?*

Bring to class an empty box or backpack and heavy objects to put in the box or backpack, such as large rocks or books. Invite a student to come to the front of the room, and ask him or her to hold the empty box or to put on the backpack. Ask the class to respond to the question written on the board, and ask another student to list students' responses on the board. After each response, place a heavy object in the box or backpack until it is full.

- How would you feel if you had to carry this burden all day?

Ask students to explain challenges or difficulties that a few of the burdens listed on the board could cause someone.

Explain that the New Testament teaches us about Jesus Christ's mortal and post-resurrection ministries, including His teachings, miracles, atoning sacrifice, and visits to early Church disciples. Throughout His teachings and interactions with others is a repeated truth that can help us with the burdens we carry.

Explain that Matthew 11 includes an example of this major theme that students will see often in their study of the New Testament this year. Invite a student to read Matthew 11:28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior's invitation to those who carry difficult burdens.

- What do you think it means to labor and be heavy laden?
- What did the Savior say we must do in order to receive His rest? (Using students' words, write the following principle on the board: **As we come unto Jesus Christ with our burdens, He will give us rest.**)
- What do you think it means to come unto Jesus Christ?

To help students understand what it means to come unto Christ, invite a student to read Matthew 11:29–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior's instructions to those who desire to come unto Him.

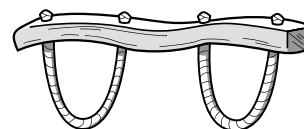
- According to these verses, what must we do in order to come unto Christ?

Draw a picture of a yoke for oxen on the board, or show a picture of a yoke.

Explain that a yoke is a wooden beam that joins or couples a pair of oxen or other animals, enabling them to pull together on a load.

- What is the purpose and benefit of a yoke? (Although the yoke is a weight or a burden, it allows both animals to combine their power and strength, thereby increasing their productivity.)
- What do you think it means to take the Savior's yoke upon us?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for how we can take the Savior's yoke upon us and what blessings we can receive by doing so.





“A yoke places animals side-by-side so they can move together in order to accomplish a task.

“Consider the Lord’s uniquely individual invitation to ‘take my yoke upon you.’ Making and keeping sacred covenants yokes us to and with the Lord Jesus Christ. In essence, the Savior is beckoning us to rely upon and pull together with Him, even though our best efforts are not equal to and cannot be compared with His. As we trust in and pull our load with Him during the journey of mortality, truly His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

“We are not and never need be alone. We can press forward in our daily lives with heavenly help. Through the Savior’s Atonement we can receive capacity and ‘strength beyond [our] own’ (‘Lord, I Would Follow Thee,’ *Hymns*, no. 220)” (“Bear Up Their Burdens with Ease,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 88).

- What “yokes” us to the Savior Jesus Christ?
- According to Elder Bednar, what are the blessings of being yoked to the Savior?

Point out that the Savior’s promise of “rest” in Matthew 11:28–29 does not necessarily mean that He will always remove our problems or challenges. Often, the Savior will give us the peace and strength we need to overcome or endure our trials, thus making our burdens lighter. If we are faithful through the challenges of mortality, the ultimate rest we will receive is exaltation with God (see D&C 84:23–24).

Ask students to ponder how the Savior has given them rest when they have come unto Him. Invite a few students to share their experiences with the class. You might consider sharing one of your own experiences.

Invite students to set specific goals regarding ways they can come unto Jesus Christ throughout this year of studying the New Testament. Encourage them to include in their goals studying the scriptures daily and reading all of the New Testament this year.

Encourage daily scripture study

Encourage students to set aside time every day for personal study of the New Testament. You can help them account for their daily study by providing an appropriate tracking system (see the reading charts in the appendix of this manual). Give students regular opportunities to share what they are learning and feeling during their personal scripture study. Take care not to embarrass or discourage students who struggle to study the scriptures on their own.

Disciples of Jesus Christ have a responsibility to help others come unto Him

Ask students to think about times in their lives when they were eager and excited to tell someone about an experience they had or something they saw, read, or heard. Invite several students to report what they were eager and excited to tell someone about.

Explain that the New Testament contains numerous examples of individuals who were strengthened, taught, or blessed by the Lord and then felt a desire to tell others about Him. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from John 1:37–42. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what two of John the Baptist’s disciples did after hearing his testimony of Jesus.

- What did Andrew learn about Jesus as he spoke with Him?
- What did Andrew do after he learned that Jesus was the Messiah?
- Why do you think he was so anxious to share this news with his brother, Simon Peter?

Summarize John 1:43–44 by telling students that the Savior invited a man named Philip to be His disciple. Invite a student to read John 1:45–46 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Philip did after he learned that Jesus was the Messiah.

- What did Philip say to Nathanael about Jesus of Nazareth?
- How did Nathanael respond to Philip’s testimony that Jesus was the Messiah?
- What was Philip’s invitation to Nathanael?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *As we come unto Jesus Christ, . . .*

- Based on these examples from the New Testament, what desire will we have as we come unto Jesus Christ? (As students respond, complete the statement on the board so it reflects the following principle: **As we come unto Jesus Christ, we will have a greater desire to invite others to come unto Him.**)

To help students better understand this principle, copy the accompanying diagram on the board.

- Why do you think we will have a greater desire to invite others to come unto Christ as we come unto Him ourselves?

Explain that President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency taught about a great blessing we receive as we invite others to come unto Jesus Christ. Invite a student to read the following statement aloud:

“When you give your heart to inviting people to come unto Christ, your heart will be changed. . . . By helping others come unto Him, you will find that you have come unto Him yourself” (“Come unto Christ,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2008, 49).

- What can happen in our lives as we invite others to come unto Jesus Christ?

Add an arrow to the illustration on the board so it looks similar to the accompanying diagram.

- Why do you think inviting others to come unto Christ can help us come closer to Him as well?
- Who has invited you to come unto the Savior and His gospel? How has your life been blessed as a result?

Encourage students to prayerfully consider whom they could invite to come unto Jesus Christ.

- What can we do to invite others to come unto Him?

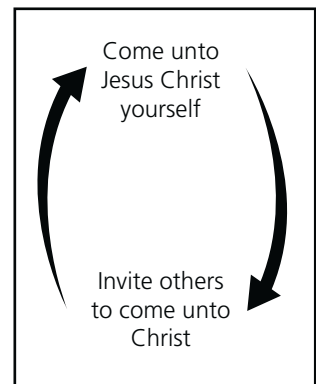
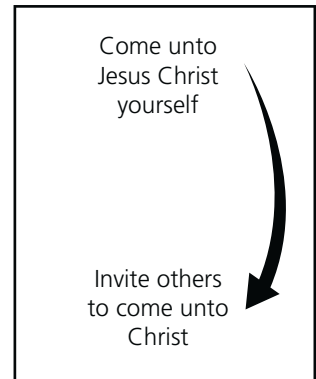
Explain that inviting friends and classmates to attend seminary is one way that students can invite others to “come and see” who Jesus Christ is and how His gospel can bless their lives.

Invite a student to read John 1:47–50 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Nathanael experienced when he met the Savior (explain that the phrase “no guile” means no deceit).

- What did the Savior say that caused Nathanael to declare that Jesus was the Son of God?
- According to verse 50, what did the Savior promise Nathanael because he believed?

Explain that along with Andrew, Peter, Philip, and others, Nathanael became one of Jesus’s Apostles. Because these Apostles heeded the invitation to come unto Jesus Christ, they witnessed many “greater things” (verse 50), including the miracles and teachings of Jesus Christ and His Resurrection and Ascension into heaven.

Close by testifying that as students study the New Testament this year, they will feel the Savior’s continual plea to come unto Him. As they apply the doctrines and principles they learn throughout the year, they will receive His help with their burdens and, like the ancient Apostles, be filled with a desire to help others come to Him as well.



Commentary and Background Information

Matthew 11:29–30. “Take my yoke upon you”

President Howard W. Hunter taught of blessings that come when we take Christ’s yoke upon us:

“In biblical times the yoke was a device of great assistance to those who tilled the field. It allowed the strength of a second animal to be linked and coupled with the effort of a single animal, sharing and reducing the heavy labor of the plow or wagon. A burden that was overwhelming or perhaps impossible for one to bear could be equitably and comfortably borne by two bound together with a common yoke. His yoke requires a great

and earnest effort, but for those who truly are converted, the yoke is easy and the burden becomes light.

“Why face life’s burdens alone, Christ asks, or why face them with temporal support that will quickly falter? To the heavy laden it is Christ’s yoke, it is the power and peace of standing side by side with a God that will provide the support, balance, and the strength to meet our challenges and endure our tasks here in . . . mortality” (“Come unto Me,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 18; see also “Take My Yoke upon You” [*Ensign*, Sept. 2013, 22–23] for a picture of a yoke and further explanation of its use and function).

LESSON 2

The Plan of Salvation

Introduction

President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles instructed religious educators to present a brief overview of the plan of salvation at the beginning of each school year:

“A brief overview of the ‘plan of happiness’ . . . , if given at the very beginning and revisited occasionally, will be of immense value to your students” (“The Great Plan of

Happiness” [address to CES religious educators, Aug. 10, 1993], *si.Ids.org*; see also *Teaching Seminary: Preservice Readings* [Church Educational System manual, 2004], 68–74).

This lesson provides a brief overview of the plan of salvation and focuses on the central role of Jesus Christ and His Atonement in that plan.

Invite the Spirit through effective devotionals

A brief devotional at the beginning of class can help teachers and students feel the Spirit and prepare to learn. A devotional generally includes a hymn, a prayer, and a thought from the scriptures. Devotionals are most effective when students bear testimony and share feelings and insights they have had during their personal scripture study. Consider how you might organize devotionals so that all students have opportunities to participate throughout the year.

Suggestions for Teaching

Jesus Christ’s role in the premortal life

As part of the devotional, you may want to invite the class to sing verses 1 and 4 of “I Believe in Christ” (*Hymns*, no. 134) or another hymn about the Savior. Begin the lesson by asking:

- How would you respond if someone asked you why Jesus Christ is important to you?

Explain to students that in today’s lesson they will learn about the role of Jesus Christ in Heavenly Father’s plan of salvation. Invite them to look for truths as they study today that can help them strengthen their faith in Jesus Christ.

Copy the following chart on the board. You may also want to distribute it as a handout for students. (If you distribute handouts, ask students to complete their charts as you complete the chart on the board.)

Jesus Christ Is Central to Heavenly Father’s Plan of Salvation

Premortal Life	Mortal Life	Postmortal Life

Point out that Heavenly Father’s plan consists of three main stages: (1) our premortal life, which preceded our physical birth; (2) our mortal life on earth; and (3) our postmortal life, which will follow our physical death.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement, and ask the class to listen for the limitations we experienced in our premortal life:

“We lived as spirit children of our Father in Heaven before we were born on this earth. We were not, however, like our Heavenly Father, nor could we ever become like Him and enjoy all the blessings that He enjoys without the experience of living in mortality with a physical body.

“God’s whole purpose—His work and His glory—is to enable each of us to enjoy all His blessings. He has provided a perfect plan to accomplish His purpose. We understood and accepted this plan before we came to the earth. . . .

“In order to progress and become like God, each of us had to obtain a body and be tested during a time of probation on the earth” (*Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* [2004], 48, 49).

- What limitations did we experience in our premortal life?

Explain that as Heavenly Father presented His plan of happiness, we learned that a savior would be required to carry out this plan. Lucifer, one of Heavenly Father's spirit children, rebelled against Heavenly Father's plan. He became known as *Satan*, a Hebrew term meaning "adversary."

Invite a student to read Moses 4:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Satan demanded of Heavenly Father.

- What did Satan demand of Heavenly Father?
- According to verse 2, what did Heavenly Father say about Jesus Christ?
- What was Jesus Christ chosen to do? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board under *Premortal Life*: **Jesus Christ was chosen in the premortal life to be the Redeemer of mankind.**)

Explain that after Jesus Christ was chosen to carry out Heavenly Father's plan of salvation, He created this earth where we could each obtain a physical body and gain experience.

Ask a student to read Hebrews 1:1–2 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for Jesus Christ's role in the creation of the earth.

- What was Jesus Christ's role in the creation of the earth? (Write the following doctrine on the board under *Premortal Life*: **Under the direction of Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ created the earth.**)

Invite students to think about the earth's beauty. You may want to display one or more pictures showing the beauty of the earth.

- How does knowing that Jesus Christ created this earth, and millions of others like it, affect your feelings about Him?

Jesus Christ's role in mortal life

Explain that in mortality we experience additional limitations or obstacles that prevent us from becoming like Heavenly Father and returning to His presence. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement, and ask the class to listen for two obstacles we experience during mortality:

"In mortality we live in a condition where we are subject to both physical and spiritual death. God has a perfect, glorified, immortal body of flesh and bones. To become like God and return to His presence, we too must have a perfect, immortal body of flesh and bones. However, because of the Fall of Adam and Eve, every person on earth has an imperfect, mortal body and will eventually die. If not for the Savior Jesus Christ, death would end all hope for a future existence with Heavenly Father.

"Along with physical death, sin is a major obstacle that keeps us from becoming like our Father in Heaven and returning to His presence. In our mortal condition we often yield to temptation, break God's commandments, and sin. . . . Although it sometimes appears otherwise, sin always leads to unhappiness. Sin causes feelings of guilt and shame. Because of our sins, we are unable to return to live with Heavenly Father unless we are first forgiven and cleansed.

". . . As with physical death, we cannot overcome the effects of sin by ourselves" (*Preach My Gospel*, 50).

Explain that before Jesus was born on the earth, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream when he learned that Mary was expecting a child. Ask a student to read Matthew 1:21 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the angel proclaimed to Joseph.

- What did the angel say Jesus would do? (After students respond, write the following doctrine on the board under *Mortal Life*: **Jesus Christ came to save us from our sins.**)
- What did Jesus Christ do that allows us to be saved from our sins?

Display the pictures *Jesus Praying in Gethsemane*, *The Crucifixion*, and *Mary and the Resurrected Jesus* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], nos. 56, 57, 59; see also LDS.org). Remind students that Jesus Christ's suffering, death, and Resurrection are collectively referred to as the Atonement.

- What must we do to be saved from our sins through the Atonement of Jesus Christ? (See Acts 2:38).



Why Weepst Thou? © 2015 by Simon Dewey. Used by permission of Altus Fine Art, altusfineart.com.

Jesus Christ's role in the postmortal life

Ask students to think of someone who has passed away. After a few moments, ask:

- According to your understanding of the plan of salvation, where are those who have passed away? (At death the spirits of all people enter the spirit world. To add to students' understanding, you may want to invite a student to read Alma 40:11–14 aloud.)

Display the picture *Burial of Jesus* (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 58; see also LDS.org). Invite a student to read 1 Peter 3:18–20; 4:6 aloud. Then ask:

- What did Jesus Christ do immediately following His death?

Invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 138:18–19, 30–32 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus Christ did to allow the gospel to be preached to everyone in the spirit world.

- What did Jesus Christ do to allow the gospel to be preached to everyone in the spirit world?
- How do these efforts illustrate the love of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ for all people?

Refer to the picture *Mary and the Resurrected Jesus* (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 59; see also LDS.org), and ask the class:

- What happened on the third day after the Savior's death? (He was resurrected.)
- What does it mean to be resurrected? (A person's spirit and physical body are reunited, never to be separated again [see D&C 138:17].)

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 15:20–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Jesus Christ's Resurrection affects each of us.

- How are we affected by Jesus Christ's Resurrection? (After students respond, write the following doctrine on the board under *Postmortal Life*: **Because of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, all people will be resurrected.**)

Invite a student to read Revelation 20:12 aloud. Then ask:

- What will happen to each of us after we are resurrected?

Explain that the book of life can represent a person's thoughts and actions in this life as well as the record kept in heaven of the righteous (see Bible Dictionary, "Book of life"). Emphasize that we are judged not only according to our works but also according to our thoughts, words, and desires (see Mosiah 4:30; Alma 12:14; 41:3; D&C 137:9).

You may want to suggest that students write *John 5:22* in the margin of their scriptures near Revelation 20:12. Ask students to read John 5:22 silently and look for who will judge us.

- Who will judge us? (After students respond, write the following doctrine on the board under *Postmortal Life*: **Jesus Christ will judge all mankind.**)

Remind students that the ultimate purpose of Heavenly Father's plan is to provide us an opportunity to obtain eternal life, or exaltation, which means to become like Heavenly Father and live with Him forever in eternal families. You may want to display a picture of your family and explain why it is important for you to be able to live with Heavenly Father and your family forever.

Invite a student to read John 3:16–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what we must do to receive eternal (or everlasting) life.

- What must we do to receive eternal life? (Explain that to believe in the Only Begotten Son means to exercise faith in Jesus Christ and live according to His gospel, which includes receiving temple ordinances.)
- How would you summarize John 3:16 as a principle? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board under *Postmortal Life*: **If we exercise faith in Jesus Christ and live according to His gospel, then we can receive eternal life.**)

Remind students of the question you asked at the beginning of class: "How would you respond if someone asked you why Jesus Christ is important to you?" Ask students to explain how they might further develop their answers to this question based on what they have learned today. You may also want to invite several students to share their testimonies of Jesus Christ and His role in Heavenly Father's plan. You might conclude by sharing your own testimony as well.



The Burial of Christ, by Carl Heinrich Bloch. Courtesy of the National History Museum at Frederiksborg Castle in Hillerød, Denmark. Do not copy.

LESSON 3

The Role of the Learner

Introduction

The Holy Ghost, the teacher, and the learner each have an important role in gospel learning. This lesson can help students understand each of these roles so they can

be successful in their learning efforts. You may need to regularly review the principles taught in this lesson to remind students of their responsibility in gospel learning.

Suggestions for Teaching

The roles of the Holy Ghost, the teacher, and the learner in gospel learning

Invite a student to read aloud the following scenario:

A young woman is inspired and edified as she attends seminary. She feels the influence of the Holy Ghost there and is grateful for the things she learns. Another young woman is in the same seminary class. However, she is often bored and feels that she doesn't get much out of the class.

- What are some possible reasons why these two young women have such different experiences while attending the same seminary class? (Possible answers may include the following: the first young woman may participate more actively in the lesson; the first young woman may have had more previous spiritual learning experiences on which her present learning can build; and the second young woman may be distracted by other concerns.)

Invite students to look for doctrines and principles in today's lesson that can help them fulfill their role in seminary and strengthen their testimonies of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Explain that three individuals have essential roles in gospel learning in a setting like seminary: the Holy Ghost, the teacher, and the student.

Invite one student to read John 14:26 aloud and another student to read John 16:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for some of the roles of the Holy Ghost.

- What truths can we learn from these verses about the roles of the Holy Ghost? (Students may give a variety of answers, but be sure they identify the following doctrine: **The Holy Ghost teaches truth.**)
- How can we know when the Holy Ghost is teaching us truth? (You may want to refer students to Doctrine and Covenants 8:2–3.)

Ask a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 50:13–14 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for the role of a teacher of the gospel. Before the student reads, explain that these verses were given to early Church members who had been ordained to teach the gospel.

- What is the role of a teacher of the gospel? (See also D&C 42:14.)

Invite a student to read 2 Nephi 33:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Holy Ghost does for us when the truth is taught by His power.

- According to this verse, what does the Holy Ghost do for us?

To help students understand how to invite the Holy Ghost to carry truth into their hearts, invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 88:118 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how we are to seek learning.

- How are we to seek learning? (By study and by faith.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for what we enable to happen when we seek to learn by faith:

"A teacher can explain, demonstrate, persuade, and testify, and do so with great spiritual power and effectiveness. Ultimately, however, the content of a message and the witness of the Holy Ghost penetrate into the heart only if a receiver allows them to enter. Learning by faith opens the pathway *into* the heart" ("Seek Learning by Faith," *Ensign*, Sept. 2007, 61).

Cultivate an environment of love and respect

As the course begins, look for ways to cultivate a learning environment of love, respect, and purpose. Help students feel comfortable with each other and with you by learning each other's names and by learning about one another's interests, talents, challenges, and abilities. One way to cultivate this type of environment is to invite students to share with each other experiences and insights from their personal scripture study.

- From this statement, what principle can we learn about what can happen if we seek to learn by faith? (Help students identify the following principle: **If we seek to learn by faith, then we invite the Holy Ghost into our hearts to teach and testify of truth.** Consider writing this truth on the board.)

Point out that faith is more than passive belief. We express our faith through action.

- What do you think it means to learn by faith?

To illustrate what it means to learn by faith, ask for a volunteer who has never played soccer. (You may adapt this activity to involve a student who has never played basketball, played a musical instrument, juggled, tied a tie, and so on.) Inform the volunteer that you intend to teach him or her how to play soccer well enough to play on a soccer team. Ask the volunteer if he or she has faith in your ability to teach and in his or her ability to learn. Then explain and demonstrate how to dribble a soccer ball, but do not let the volunteer try. Explain how to pass a soccer ball. Then demonstrate by passing the ball to the volunteer, but retrieve the ball rather than allowing the volunteer to try passing it back to you. Do the same for throwing a soccer ball inbounds after it has gone out of play. Then ask the volunteer:

- How prepared do you feel to try out for a soccer team? Why?
- Although learning about and watching others play soccer can help, if you want to develop the needed skills to succeed in soccer, what must you do?
- How might this relate to learning by faith? (Only believing and trusting that the Spirit can teach us is not enough. To obtain knowledge of God's truths, we must also put forth effort to learn and apply what we learn.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bednar. Ask the class to listen for what he teaches about learning by faith (you might consider making copies of this statement for students and inviting them to mark what they find):



“A learner exercising agency by acting in accordance with correct principles opens his or her heart to the Holy Ghost and invites His teaching, testifying power, and confirming witness. Learning by faith requires spiritual, mental, and physical exertion and not just passive reception. It is in the sincerity and consistency of our faith-inspired action that we indicate to our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, our willingness to learn and receive instruction from the Holy Ghost. . . .

“. . . Learning by faith cannot be transferred from an instructor to a student through a lecture, a demonstration, or an experiential exercise; rather, a student must exercise faith and act in order to obtain the knowledge for himself or herself” (“Seek Learning by Faith,” 64).

- What are some spiritual, mental, or physical efforts we can make to invite the Spirit to teach and testify to us of truth?

Note: This may be an appropriate time to read Doctrine and Covenants 88:122 and discuss the importance of order and respect in the class.

- What are some attitudes or behaviors that can prevent the Spirit from teaching us truth in a seminary class?
- How would the seminary experience of a student who seeks to learn by faith be different from the experience of one who doesn't?

Ask students to turn to Matthew 4. Explain that in the experience of the Apostle Peter we can see an example of how seeking to learn by faith invites the Holy Ghost into our hearts to teach and testify of truth. Ask a student to read Matthew 4:18–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior's invitation to Peter and Andrew.

- What did the Savior invite Peter and Andrew to do?
- How was their response an example of seeking to learn by faith?

Point out that Peter's action of following Jesus Christ allowed him to be with the Savior throughout His mortal ministry. By heeding the Savior's call to follow Him, Peter had the privilege of hearing the Savior teach on a regular basis and of witnessing many miracles. With the Savior's invitation, Peter even walked on water (see Matthew 14:28–29).

Explain to students that on one occasion, Jesus asked His disciples a question. Invite a student to read Matthew 16:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior asked.

- What did the Savior ask His disciples?
- How did they answer?

Invite a student to read Matthew 16:15–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Peter responded to the Savior’s next question.

- What was Peter’s response to the Savior’s question?
- What did the Savior explain about how Peter received his knowledge?
- How is Peter’s experience an illustration of the truths we have identified in this lesson?

Invite students to respond to the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals (you might consider writing these questions on the board):

- When have you sought to learn by faith? How did the Holy Ghost fulfill His role in gospel learning when you did this? (You might invite students to reflect on previous learning experiences they have had when they sought to learn more about Jesus Christ.)

If students are comfortable sharing, invite several of them to describe the experiences they wrote about. You may also want to share an experience of your own as well as your testimony of the truths you have discussed.

Ask students to think of one or two things they will do to learn by faith and to invite the Holy Ghost into their hearts to teach and testify of truth. Invite students to write down what they will do.

Conclude by sharing the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:

“Young people, I ask you to participate in seminary. Study your scriptures daily. Listen to your teachers carefully. Apply what you learn prayerfully” (“Participate in Seminary,” Aug. 12, 2011, seminary.lds.org).

Commentary and Background Information

Reverence invites revelation

Reverent attitudes and behaviors can be part of learning by faith and can invite the Spirit to teach and testify of truth. President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught about the relationship between reverence and revelation:

“For the past several years we have watched patterns of reverence and irreverence in the Church. While many are to be highly commended, we are drifting. We have reason to be deeply concerned.

“The world grows increasingly noisy. . . .

“This trend to more noise, more excitement, more contention, less restraint, less dignity, less formality is not coincidental nor innocent nor harmless.

“The first order issued by a commander mounting a military invasion is the jamming of the channels of communication of those he intends to conquer.

“Irreverence suits the purposes of the adversary by obstructing the delicate channels of revelation in both mind and spirit. . . .

“. . . Leaders should teach that reverence invites revelation” (“Reverence Invites Revelation,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 22).

Sister Margaret S. Lifferth of the Primary general presidency taught about reverence in Church meetings, and her instruction pertains to a seminary class as well:

“Only in an attitude of reverence can the Spirit confirm the truths of the gospel through the word of God, music, testimony, and prayer. . . .

“. . . Texting or reading e-mails in a Church meeting is not only irreverent, it is distracting and signals a lack of respect for those around us. So we exemplify reverence by participating in the meeting, listening to the speakers, and singing the hymns of Zion together” (“Respect and Reverence,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2009, 13).

A prophet’s call to participate in seminary

President Thomas S. Monson gave the following message about participating in seminary:

“Seminary has blessed the lives of hundreds of thousands of Latter-day Saint youth. I remember my own seminary experience. Seminary for me was held at an early hour in a little house across the street from my high school. I thought, if my teacher can get up that early, I can get up that early.

“Seminary will help you to understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ. You will feel the Spirit of the Lord as you learn to love the scriptures. You will prepare yourselves for the temple and for missionary service.

“Young people, I ask you to participate in seminary. Study your scriptures daily. Listen to your teachers carefully. Apply what you learn prayerfully” (“Participate in Seminary,” Aug. 12, 2011, seminary.lds.org).

LESSON 4

Studying the Scriptures

Introduction

This lesson will help students understand the importance of studying the scriptures daily and reading the entire New

Testament as part of this course of study. Students can also learn ways to improve their study of the scriptures.

Suggestions for Teaching

The need for effective daily scripture study

Give each student a copy of the following survey. Invite students to consider the statements and mark their responses on the continuum. Assure students that you will not ask them to report their responses.

	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
1. The scriptures are of great value to me.	-----			
2. In the last few weeks, I studied the scriptures daily.	-----			
3. I feel that my scripture study sessions are meaningful.	-----			
4. I regularly apply what I learn from my scripture study.	-----			

Encourage students to study the scriptures daily

Few things teachers do will have a more powerful and long-lasting influence for good in the lives of students than helping them learn from and love the scriptures and study them daily. Teachers can set an example of daily scripture study. They can also help students be accountable for their daily study by using an appropriate tracking system that measures their consistency and progress.

After students complete the survey, invite them to ponder during the lesson how they might improve their scripture study.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:




“The scriptures contain the words of Christ and are a reservoir of living water to which we have ready access and from which we can drink deeply and long. . . .

“Through normal activity each day, you and I lose a substantial amount of the water that constitutes so much of our physical bodies. Thirst is a demand by the cells of the body for water, and the water in our bodies must be replenished daily. It frankly does not make sense to occasionally ‘fill up’ with water, with long periods of dehydration in between. The same thing is true spiritually. Spiritual thirst is a need for living water. A constant flow of living water is far superior to sporadic sipping” (“A Reservoir of Living Water” [Church Educational System fireside, Feb. 4, 2007], 1, 7, broadcast.lds.org).

- What principle can we learn from Elder Bednar about what we can receive from daily scripture study? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we study the scriptures daily, we receive the “living water” we need.** Write this principle on the board.)

The value of the holy scriptures in our day

 To help students understand the value and importance of the scriptures in our day, you may want to show the video “The Blessings of Scripture” (3:04), which is available on LDS.org. In this video, Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles describes the sacrifice one man made to enable more people to read the Bible. If you show the video, consider pausing after Elder Christofferson asks, “What did they understand that we should also understand?” (time code 1:56) to ask students how they would answer his question. Then continue showing the video. At the conclusion of the video, continue the lesson at the paragraph that begins, “After the video . . .”

If you do not show the video, invite four students to come to the front of the class and read the following portions of a talk given by Elder Christofferson.



1. “On October 6, in the year 1536, a pitiful figure was led from a dungeon in Vilvorde Castle near Brussels, Belgium. For nearly a year and a half, the man had suffered isolation in a dark, damp cell. Now outside the castle wall, the prisoner was fastened to a post. He had time to utter aloud his final prayer, ‘Lord! open the king of England’s eyes,’ and then he was strangled. Immediately, his body was burned at the stake. Who was this man, and what was the offense?” (“The Blessing of Scripture,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2010, 32).

2. “His name was William Tyndale, and his crime was to have translated and published the Bible in English.

“ . . . In a heated exchange with a cleric who argued against putting scripture in the hands of the common man, Tyndale vowed, ‘If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough, shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost!’ . . .

“William Tyndale was not the first, nor the last, of those who in many countries and languages have sacrificed, even to the point of death, to bring the word of God out of obscurity. . . . What did they know about the importance of scriptures that we also need to know? What did people in 16th-century England, who paid enormous sums and ran grave personal risks for access to a Bible, understand that we should also understand?” (“The Blessing of Scripture,” 32).

Ask the class:

- Why do you think people made such great sacrifices to have access to the scriptures?

Ask the third reader to continue reading Elder Christofferson’s statement.

3. “In Tyndale’s day, scriptural ignorance abounded because people lacked access to the Bible, especially in a language they could understand. Today the Bible and other scripture are readily at hand, yet there is a growing scriptural illiteracy because people will not open the books. Consequently they have forgotten things their grandparents knew” (“The Blessing of Scripture,” 33).

Ask the class:

- Why do you think some people in our day are not reading the scriptures as they should?

Ask the fourth reader to continue reading Elder Christofferson’s statement.

4. “Consider the magnitude of our blessing to have the Holy Bible and some 900 additional pages of scripture, including the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. . . . Surely with this blessing the Lord is telling us that our need for constant recourse to the scriptures is greater than in any previous time” (“The Blessing of Scripture,” 35).

After the video (or after the fourth reader has finished reading Elder Christofferson’s statement), invite students to explain what they believe Elder Christofferson is saying about our need to study the scriptures. After students have responded, write the following truth on the board: **Our need for the scriptures is greater today than in any previous time.**

- Why do you think that our need for the scriptures is greater today than in any previous time?

To help students understand how studying the scriptures can benefit us in our day, explain that the Apostle Paul wrote a letter in which he described some conditions of the world in the last days. Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 3:1–5, 13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for some of the sins and attitudes that would be common in our day. (You

may want to refer students to the footnotes for help in defining difficult words and phrases in these verses.)

- What are some of the sins and attitudes listed in these verses that you have witnessed in our society today?

Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 3:14–17 aloud. Ask the class to look for how we can find safety in these perilous times.

- How can we find safety in these perilous times?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *As we study the scriptures, we can receive . . .*

- According to 2 Timothy 3:15–17, what blessings are available to us as we study the scriptures and live their teachings? (After students respond, complete the statement on the board so it reads as follows: **As we study the scriptures, we can receive wisdom, correction, and instruction that will lead us to salvation.**)

Explain that the statement on the board is an example of a principle. Principles and doctrines of the gospel of Jesus Christ are fundamental, unchanging truths that provide guidance for our lives. One of the central purposes of the scriptures is to teach doctrines and principles of the gospel. We can make our personal scripture study more meaningful by searching for doctrines and principles, pondering their meaning, and applying them in our lives.

Refer again to the principle you wrote on the board.

- What do you think it means that we can receive wisdom, correction, and instruction as we study the scriptures?
- When have you felt that you received wisdom, correction, or instruction as a result of studying the scriptures? (You may want to share an experience as well.)

Encourage students to read the text for the course

The standard works are inspired writings that contain doctrines and principles of the gospel. They illustrate God's dealings with mankind and teach about the Atonement of Jesus Christ. They are important individually, and collectively they give a greater understanding of the gospel and the plan of salvation prepared by our Father in Heaven. Students and teachers should read and study the entire New Testament during this course.

Reading the New Testament daily

Explain that one of the expectations for this seminary course of study is that students read the entire New Testament. This is a requirement to receive a seminary diploma.

Explain that reading the entire New Testament will take consistent determination but is worth the effort. To illustrate this, display two transparent glasses filled with water (or a soft drink). Invite two students to each stand next to a glass. Give one student a straw. Give the other student seven straws taped together in a bundle. Instruct them to drink all of the water as quickly as they can using the straw or straws. (The student using one straw should be able to steadily drink the water and finish first; the other student should struggle to get all of the water up the straws.) Invite the two students to be seated, and ask the class:

- How would you relate this activity to our goal of reading the entire New Testament during this course of study? (The student with seven straws is like someone who tries to read large portions of the scriptures all at once. The student with one straw is like someone who reads a smaller amount daily.)

To help students see how they can read the entire New Testament by reading small portions consistently, invite them to divide the number of pages in the New Testament (404 pages in the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible) by the number of total days until the end of the course. For example, if the course were to be taught in a school year of 280 days, students would need to read about 1.5 pages per day to finish the New Testament by the end of the course.

Testify of the blessings that can come to students as they diligently study the New Testament. Students will receive wisdom, correction, and instruction from the scriptures and be blessed with the companionship of the Holy Ghost.

Refer again to the principles on the board, and testify that by studying the scriptures daily, students will experience the blessings described by Paul in 2 Timothy 3:15–17. Encourage students to make goals to set aside time every day for personal scripture study and to read the entire New Testament. Invite students to write their goals in their scripture study journals.

LESSON 5

Context and Overview of the New Testament

Introduction

In this lesson, students will learn about the historical and cultural context of the New Testament, including factors that contributed to many Jews rejecting Jesus as the

Messiah and Savior. Students will also learn about the structure of the New Testament.

Suggestions for Teaching

The context of the New Testament

Display a portion of the picture *Stephen Sees Jesus on the Right Hand of God* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 63; see also LDS.org) by using paper or another material to cover everything in the picture except Stephen (the man in the blue cap).

Invite students to describe what is happening in the picture. Ask them why they think the man is on the ground and stretching forth his hand. After students respond, reveal the rest of the picture.

- How does seeing the full picture help you understand what is happening?

Invite students to read the chapter heading for Acts 7 to understand that this picture shows Stephen, a disciple of Jesus Christ, being stoned to death and seeing Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

- How can we liken uncovering this picture to understanding the scriptures?

Explain that this activity illustrates the importance of understanding the context of the scriptures. The word *context* refers to the circumstances that surround or give background to a scriptural passage, event, or story. Point out that as students become familiar with the historical and cultural context of the New Testament, they can better understand and apply its teachings.

Jewish religious leaders during the Savior's ministry

Invite a student to read 2 Nephi 10:3–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words or phrases the prophet Jacob used to describe the spiritual condition among some of the Jews during the Savior's ministry.

- What words or phrases did Jacob use to describe the spiritual condition among some of the Jews? (Explain that the word *priestcrafts* in verse 5 refers to preaching that seeks “gain and praise of the world” rather than the welfare of God's people [2 Nephi 26:29]. Those who were guilty of priestcrafts were primarily wicked religious leaders among the Jews who were leading people astray.)

Invite a student to read Matthew 23:16, 24 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior described these Jewish religious leaders during His ministry.

- How did the Savior describe these Jewish religious leaders?
- What did the Savior teach about these leaders by calling them “blind guides”?

Additions to the law of Moses and other false philosophies

To help students understand further how religious leaders led people astray, draw a circle on the board and write *Law of Moses* in its center. Draw another circle around the first circle and label it *Oral Law*.

Explain that in the absence of prophets, Jewish teachers and leaders added their own rules and interpretations to the law. Known variously as the oral law, oral tradition, or the traditions of the elders, these added rules and interpretations were intended to prevent violation of God's law. To demonstrate one of these rules, invite two students to come to

Use visuals

Objects and pictures, including maps and charts, can effectively help students visualize, analyze, and understand the scriptures, especially when the visuals stimulate a discussion. Having an object or picture on display as students enter the classroom can enhance the learning atmosphere and encourage a spirit of inquiry.



the front of the class. Give them each a rope with a knot in it. Ask one student to untie the knot using only one hand, and ask the other student to untie the knot using both hands. After they attempt this, invite them to return to their seats.

Explain that according to the oral law, it was forbidden to untie a knot with both hands on the Sabbath. Doing so was considered work and thus a violation of the Sabbath day. However, untying a knot with only one hand was permitted.

- What could be the danger of adding man-made rules to God’s commandments?

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement concerning certain Jewish religious leaders by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“They took the plain and simple things of pure religion and added to them a host of their own interpretations; they embellished them with added rites and performances; and they took a happy, joyous way of worship and turned it into a restrictive, curtailng, depressive system of rituals and performances. The living spirit of the Lord’s law became in their hands the dead letter of Jewish ritualism” (*The Mortal Messiah*, 4 vols. [1979–81], 1:238).

- According to Elder McConkie, what had the Jewish religious leaders done to God’s law with their added interpretations?

Point out that the Jews in Jesus’s day were in a state of apostasy. Although the authority and ordinances of the Aaronic Priesthood continued among them, many of the Jews had fallen away from the true practice of their religion as revealed by God to Moses (see D&C 84:25–28). The tradition of the elders had gained priority over pure religion and the written word of God.

Invite a student to read Matthew 12:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Pharisees desired to do to Jesus because He disregarded their authority and some of their oral traditions.

- What did these religious leaders conspire to do to Jesus?

Explain that in addition to apostate Jewish traditions, other false philosophies influenced people’s rejection of Jesus Christ after His Resurrection. For example, the spread of Greek culture led many people to reject the reality of a physical resurrection (see 1 Corinthians 15:12). Thus, as the Apostles testified of the resurrected Savior after His Crucifixion, many rejected their testimonies.

Foreign rule and the expectation of a Messiah to deliver Israel

Write the following words on the board: *Babylon, Persia, Macedonia (Greece), and Rome.*

- Regarding the Jews, what did these ancient empires have in common? (They had conquered and ruled over the Jews.)

Divide students into groups and provide the following handout to each group:

Except for one period of independence, by New Testament times the Jews had lived as a conquered people for over 500 years. A revolt led by the Maccabees, a family of Jewish patriots, led to independence about 160 years before Christ’s birth. However, by the time of Christ’s birth, Rome had conquered Israel. King Herod (also known as Herod the Great), who had married into the Maccabee family, was appointed by Rome to rule over Israel. The Jews resented Roman rule and eagerly looked forward to a promised Messiah who they believed would deliver them from the Romans. Because many Jews expected a Messiah who would deliver them from foreign rule, they rejected Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Ask students to read the handout and discuss the following questions as a group (you may want to copy these questions on the board):

- What did many Jews expect from the coming Messiah?
- Why do you think this false expectation led many Jews to reject Jesus as the Messiah?

Explain that while some Jews rejected Christ, others who were humble and spiritually sensitive recognized Him as the Messiah and Savior.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Luke 2:25–33. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what a righteous man named Simeon did and said when Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to the temple as an infant.

- According to verses 30–32, why was Jesus sent to earth? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **Jesus Christ was sent to bring salvation to all people.**)
- What did Jesus Christ do to allow all people to be saved?

Display the picture of Stephen that was shown at the beginning of the lesson. Encourage students to remember the cultural and historical context you have discussed as they study the New Testament. As they do, they will better understand the teachings of the Savior and His Apostles. (For additional information about the historical and cultural context of the New Testament, see “The Intertestamental Period” and “The New Testament Setting” in the *New Testament Student Manual* ([Church Educational System manual, 2014], 1–3). This material includes brief explanations of groups such as the Samaritans, Pharisees, Sadducees, Sanhedrin, and scribes).

A brief preview of the New Testament

Tell students that you will show them a picture for 10 seconds and will then invite them to write a detailed description of what they saw. Show students Christ Healing the Sick at Bethesda (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 42; see also LDS.org). After 10 seconds, put the picture away and invite students to write their descriptions. After sufficient time, ask a few students to read their descriptions to the class.

- Although you all saw the same picture, why did your descriptions differ?
- Why is it helpful to have more than one witness of an event?

Write the names of the writers of the four Gospels on the board: *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, and *John*. Explain that each of these disciples of Jesus Christ recorded events and teachings from the Savior’s life. Their records are called the Gospels. The word *gospel* means “good news.” Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation changes the title of each Gospel to *testimony*, as in “The Testimony of St. Matthew.”

- Why is it helpful to have more than one Gospel or testimony of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ?

Explain that although the four Gospels vary in some details and perspective, they all recount the events of the Savior’s life and earthly ministry among the Jews. All four Gospels testify that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of the world (see Bible Dictionary, “Gospels”).

You might want to provide students with copies of the abbreviated version of the chart “The Mortal Life of Jesus Christ at a Glance” at the end of this lesson. The full version of this chart is in the appendix of this manual. Invite students to use the chart to identify a few major events in the Savior’s mortal ministry.

- According to the chart, how long was the Savior’s mortal ministry?
- Where was the Savior during most of His ministry?

Invite students to use this chart to better understand the context of the four Gospels as they study the New Testament.

Ask students to open to the table of contents of the Bible. Explain that while the Gospels give an account of the Savior’s ministry, the books from Acts through Revelation record the ministry of Christ’s ancient Apostles after His Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension. These Apostles traveled throughout the land of Israel and the Roman Empire preaching the gospel and establishing branches of the Church. By studying these Apostles’ acts and writings, we can strengthen our faith in the Savior and learn how to receive the blessings of His Atonement. We can also see how closely The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints parallels the ancient Church of Jesus Christ.

Consider testifying of truths you have discovered from studying the New Testament. Invite students to look for truths that will bless them as they study the New Testament this year.



The Mortal Life of Jesus Christ at a Glance



Changes water to wine

Calls disciples

Calms the sea

Walks on water

Grows to maturity

Teaches and heals throughout Galilee

Feeds more than 5,000

Teaches parables of the kingdom

Mount of Transfiguration

Preaches Sermon on the Mount

Teaches the woman at the well

Teaches and heals in Samaria and Perea

Birth

Baptism

Escape to Egypt

First cleansing of the temple

Teaches and heals in Samaria and Perea

Triumphal entry and second cleansing of the temple

Raises Lazarus

Last Supper

Crucifixion

Ascension

Resurrection

Getsemane

First Year of Ministry

Second Year of Ministry

Third Year of Ministry

Last Week and Atonement

Home-Study Lesson

The Plan of Salvation—Introduction to and Context of the New Testament (Unit 1)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following is a summary of events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied the four home-study student lessons for unit 1. Knowing what students have been studying will help you prepare for class. The summary is not part of the lesson and is not meant to be shared with students. Because the lesson you will teach for unit 1 concentrates on only a few of the doctrines and principles listed in the summary, you may at times feel impressed to review or discuss others according to the promptings of the Spirit and the needs of your students.

Day 1 (The Plan of Salvation)

In their study of the plan of salvation, students learned that Jesus Christ was chosen in the premortal life to be the Redeemer of mankind and that under the direction of Heavenly Father, He created this earth. They also learned the following truths: Jesus Christ came to save us from our sins. Because of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, all people will be resurrected. Jesus Christ will judge all mankind. If we exercise faith in Jesus Christ and live according to His gospel, then we can receive eternal life.

Day 2 (The Role of the Learner)

Students learned that the Holy Ghost teaches truth. They also identified that if we seek to learn by faith, then we invite the Holy Ghost into our hearts to teach and testify of truth.

Day 3 (Studying the Scriptures)

Students learned the importance of reading the entire New Testament and studying the scriptures daily. In addition, students discovered that our need for the scriptures is greater today than in any previous time and that as we study the scriptures, we can receive wisdom, light, truth, correction, and instruction that will lead us to salvation. They also identified that as we study the scriptures daily, we receive the “living water,” or spiritual nourishment, that we need.

Day 4 (Introduction to and Context of the New Testament)

Students learned that as they become familiar with the historical and cultural context of the New Testament, they can better understand and apply its teachings. They also learned that Jesus Christ was sent to bring salvation to all people and that as we come unto Jesus Christ, we will have a greater desire to invite others to come unto Him.

Introduction

This lesson is intended to prepare and encourage students to study the New Testament by introducing them to a major theme found in the teachings of Jesus Christ and His ancient Apostles. As students study the New Testament, they will learn how to respond to the Savior’s repeated invitation to come unto Him and receive His help and direction in their lives.

Suggestions for Teaching

Introduction to the New Testament

The New Testament helps us come unto Jesus Christ

Before class, write the following question on the board: *What are some difficult burdens that youth experience in our day?*

Bring to class an empty box or backpack and heavy objects to put in the box or backpack, such as large rocks or books. Invite a student to come to the front of the room, and ask him or her to hold the empty box or to put on the backpack. Ask the class to respond to the question written on the board, and ask another student to list students’ responses on the board. After each response, place a heavy object in the box or backpack until it is full.

- How would you feel if you had to carry this burden all day?

Ask students to explain the challenges or difficulties that a few of the burdens listed on the board could cause someone.

Explain that the New Testament teaches us about Jesus Christ’s mortal and post-Resurrection ministries, including His teachings, miracles, atoning sacrifice, and visits to early Church disciples. Throughout His teachings and interactions with others is a repeated truth that can help us with the burdens we carry.

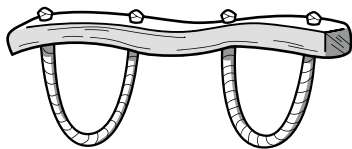
Explain that Matthew 11 includes an example of this major theme that students will see often in their study of the New Testament this year. Invite a student to read Matthew 11:28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior’s invitation to those who carry difficult burdens.

- What do you think it means to labor and be heavy laden?
- What did the Savior say we must do in order to receive His rest? (Using students’ words, write the following principle on the board: **As we come unto Jesus Christ with our burdens, He will give us rest.**)
- What do you think it means to come unto Jesus Christ?

To help students understand what it means to come unto Christ, invite a student to read Matthew 11:29–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior’s instructions to those who desire to come unto Him.

- According to these verses, what must we do in order to come unto Christ?

Draw a picture of a yoke for oxen on the board, or show a picture of a yoke.



Explain that a yoke is a wooden beam that joins or couples a pair of oxen or other animals, enabling them to pull together on a load.

- What is the purpose and benefit of a yoke? (Although the yoke is a weight or a burden, it allows both animals to combine their power and strength, thereby increasing their productivity.)
- What do you think it means to take the Savior's yoke upon us?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for how we can take the Savior's yoke upon us and what blessings we can receive by doing so.

"A yoke places animals side-by-side so they can move together in order to accomplish a task.

"Consider the Lord's uniquely individual invitation to 'take my yoke upon you.' Making and keeping sacred covenants yokes us to and with the Lord Jesus Christ. In essence, the Savior is beckoning us to rely upon and pull together with Him, even though our best efforts are not equal to and cannot be compared with His. As we trust in and pull our load with Him during the journey of mortality, truly His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

"We are not and never need be alone. We can press forward in our daily lives with heavenly help. Through the Savior's Atonement we can receive capacity and 'strength beyond [our] own' ('Lord, I Would Follow Thee,' *Hymns*, no. 220)" ("Bear Up Their Burdens with Ease," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 88).

- What "yokes" us to the Savior, Jesus Christ?
- According to Elder Bednar, what are the blessings of being yoked to the Savior?

Point out that the Savior's promise of "rest" in Matthew 11:28–29 does not necessarily mean that He will remove our problems or challenges. Often, the Savior will give us the peace and strength we need to overcome or endure our trials, thus making our burdens lighter. If we are faithful through the challenges of mortality, the ultimate rest we will receive is exaltation with God (see D&C 84:23–24).

Ask students to ponder how the Savior has given them rest when they have come unto Him. Invite a few students to share their experiences with the class.

Invite students to set specific goals regarding ways they can come unto Jesus Christ throughout this year of studying the New Testament. Encourage them to include in their goals studying the scriptures daily and reading all of the New Testament this year.

A Brief Overview of the New Testament

The books in the New Testament testify that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and our Savior

Write the names of the writers of the four Gospels on the board: *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, and *John*. Explain that each of these disciples of Jesus Christ recorded events and teachings from the Savior's life. Their records are called the Gospels. The word *gospel* means "good news." Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation changes the title of each Gospel to *testimony*, as in "The Testimony of St. Matthew."

- Why is it helpful to have more than one Gospel or testimony of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ?

Explain that although the four Gospels vary in some details and perspective, they all recount the events of the Savior's life and earthly ministry among the Jews. All four Gospels testify that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Savior of the world. Refer students to the chart "The Mortal Life of Jesus Christ at a Glance," at the end of the Unit 1: Day 4 lesson. Invite them to use the chart to identify a few major events in the Savior's mortal ministry.

- According to the chart, how long was the Savior's mortal ministry?
- Where was the Savior during most of His ministry?

Invite students to use this chart to better understand the context of the four Gospels as they study the New Testament.

Invite students to open to the table of contents of the Bible. Explain that while the Gospels give an account of the Savior's ministry, the books from Acts through Revelation record the ministry of Christ's ancient Apostles after His Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension. These Apostles traveled throughout the land of Israel and the Roman Empire preaching the gospel and establishing branches of the Church. By studying these Apostles' acts and writings, we can strengthen our faith in the Savior and learn how to receive the blessings of His Atonement. We can also see how closely The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints parallels the ancient Church of Jesus Christ.

Consider sharing your testimony of the New Testament, and invite students to look for truths that will bless them as they study the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and His Apostles in the New Testament.

Next Unit (Matthew 1–5)

Explain that in the next unit students will study some of the details surrounding the birth of the Son of God. They will also study Jesus Christ's teachings about how to be truly happy in this life and become perfect like Heavenly Father.

INTRODUCTION TO

The Gospel According to St. Matthew

Why study this book?

Some of the most beloved passages of the Bible are found in the book of Matthew, including the Sermon on the Mount and many of the parables, teachings, and miracles of Jesus Christ. Studying this book can help students become familiar with the ministry and words of Jesus Christ and can strengthen their testimonies of Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world and the Promised Messiah spoken of by all the holy prophets.

Who wrote this book?

Matthew, also known as Levi, the son of Alphaeus, is the author of this book. He was a publican, or tax collector, before his life changed forever when he responded to Jesus Christ's invitation to follow Him. (See Matthew 9:9; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27–28; Bible Dictionary, "Matthew.") Following his conversion, Matthew became one of the Savior's Twelve Apostles (see Matthew 10:2–4). As an Apostle, Matthew was an eyewitness to many of the events he described in his record. This is supported by the title given to his Gospel in the Joseph Smith Translation: "The Testimony of St. Matthew."

When and where was it written?

We do not know precisely when the book of Matthew was written, but it was likely written in the second half of the first century A.D. We do not know where Matthew wrote this book.

To whom was it written and why?

Matthew appears to have written to a Jewish audience to show that Jesus Christ fulfilled Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah (see Bible Dictionary, "Matthew"). As Matthew recounted the life, words, and deeds of Jesus Christ, he frequently referred to Old Testament prophecies and used the phrase "that it might be fulfilled" (for example, see Matthew 4:14; 8:17; 13:35; 21:4).

In his Gospel, Matthew employed the term "Son of David" 12 times as testimony that Jesus Christ was the rightful heir to King David's throne and the fulfillment of messianic prophecies. Matthew's genealogy of Jesus Christ traces His lineage through David, Judah, and Abraham (see Matthew 1:1–3), demonstrating Jesus's right to rule and His role in fulfilling God's promises to Israel.

What are some distinctive features of this book?

Though a large amount of Matthew's material is also found in Mark and Luke, about 42 percent of Matthew's Gospel is unique. A major theme in Matthew is that Jesus Christ came to establish His kingdom on the earth. Matthew mentioned "the kingdom of heaven" numerous times, and he is the only Gospel author to have included teachings of Jesus that mention the "church" (see Matthew 16:18; 18:17).

The Gospel of Matthew also helps us see parallels between the ministries of Moses and Jesus Christ. For example, both were saved as infants from a king's attempt to slay them (see Exodus 2:1–10; Matthew 2:13–18), both came out of Egypt, both delivered God's law on a mount (see Exodus 19–20; Matthew 5–7), and both came to deliver their people.

Outline

Matthew 1–4 Matthew sets forth the genealogy and birth of Jesus Christ. Wise men seek the King of the Jews. Guided by dreams, Joseph takes Mary and the child Jesus to Egypt and later to Nazareth. John the Baptist preaches the gospel of repentance and baptizes Jesus Christ. The Savior is tempted in the wilderness. He begins His mortal ministry by teaching and healing.

Matthew 5–7 Jesus Christ delivers the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 8–12 The Savior heals a leper, calms a storm, casts out devils, raises Jairus's daughter from the dead, and gives sight to the blind. Jesus Christ gives the Twelve Apostles authority to do as He has done and sends them out to preach the gospel. Jesus proclaims that John the

Baptist is more than a prophet. The Savior heals on the Sabbath.

Matthew 13–15 Jesus teaches using parables. John the Baptist is executed. After the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus and Peter walk on the Sea of Galilee. Scribes and Pharisees question Jesus.

Matthew 16–18 After Peter testifies that Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior indicates that He will give the keys of the kingdom of God to Peter and the Twelve. Jesus Christ is transfigured on a mountain, where Peter, James, and John receive priesthood keys. Jesus gives instructions to His disciples on how to guide the Church and teaches that God will not forgive us if we do not forgive others.

Matthew 19–23 The Savior teaches about the eternal nature of marriage. He enters Jerusalem and

cleanses the temple. Through the use of parables, Jesus exposes the evil intentions of the Jewish leaders who oppose Him. He mourns over Jerusalem's future destruction.

Matthew 24–25; Joseph Smith—Matthew Jesus Christ prophesies of the destruction of Jerusalem. He teaches how His followers can be prepared for His return.

Matthew 26–27 Jesus eats the Passover meal with His disciples and introduces the sacrament. He suffers in the Garden of Gethsemane and is betrayed, arrested, tried before Jewish and Roman authorities, and crucified. He dies and is buried.

Matthew 28 The resurrected Savior appears to His disciples. Jesus commissions the Apostles to take His gospel to all nations.

LESSON 6

Matthew 1–2

Introduction

Matthew gave the genealogy of Jesus Christ, and an angel declared Jesus's divine parentage to Joseph. Wise men from the East traveled to find and worship the young

Jesus. Joseph was told in a dream to take his family to Egypt to avoid Herod's slaughter of children in Bethlehem.

Use the curriculum

When you prepare a lesson, prayerfully review the curriculum materials as you study the scripture block. As you do so, the Holy Ghost can help you personalize the lesson for students' needs. You might use all or part of the teaching suggestions for a scripture block, or you might adapt the suggested ideas to the needs and circumstances of your class.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 1:1–17

The genealogy of Jesus

Display a photograph of your parents and ask students if they can spot any traits you inherited from them. You could also invite a few students to bring in photographs of their parents and ask the class to guess whose parents they are. Ask students to discuss with each other any traits they inherited from their parents (such as eye color, hair color, or height).

Invite students as they study Matthew 1–2 to look for truths about the Savior's parents and traits He inherited from them. This activity should prepare students to understand the truths that Jesus Christ is the divine Son of Heavenly Father and Mary and that He is the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh.

Explain that Matthew 1:1–17 lists the Savior's ancestors. Point out that verse 1 mentions that Jesus Christ was a descendant of David and of Abraham.

Explain that Old Testament prophecies declared that the Messiah would be a descendant of David (see 2 Samuel 7:12–13; Isaiah 9:6–7; Jeremiah 23:5–6) and that an offspring of Abraham would bless "all the nations of the earth" (Genesis 22:18; see also Abraham 2:11). Matthew wanted readers to know that Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah (see Matthew 1:22–23; 2:5, 15, 23; 26:55–56). The genealogy given in Matthew 1:1–17 shows that Jesus was the promised Messiah and the rightful heir to the throne of David.

Invite a student to read Matthew 1:16 aloud. Ask students to follow along and look for a title given to Jesus and to report what they find.

Explain that the word *Christ* is the Greek form of the Aramaic word *Messiah*, which means "the anointed."

- In the premortal existence, what was Jesus Christ anointed or chosen to do? (He was anointed by Heavenly Father to be our "Prophet, Priest, King, and Deliverer" [Guide to the Scriptures, "Messiah," scriptures.lds.org; see also Bible Dictionary, "Anointed One"].)

Matthew 1:18–25

An angel declares Jesus's divine parentage to Joseph

Point out that Matthew 1:16 also mentions that Mary was Joseph's wife. According to Matthew 1:18, Joseph and Mary were *espoused*. This means they were betrothed, or engaged, and legally bound to each other but not yet living together as husband and wife. However, before the wedding, Joseph learned that Mary was pregnant. Invite a student to read Matthew 1:19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Joseph intended to do.

- What did Joseph intend to do when he learned that Mary was pregnant? (Explain that "to put her away privily" means Joseph planned to cancel the engagement privately without forcing Mary to face public humiliation or the possible penalty of stoning.)
- What does this verse teach us about Joseph's character?

Invite a student to read Matthew 1:20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Joseph while he was considering ending the betrothal to Mary.

- Why did the angel tell Joseph not to be afraid to proceed with his marriage to Mary?

To help students understand the meaning of the phrase “of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 1:18, 20), invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“Just as Jesus is literally the Son of Mary, so he is the personal and literal offspring of God the Eternal Father. . . . Matthew’s statement, ‘she was found with child of the Holy Ghost,’ properly translated should say, ‘she was found with child *by the power of the Holy Ghost.*’ (Matt. 1:18.) . . . Alma perfectly describes our Lord’s conception and birth by prophesying: Christ ‘shall be born of Mary, . . . she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed and *conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost,* and bring forth a son, yea, even *the Son of God.*’ (Alma 7:10.)” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:82).

- What do we learn about Jesus’s parentage from these teachings? (Students may use different words but should identify the following doctrine: **Jesus Christ is the divine Son of Heavenly Father and Mary.** You may want to suggest that students write this doctrine in the margin of their scriptures next to Matthew 1:18–25.)

Refer to the photograph of your parents and reiterate some of the traits you inherited from them. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder James E. Talmage of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask students to listen for why it is important to understand that Jesus is the divine Son of Heavenly Father and Mary.



“That Child to be born of Mary was begotten of Elohim, the Eternal Father. . . . In His nature would be combined the powers of Godhood with the capacity and possibilities of mortality. . . . The Child Jesus was to inherit the physical, mental, and spiritual traits, tendencies, and powers that characterized His parents—one immortal and glorified—God, the other human—woman” (*Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 81).

- What traits did Jesus inherit from His Father? What traits did He inherit from His mother?

Explain that because Jesus was the Son of an immortal Father and a mortal mother, He had the capacity to live eternally if He chose, as well as the ability to die. This divine nature uniquely qualified Him to be able to suffer for our sins, die on the cross, and be resurrected.

Matthew 2:1–12

The Wise Men are directed to Jesus



Display three wrapped gifts in front of the class or draw a picture of three gifts on the board.

- Who brought gifts to the Savior after He was born?

Explain that the Gospel of Matthew is the only Gospel to include an account of the Wise Men. Distribute the following quiz as a handout or write the questions on the board before class. Give students a few minutes to read the questions and write their answers.

How much do you know about the Wise Men?

1. How did the Wise Men know the Messiah had been born?
2. Why did the Wise Men want to find the Messiah?
3. How did the chief priests and scribes know where the Messiah would be born?
4. What did Herod want the Wise Men to do after they found Jesus?
5. What did the Wise Men do instead?

After sufficient time, invite students to read Matthew 2:1–12 silently, looking for the answers to the quiz questions.

Invite a few students to share anything new they learned about the Wise Men. Details in verses 11 and 16 suggest that it may have been as long as two years after Jesus's birth when the Wise Men were led to the holy family (the Wise Men found Jesus in a house, not a manger, and He was a "young child," not a baby). Point out that the reason Herod wanted the Wise Men to report where they found the Messiah was so he could kill Him (see Matthew 2:13).

- How did the Wise Men know where to find the Messiah?
- What can we learn from the example of the Wise Men seeking the Savior? (Students' responses may vary, but help them identify the following principle: **If we sincerely and diligently seek the Savior, we will be guided to Him.**)
- How can we diligently seek the Savior?
- What did the Wise Men do once they found the Savior? Why? (One purpose for presenting gifts to the Savior was to worship Him.)
- What can we learn from the example of the Wise Men offering gifts to the Savior? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **We can worship the Lord by offering meaningful gifts to Him.**)

To help students understand how we can offer meaningful gifts to the Savior, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"In ancient times when people wanted to worship the Lord and seek His blessings, they often brought a gift. . . .

"Is there something in you or in your life that is impure or unworthy? When you get rid of it, that is a gift to the Savior. Is there a good habit or quality that is lacking in your life? When you adopt it and make it part of your character, you are giving a gift to the Lord. Sometimes this is hard to do, but would your gifts of repentance and obedience be worthy gifts if they cost you nothing?" ("When Thou Art Converted," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2004, 12).

- What can we offer as meaningful gifts to the Savior?

Invite students to ponder Elder Christofferson's statement and consider what gifts they feel they should offer the Savior. Provide pieces of paper for them to write their ideas on. Invite them to plan how they will give these gifts to Jesus Christ.

Matthew 2:13–23

Joseph, Mary, and Jesus escape to Egypt

Explain that according to Matthew 2:13–23, Herod became angry after the Wise Men "departed into their own country" (Matthew 2:12) without telling him where the Messiah was. Hoping to kill the Messiah, he ordered that all children two years old and younger in Bethlehem and the surrounding area be killed.

Read Matthew 2:13–14 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for how Joseph knew what to do to keep his family safe. Invite students to report what they find.

- Where did Joseph take Mary and Jesus?

Summarize Matthew 2:15–23 by explaining that Joseph, Mary, and Jesus stayed in Egypt until Herod died. God instructed Joseph through dreams to take his family back to Israel, and they settled in the city of Nazareth.

- How did Joseph's sensitivity to spiritual things bless others' lives?
- What principle can we learn from Joseph? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we are sensitive to the Spirit, we can receive revelation and guidance.**)

Invite students to ponder what they can do to be more sensitive to the Spirit. Encourage them to set a goal to act on any promptings they receive.

LESSON 7

Matthew 3

Introduction

John the Baptist preached and baptized in Judea. Jesus Christ traveled from Galilee to the Jordan River, where

He was baptized by John. God the Father testified that Jesus is His Beloved Son.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 3:1–12

John the Baptist preaches in Judea

Ask the class to imagine how they would feel if one of the students in the class were to get up and begin taking personal items that belong to the other students. Then ask them to imagine that after taking each item, the offending student apologizes but continues to take items from other students. Ask:

- What would you think about this student's apologies?
- How might this student's actions be similar to trying to repent insincerely?

Invite students as they study Matthew 3 to look for truths that help us understand what we must do to truly repent.

Invite a student to read Matthew 3:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to look for what happened that would help prepare the people for the Savior's ministry.

- Who was John the Baptist? (He was the son of Zacharias and Elisabeth, who was Mary's relative. He held the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood [see D&C 13; 84:27–28].)
- What was John doing?
- What did John exhort his listeners to do?

Explain that John's mission had been foretold by Isaiah (Esaiahs) and other prophets (see Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1; 1 Nephi 10:7–10). John was to prepare the way for the Messiah (Jesus Christ) by declaring repentance and baptizing with water.

- How do you think declaring repentance and baptizing with water helped prepare the way of the Lord?

Invite a student to read Matthew 3:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how people responded to John's message.

- How did people respond to John's message? (They confessed their sins and were baptized. Explain that being willing to confess one's sins to Heavenly Father and, when necessary, to designated priesthood leaders is essential to repentance [see *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (2004), 134].)

Invite a student to read Matthew 3:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom John spoke to.

- According to this verse, whom did John speak to?

Explain that the Pharisees were a religious group of Jews whose name suggests being separate or apart. They took pride in strictly observing the law of Moses and believed that man-made additions to it, known as the oral law, were as important as the law of Moses itself (see Bible Dictionary, "Pharisees"). The Sadducees were a small but politically powerful group of Jews who believed in obeying the letter of the law of Moses. They did not believe in the doctrine of resurrection or eternal life (see Bible Dictionary, "Sadducees").

- What did John call the Pharisees and Sadducees?

If possible, display a picture of a Palestinian viper and explain that it is the most common poisonous snake in Israel. Vipers are active at night and typically hunt by hiding and then sneaking up on their prey. When they feel threatened, vipers will coil their body, hiss, and strike at their opponents.

The purpose of seminary

The purpose of seminary "is to help youth . . . understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ, qualify for the blessings of the temple, and prepare themselves, their families, and others for eternal life with their Father in Heaven" ("The Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion" [2012], si.lds.org). As you prepare lessons, prayerfully determine how you can help achieve this goal each day.



Palestinian viper
© tavipho/Shutterstock.com

- Why do you think John referred to the Pharisees and Sadducees as vipers? (You may want to point out that the Pharisees and Sadducees felt threatened by John, as he drew many people away from their evil influence and false teachings.)

Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation contains additional words that John spoke to the Pharisees and Sadducees. Invite students to turn to Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 3:34–36 (in the Bible appendix). (You may want to explain that these verses are a translation of Matthew 3:8–9.) Ask a student to read these verses aloud.

- According to John, if the Pharisees and Sadducees rejected his preaching, whom would they also reject?
- How would you summarize John’s message to them?

Write the phrase *Bring forth fruits meet for repentance* on the board.

To help students understand this phrase, point out that in the scriptures people are sometimes symbolized by trees that produce either good fruit or bad fruit. Display or draw a piece of fruit and explain that it represents our desires and actions. You may want to explain that the phrase “meet for” means “worthy of” (see Matthew 3:8, footnote *b*).

Remind the class of the scenario you asked them to imagine at the beginning of the lesson (a student taking personal items from other students and then continuing to do so, even after apologizing).

- Did the student appropriately demonstrate the principle of repentance through his or her desires and actions? Why not? (The student continued to take items from other students even after apologizing.)
- How would you summarize what it means to “bring forth . . . fruits meet for repentance”? (Matthew 3:8). (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **We demonstrate true repentance to the Lord as we change our desires and actions to follow His teachings.**)
- What desires and actions indicate that we have truly repented of our sins?

To help students understand this truth, list the following examples on the board: *cheating in school, being mean to siblings, being unkind to or bullying other students, using bad language, and viewing pornography*. Ask students to explain how someone who has repented of these sins might think and act.

Read Matthew 3:10 aloud. Invite students to follow along, looking for the consequence of not truly repenting. Ask students to report what they find. Explain that being “hewn down, and cast into the fire” implies that unrepentant individuals lose the influence of the Spirit of God and eventually forfeit the blessings of the celestial kingdom.

Invite students to ponder any desires or actions they may need to change in order to truly repent. Encourage them to demonstrate true repentance by changing any desires and actions that are not in accordance with God’s teachings.

Invite students to read Matthew 3:11 silently, looking for what John said the Savior would do.

- According to verse 11, what would Jesus do that John could not? (Jesus would baptize “with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” Explain that John was referring to receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, the second half of the covenant and ordinance of baptism. The Holy Ghost sanctifies and refines our souls as if by fire [see 2 Nephi 31:13–14, 17].)

Summarize verse 12 by explaining that it symbolically describes what will happen to the righteous who accept Jesus Christ (the wheat) and to the wicked who reject Him (the chaff).

Matthew 3:13–17

Jesus Christ is baptized, and the Father acclaims Him as His Beloved Son

Ask students who have been baptized to reflect on their own baptism. Invite several of them to share what they remember.

Explain that Matthew 3:13–17 recounts the baptism of the Savior. Invite students to look for similarities between their baptism and the Savior’s as they study these verses.

Write the following questions on the board:

By whom?

How?

Why?

Divide students into pairs. Ask each partnership to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 3:13–17, looking for the answers to these three questions. After sufficient time, ask:

- Who baptized Jesus? (Write *John the Baptist* on the board next to *By whom?*)
- Why did Jesus travel from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John the Baptist? (Remind students that John held the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood and was the only man at that time who had the authority to perform the ordinance of baptism. Write *Proper authority* on the board next to *John the Baptist*.)
- What phrase in verse 16 indicates how Jesus was baptized? (Make sure students understand that Jesus coming immediately “out of the water” indicates He was baptized by immersion—meaning He was covered completely by the water. Write *By immersion* on the board next to *How?*)

Invite students to imagine that they were at the Jordan River when Jesus came to be baptized.

- Why was John initially reluctant to baptize the Savior? (He knew that Jesus’s position and authority were greater than his own.)
- According to verse 15, why did Jesus say He needed to be baptized? (“To fulfil all righteousness.” Write this phrase on the board next to *Why?*)
- What do you think this phrase means?

Explain that “to fulfil all righteousness” means doing all that Heavenly Father requires of us so that we can live with Him again. This includes receiving the ordinances of salvation, which God requires of all of His children, including Jesus. By being baptized, Jesus set the perfect example for us to follow, demonstrated humility, obeyed the commandments of His Father, and received an ordinance necessary to attain eternal life (see 2 Nephi 31:4–11).

Ask students to use the answers to the three questions on the board to identify a doctrine we can learn from Matthew 3:13–17. Students may use different words but should identify the following doctrine: **Baptism by immersion by one holding authority is essential for salvation.**

- How does your baptism compare with the example the Savior set for us?

Explain that Matthew 3:16–17 also helps us learn doctrine about the Godhead. Invite students to reread these verses silently, looking for what they teach about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

- Where was each member of the Godhead during the Savior’s baptism? (Jesus Christ was in the Jordan River, the Holy Ghost descended upon Him like a dove, and Heavenly Father spoke from heaven. You might explain that the Holy Ghost did not actually transform into a dove. Rather, the dove was a sign or symbol that the Holy Ghost had descended upon Jesus.)
- What doctrine do these verses teach us about the Godhead? (Students may use different words but should identify the following doctrine: **The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three distinct and separate beings.**)

Point out that many people do not have a correct or complete knowledge of the Godhead. The more we understand the true nature of the Godhead, the greater love we can feel for Them and the better we will be prepared to teach and testify of Them to others.

To help students gain a better understanding of the identity of each member of the Godhead, divide them into groups of three and ask them to look up “God” in the Bible Dictionary. For every group, assign each of the three students a member of the Godhead. Invite students to read the entry, looking for information about the member they have been assigned. After sufficient time, ask students to teach what they learned to their group and to explain why those truths are important for us to know.

To conclude the lesson, consider inviting students to share with the class their testimonies of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

LESSON 8

Matthew 4

Introduction

Following His baptism, Jesus spent 40 days fasting and communing with Heavenly Father in the wilderness. After this experience, the devil tempted Jesus. Using

scripture, Jesus resisted each temptation. The Savior went to Galilee, where He called Peter and others to follow Him and went about teaching, preaching, and healing.

Determine pacing

Avoid the mistake of taking too much time on the first part of the lesson and having to rush through the rest of it. As you prepare, estimate how long each section of the lesson will take using the teaching methods you have chosen. Because you will almost always have more material to teach than there is time to teach it, determine which portions of the scripture block to emphasize and which to summarize.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 4:1–11

Jesus resists the devil's temptations

Ask a volunteer to come to the front of the class. Challenge the student to focus on an item in the room for 30 seconds without looking away. Once the student begins, try to distract him or her from looking at the item. For example, you might display brightly colored items, make loud noises, or offer the student food. After 30 seconds, ask the student:

- How did you do? Why were you able, or unable, to maintain your focus?
- What did you think about during the 30 seconds?

Ask the class:

- How is this experience like our efforts to stay focused on obeying Heavenly Father's commandments? What could the attempts to distract this student represent? (Efforts to tempt us to sin.)
- Why does Satan tempt us to sin? (See 2 Nephi 2:17–18, 27.)

Ask students to think about the ways Satan tempts them to sin. Invite them as they study Matthew 4 to look for a principle they can apply to help them resist temptation.

Explain that following His baptism, the Savior had an experience that helped prepare Him for His earthly ministry. Invite a student to read Matthew 4:1–2 aloud, using the corrections from the Joseph Smith Translation in the footnotes for both verses. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus experienced in the wilderness. (You may need to explain that in this context, the word *commune* means to “be with” or to have a close, spiritual interaction.)

- How would fasting and communing with Heavenly Father have helped Jesus prepare for His earthly ministry?
- After Jesus had spent this time in fasting and communion with His Father, what did Satan seek to do?

Divide students into pairs. Provide each pair with a copy of the following chart or ask them to copy it in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

Matthew 4:1–11

	What Satan tempted Jesus to do	How Jesus responded to the temptation
Matthew 4:3–4		
Matthew 4:5–7		
Matthew 4:8–11		

Instruct students to read the designated verses in their pairs and to complete the chart. Before they start this activity, explain that the Joseph Smith Translation corrects the statements in Matthew 4:5, 8 to show that the Spirit, not the devil, took the Savior to the

different locations described in these verses (see also Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 4:5 [in Luke 4:5, footnote a]; Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 4:9 [in Luke 4:9, footnote a]).

After students have completed the chart, invite several pairs to report what they wrote in each box. You might ask the following questions:

- What desire did Satan try to appeal to when he tempted Jesus, who had been fasting, to turn the stones into bread? (He tried to appeal to the desire to satisfy physical appetite.)
- What was false about Satan’s offer to give Jesus the kingdoms of the world? (Satan promised rewards that were not his to give and that he could not provide.)
- What else does this account illustrate about the devil’s strategies to tempt us to sin? (Satan targets our weakest or most vulnerable areas and repeatedly tempts us.)

Point out that Jesus would eventually satisfy His hunger and even turn an earthly substance into food (see John 2:1–11). He would also receive divine confirmation of and assistance with His ministry (see Matthew 17:1–5; Luke 22:41–44), and He will one day rule the world (see Zechariah 14:9; Revelation 11:15). However, for Jesus to have obtained these desired ends in the ways Satan tempted Him—instead of waiting for the right time and the right way—would have been a selfish abuse of the Savior’s power. Jesus would establish His divine identity as the Son of God in ways that aligned with Heavenly Father’s will, not with Satan’s bidding. (See Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Inconvenient Messiah,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1984, 68–73.)

- What was similar about the Savior’s responses to each temptation? (Jesus responded to each of Satan’s temptations by quoting from the scriptures.)

Invite students to work in their pairs to write a principle we can learn from the Savior’s example of resisting the devil’s temptations. Ask several students to write the principles they identified on the board. As students share the principles they identified, emphasize the following principle: **When we recall and apply truths taught in the scriptures, we can resist the devil’s temptations.** If this truth isn’t clearly represented among the students’ principles, add it to the statements on the board.

Point out that the Savior not only recalled scriptures that clarified the right course of action for each temptation, but He also applied the truths taught in those scriptures.

- Considering the principle we identified about the power of recalling and applying truths taught in the scriptures, why is it important to regularly study the scriptures?

Give each pair of students a sheet of paper and ask them to make three columns on it. Instruct them to write in the first column three sins that youth their age might be tempted to commit. Ask them to write in the second column a way Satan tries to entice someone to commit each sin they wrote in column one. Direct students to exchange papers with another pair. Then instruct them to find a specific scripture reference that teaches truths someone could recall and apply when being tempted to commit each sin listed on the paper they received. (You might invite students to refer to scripture mastery passages, such as Genesis 39:9; John 14:15; or Doctrine and Covenants 10:5.) Ask students to write the scripture references in the third column.

After several minutes, invite a student from each pair to report the scripture reference they found for one of the temptations on their paper. Ask them to explain how that scripture could help us when we experience that temptation.

- When have you been strengthened and able to resist a temptation because you recalled and applied truths taught in the scriptures? (Remind students that they should not share experiences that are too personal or private.)

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a scripture reference that they will recall and apply the next time they are tempted to sin. Encourage them to memorize the scripture they chose.

Matthew 4:12–17

Jesus dwells in Galilee

Summarize Matthew 4:12–15 by explaining that following His experience in the wilderness, the Savior went to Galilee and dwelt in the city of Capernaum. Matthew noted that the Savior’s ministry in Galilee fulfilled a prophecy made by Isaiah (see Isaiah 9:1–2). Invite students to read Matthew 4:16 silently. You may want to suggest that they mark what Isaiah prophesied would happen. Point out that from this prophecy we learn that **Jesus Christ**

brings light into the lives of those who are in darkness. Encourage students to look for how the Savior did this throughout His ministry.

Summarize Matthew 4:17 by explaining that the Savior began to preach repentance in preparation for the kingdom of heaven being established among the people.

Matthew 4:18–22

Jesus calls Peter and others to follow Him



Display the picture *Calling of the Fishermen* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 37; see also LDS.org). Point out that the two men at the front of the boat are Peter and his brother Andrew.

- What are they doing with the net?

Explain that while other people likely viewed Peter and Andrew as ordinary fishermen, Jesus Christ saw their great potential and knew what they could become.

- In what ways are we like Peter and Andrew?

As students continue to study Matthew 4, invite them to look for what we must do to become all that the Lord wants us to become.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 4:18–22. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the interaction between the Savior and some fishermen.

- What did the Savior call Peter, Andrew, James, and John to do? What is a “[fisher] of men”? (verse 19).
- What would these men be sacrificing to follow the Savior and assist in His work? Why might this be difficult for them?

Invite students to ponder how they would have responded if they had been one of these men.

- What did you notice about the response of these men? What does their immediate response to the Savior’s invitation show about their character?
- Would these men do more good in their lives as fishermen or as “fishers of men”? Why?
- As illustrated in this account, what can happen if we immediately respond to the Savior’s invitations to follow Him? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we immediately respond to the Savior’s invitations to follow Him, He can make more out of our lives than we can on our own.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson. Ask the class to listen for how the Lord can make more out of our lives if we follow Him.



“Men and women who turn their lives over to God will discover that He can make a lot more out of their lives than they can. He will deepen their joys, expand their vision, quicken their minds, strengthen their muscles, lift their spirits, multiply their blessings, increase their opportunities, comfort their souls, raise up friends, and pour out peace. Whoever will lose his life in the service of God will find eternal life” (“Jesus Christ—Gifts and Expectations,”

Ensign, Dec. 1988, 4).

- When have you, or someone you know, experienced similar blessings for leaving behind worldly concerns in order to follow the Savior?
- As you consider the blessings we receive by following the Savior, why do you think it is important to respond *immediately* to the Savior’s invitations to follow Him?

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a response to the following question:

- How can you better respond to the Savior’s invitations to follow Him?

Encourage students to apply what they wrote.

Matthew 4:23–25

Jesus goes about Galilee teaching, preaching, and healing

Ask students to read Matthew 4:23–25 silently, looking for the Savior’s actions. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find. Explain that specific instances of the Savior’s teaching, preaching, and healing will be studied throughout the Gospels.

Conclude by testifying of the truths students identified in the lesson.

LESSON 9

Matthew 5:1–16

Introduction

Matthew 5–7 records a sermon the Savior gave at the beginning of His ministry. It has come to be known as the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew 5:1–16 records the

Savior’s teachings about principles that lead to happiness. The Savior also commanded His disciples to set a righteous example.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 5:1–12

The Savior begins the Sermon on the Mount by teaching the Beatitudes

Write the following questions on the board: *Are you happy? Why or why not?*

Invite students to ponder (or write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals) how they would respond to these questions. (You may want to tell students that they will not have to share their answers with the class.)

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:



“So often we get caught up in the illusion that there is something just beyond our reach that would bring us happiness: a better family situation, a better financial situation, or the end of a challenging trial.

“ . . . External circumstances don’t really matter or determine our happiness.

“ . . . We determine our happiness” (“Of Regrets and Resolutions,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 23).

- What do you think the phrase “we determine our happiness” means? Why is this important to know?

Explain that as the Savior began His ministry, He gave a sermon near the Sea of Galilee. This sermon is often called the Sermon on the Mount and is recorded in Matthew 5–7. In this sermon the Savior explained what we can do to be truly happy, regardless of our external circumstances.

Invite students to scan Matthew 5:3–11 silently, looking for words that are repeated at the beginning of each verse. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Matthew 5:3, footnote *a*, aloud, and ask the class to look for what the word *blessed* means.

- What does the word *blessed* mean?

Explain that because *blessed* translates from the Latin word *beatus*, meaning to be fortunate or happy, these verses are commonly called the Beatitudes.

Provide each student with a copy of the following chart. Point out that in addition to the verses containing the Beatitudes in Matthew 5, the chart contains two references to 3 Nephi. These references are part of a sermon Jesus Christ gave during His ministry among the Nephites that is similar to the Sermon on the Mount. The references in 3 Nephi provide greater understanding of the corresponding scripture passages in Matthew 5.

Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning

Each scripture-based lesson in seminary focuses on a scripture block rather than on a particular concept, theme, doctrine, or principle. As teachers and students study these scripture blocks sequentially, they will be able to implement many of the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning, such as understanding context and content; identifying, understanding, and feeling the truth and importance of gospel doctrines and principles; and applying gospel doctrines and principles.

The Beatitudes

Matthew 5:3; 3 Nephi 12:3	To be poor in spirit means to be humble and “to recognize gratefully [our] dependence on the Lord—to understand that [we] have constant need for His support. Humility is an acknowledgment that [our] talents and abilities are gifts from God” (<i>True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference</i> [2004], 86).
Matthew 5:4	To mourn is to feel or express sorrow. A person may mourn over the difficulties and trials of mortality, including the death of loved ones. Likewise, a person may also mourn because of sorrow for sin.

Matthew 5:5	"To be meek, as defined in Webster's dictionary, is 'manifesting patience and long-suffering: enduring injury without resentment' [<i>Webster's Third New International Dictionary</i> (1976) 'meek,' 1403]. Meekness is not weakness. It is a badge of Christian courage" (Robert D. Hales, "Christian Courage: The Price of Discipleship," <i>Ensign</i> or <i>Liahona</i> , Nov. 2008, 73).
Matthew 5:6; 3 Nephi 12:6	To hunger and thirst after righteousness implies a great desire to know and do the will of God.
Matthew 5:7	"Mercy is the compassionate treatment of a person greater than what is deserved" ("Mercy," Gospel Topics, lds.org/topics). We are able to receive Heavenly Father's mercy because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ (see Alma 33:11).
Matthew 5:8	"The pure in heart are those who love the Lord, who seek to follow Him and keep His commandments, who are striving to live virtuous lives and endure faithfully to the end. The pure in heart are those who control their thoughts to keep themselves free from immoral fantasies and deeds" (Sheldon F. Child, "Words of Jesus: Chastity," <i>Ensign</i> , Jan. 2003, 44).
Matthew 5:9	"[Peacemaking] is the gift to help people find common ground when others are seeing differences" (Henry B. Eyring, "Learning in the Priesthood," <i>Ensign</i> or <i>Liahona</i> , May 2011, 63).
Matthew 5:10–12	To be "persecuted for righteousness' sake" means to be willing to obey and defend Jesus Christ and His teachings, even when we may be mocked or mistreated for doing so.

Divide students into eight groups and assign each group one of the beatitudes listed on the chart (if you don't have enough students to form eight groups, consider assigning more than one beatitude to a group). Invite students to prepare a short presentation about their assigned beatitude(s). They should include the following activities in their presentation (you may want to write these instructions on the board or create a handout for reference):

1. Invite a classmate to read the verse or verses aloud and identify the blessing we are promised for living that beatitude.
2. Using the verse and the information in the chart, explain what we must do to receive the promised blessing.
3. Invite the class to suggest specific ways we can live according to this beatitude.
4. Explain how living according to this beatitude can bring us happiness. You may also want to share an experience that illustrates the truth you have taught, as well as your testimony of that truth.

After sufficient time, invite each group to present its assigned beatitude(s) to the class.

After students have finished presenting, point out that the Beatitudes teach about attributes of Jesus Christ and that by living them we can become more like Him.

- Based on what you have learned in Matthew 5, what will happen to us as we develop these and other Christlike attributes? (Though they may use different words, students should identify the following principle: **As we develop Christlike attributes, we will find increased happiness.** Write this principle on the board.)

Consider sharing your testimony of this principle. Remind students of the questions concerning their happiness that they pondered at the beginning of the lesson. Invite students to seek greater happiness by choosing one of the attributes listed in the Beatitudes and setting a goal to develop that attribute.

Matthew 5:13–16

Jesus Christ instructs His disciples to set a righteous example

Ask students to think of someone they know, such as a family member or friend, who could be blessed by drawing nearer to Heavenly Father. As students continue to study Matthew 5, invite them to look for principles that can guide them as they try to help this person.

Display a container of salt and pour out a small amount into a bowl.

- In what ways can salt be useful?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Carlos E. Asay of the Seventy. Ask the class to listen for some of the uses of salt:

“[Good salt] . . . is clean, pure, uncontaminated, and useful. In this state or condition, salt will preserve, flavor, heal, and perform other useful functions” (“Salt of the Earth: Savor of Men and Saviors of Men,” *Ensign*, May 1980, 42).

Invite students to read Matthew 5:13 silently, looking for whom the Savior likened to salt.

- To whom did the Savior liken salt? (His disciples.)
- In what ways do disciples of Jesus Christ demonstrate the same characteristics as good salt?
- According to verse 13, what happens when salt loses its savor?

Explain that the word *savor* refers not only to salt’s flavor but also to its unique qualities that make it a healing and preserving agent.

- What causes salt to lose its savor? (Salt loses its savor when it mixes with other materials and becomes contaminated.)

Pour other material, such as dirt, into the bowl, and mix the salt and other elements together.

- What happens to the salt’s usefulness when it is mixed with other materials?
- As disciples of Jesus Christ, what can cause us to lose our savor, or the Christlike qualities that allow us to be a blessing to others? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **Becoming contaminated by the sins of the world can prevent us from being a blessing to others.** Write this principle on the board.)
- What can we do to retain or regain our savor?

Display a candle (do not light the candle). Invite a student to read Matthew 5:14–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior compared His disciples to a candle.

- What are Christ’s disciples asked to do with their light?
- What does it mean to let your light shine? (See 3 Nephi 18:24.)
- What will our good works lead others to do?

Explain that among other things, the phrase “to glorify your Father which is in Heaven” (verse 16) means to give praise and honor to God through word or action.

- What principle can we learn from verses 14–16 about how our righteous example can influence others? (Students may use other words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **Our righteous example can encourage others to draw nearer to Heavenly Father.** Write this principle on the board.)
- When has someone set a righteous example that has helped you draw nearer to Heavenly Father?

Encourage students to ponder what they can do to be a better example to their family and friends.

Review the principles that were identified and written on the board in this lesson. Write the words *Start*, *Stop*, and *Continue* on the board. Invite students to evaluate their lives and choose one thing they could start doing, one thing they could stop doing, and one thing they could continue doing to apply these principles in their lives.

Scripture Mastery—Matthew 5:14–16

Explain that throughout the year students will focus on 25 scripture mastery passages, including Matthew 5:14–16. These passages will help them understand and explain basic doctrines of the gospel. The 25 scripture mastery references are listed on the back of the seminary bookmark for the New Testament. Explain that “mastering” scripture passages includes being able to locate, understand, apply, and memorize them.

To help students memorize this passage, invite them to recite it several times in their minds and then aloud to a classmate. You may want to have the class recite this passage aloud at the beginning or end of each class during the next week.

Matthew

5:14–16 is a scripture mastery passage.

Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

For an explanation of scripture mastery and a list of additional activities to help students master these selected passages, see the appendix of this manual.

LESSON 10

Matthew 5:17–48

Introduction

As the Savior continued His Sermon on the Mount in Galilee, He explained that He didn't come to destroy the law of Moses but to fulfill it. The Savior also gave His

disciples commandments they needed to follow in order to become perfect like Heavenly Father.

Understand context and content

One fundamental of gospel teaching and learning is to understand the context and content of the scriptures. Context includes the circumstances that surround or provide background for a particular scriptural passage, event, or account. Content includes the story line, people, events, sermons, and inspired explanations that make up the scripture text. As you help students understand the context and content of the scriptures, they will be prepared to recognize the underlying messages of the inspired authors.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 5:17–48

Jesus Christ teaches His disciples how to become perfect like Heavenly Father

Before class, write the following question on the board: *Which commandment do you think is the most difficult for people to keep?* When class begins, ask students to respond to the question. List their answers on the board.

Invite a student to read Matthew 5:48 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a commandment that is difficult to keep. You may want to suggest that students mark the Joseph Smith Translation in Matthew 5:48, footnote *a*.

- How does the commandment to be perfect make you feel?
- What do you think it means to be perfect?

Invite students to read Matthew 5:48, footnote *b*, silently, looking for the meaning of the word *perfect*, and ask them to report what they find. Explain that to become complete or fully developed means to become like Heavenly Father.

As students continue their study of the Savior's Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, invite them to look for principles they need to follow in order to progress toward becoming perfect like our Father in Heaven.

Summarize Matthew 5:17–20 by explaining that the Savior taught that He came to fulfill the law of Moses, not to destroy, or do away with, any of the eternal truths in the law of Moses. Jesus Christ restored the fulness of the gospel that had been lost due to wickedness and apostasy, corrected false teachings, and fulfilled the prophecies made by Old Testament prophets. Eventually, as part of the restoration of the fulness of the gospel, some aspects of the law of Moses were discontinued, such as circumcision and animal sacrifice.

Explain that Matthew 5:21–48 includes the Savior's teachings about various laws and traditions the Jews had developed or added under the law of Moses. As Jesus Christ explained the true meaning of the laws, He taught a higher way of righteousness. Members of His kingdom must live this higher law. These higher laws provided guidance to help disciples of Jesus Christ avoid breaking God's commandments.

To prepare students to study the Savior's teachings about anger, invite them to think of a time when they were angry with someone.

- What are some dangers of not controlling our anger?

Invite a student to read Matthew 5:21–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the law of Moses taught about violence and anger and what additional truths the Lord taught about anger as part of the higher law.

- What did the Savior teach about violence and anger? (Explain that the term *Raca* in verse 22 means imbecile, fool, or empty-headed person.)
- According to these verses, what will happen if we do not learn to control our anger?

Invite a student to read aloud the Joseph Smith Translation change in Matthew 5:22, footnote *b*.

- Why is it significant that the phrase "without a cause" is omitted from this verse?
- How does controlling our anger help us progress toward becoming perfect?

Write the following phrase on the board: *Therefore, if ye shall come unto me, or shall desire to come unto me . . .*

Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation adds the phrase “if ye shall come unto me, or shall desire to come unto me” to the beginning of verse 23 so that it reads, “Therefore, if ye shall come unto me, or shall desire to come unto me, or if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee” (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 5:25).

Invite a student to read Matthew 5:23–24 aloud, including the added phrase from the Joseph Smith Translation. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught we must do with our anger toward others if we desire to come unto Him.

- What does the phrase “leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way” mean? (Before the people offered sacrifices to the Lord, they first needed to repair their relationships with other people.)
- According to verse 24, what must we do if we desire to come unto Christ? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **If we desire to come unto Jesus Christ, we must first do our part to be reconciled with others.**)
- What does it mean to be reconciled with someone? (To settle disputes or restore harmony in the relationship. This includes those who have unkind feelings toward us and those toward whom we may have unkind feelings.)
- Why do you think we need to settle our disputes with others in order to come unto Christ?

Invite a student to read Matthew 5:25–26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior said we can do to be reconciled with others.

- What do you think it means to agree with your adversary quickly? (If students need help, invite them to look at Matthew 5:25, footnote *a*.)
- How can choosing to have kind thoughts toward someone help us settle a dispute or restore a damaged relationship with him or her?

Ask students to think of a time when they settled a dispute with another person and were able to draw closer to the Lord as a result. You may want to invite one or two students to share their experiences, if they are not too personal. Encourage students to settle their disputes with others so they can progress toward becoming perfect like our Father in Heaven.

Show students a weed (or a picture of a weed).

- What might happen if weeds are not removed from a garden?
- How might weeds be like sins?

Invite a student to read Matthew 5:27–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a sin the Savior warned against and the higher law He expects His disciples to live.

- What did the Savior teach about those who entertain lustful thoughts or desires? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **if we choose to entertain lustful thoughts or desires, it is like committing adultery in our hearts.**)

Explain that while we cannot always prevent impure thoughts from entering our minds, we can prevent them from staying there.

Invite a student to read Matthew 5:29–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught about removing impure thoughts.

- What did the Savior say we must do to remove impure thoughts?
- What do you think it means to pluck out one’s eye and cut off one’s hand in these verses?

Invite a student to read Matthew 5:30, footnote *b*, aloud. Ask the class to look for how the Joseph Smith Translation helps us understand what it means to pluck out one’s eye and cut off one’s hand in these verses. Invite students to report what they find.

- Based on what the Lord taught in Matthew 5:29–30, what might happen if we do not remove sins from our lives? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we choose not to remove sin from our lives, it will destroy us spiritually.**)
- What can we do to remove sins from our lives?
- What must we do to remove sins from our lives and to make sure we do not commit those sins again?



Encourage students to think about a sin they would like to remove from their lives and then to set a goal to do so by repenting and replacing it with righteous actions.

Summarize Matthew 5:31–37 by explaining that the Lord taught about divorce, marriage, and making oaths.

Invite students to imagine that a peer at school says cruel and unkind things about them. Ask students how they would respond.

Invite a student to read Matthew 5:38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the law of Moses taught about punishing individuals for their sins or offenses. Ask them to report what they find. Explain that the phrase “an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth” means that under the law of Moses, the punishment had to match the seriousness of the offense.

Divide the students into pairs. Invite one partner to read Matthew 5:39–42 and the second partner to read Matthew 5:43–47. Ask them to look for the higher law. After sufficient time, ask students to discuss the following questions with their partners (you may want to display these questions on the board or provide them on a handout):

According to the Savior, what is the higher law?

What does the higher law teach us about how we should respond to those who offend us?

After sufficient time, invite a few students to share their answers with the class.

Invite a student to reread Matthew 5:45 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what will happen if we love our enemies and do good to those who hate us.

- What will happen if we love our enemies and do good to those who hate us?
- Knowing that we are all spirit children of God, what do you think it means in this verse to be children of our Father in Heaven? (It means to be like Him and become heirs of His kingdom.)
- How did the Savior exemplify loving His enemies and doing good to others during His life?

Invite students to reflect on what they have learned in Matthew 5 about what we need to do to become perfect like Heavenly Father.

- What are some things we need to do to become perfect like our Father in Heaven? (Students may use different words, but they should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we follow the Savior’s teachings and commandments, we can become perfect like our Father in Heaven.**)

Remind students that it is only through Jesus Christ and by His grace that we can become perfected (see Moroni 10:32).

To help students understand the process of becoming perfect, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“We need not be dismayed if our earnest efforts toward perfection now seem so arduous [difficult] and endless. Perfection is pending. It can come in full only after the Resurrection and only through the Lord. It awaits all who love him and keep his commandments” (“Perfection Pending,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 88).

- According to President Nelson, when will we reach perfection?
- How might this statement help someone who feels overwhelmed and discouraged by his or her imperfections?

Encourage students to continue to obey God’s commandments so that they can eventually become like our Heavenly Father.

Home-Study Lesson

Matthew 1–5 (Unit 2)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Matthew 1–5 (unit 2) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Matthew 1–2)

As students studied about the genealogy of the Savior, they learned that Jesus Christ is the Divine Son of Heavenly Father and Mary. From the example of the Wise Men who came to worship Jesus, students learned that if we sincerely and diligently seek the Savior, we will be guided to Him. Reading about how Joseph was inspired to take his family and flee to Egypt for safety, students discovered that if we are sensitive to the Spirit, we can receive revelation and guidance.

Day 2 (Matthew 3)

As students read about John the Baptist and the baptism of Jesus Christ, they learned the following truths: We demonstrate true repentance to the Lord as we change our desires and actions to follow His teachings. Baptism by immersion by one holding authority is essential for salvation. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three distinct and separate Beings.

Day 3 (Matthew 4)

As students read about the Savior's response to the devil's temptations, they learned that when we recall and apply truths taught in the scriptures, we can resist the devil's temptations. They also learned that Jesus Christ brings light into the lives of those who are in darkness. When students read about Peter, Andrew, James, and John, they discovered the following truth: If we immediately respond to the Savior's invitations to follow Him, He can make more out of our lives than we can on our own.

Day 4 (Matthew 5)

In this lesson students read a portion of the Savior's Sermon on the Mount. From this sermon, they learned the following truths: As we develop Christlike attributes, we will find increased happiness. Becoming contaminated by the sins of the world can prevent us from being a blessing to others. Our righteous example can encourage others to draw nearer to Heavenly Father. Students also learned about the higher law Jesus Christ taught His disciples.

Introduction

This lesson can help students understand what we must do to become perfect like our Father in Heaven. Additionally, as students review the Lord's higher laws, they can consider ways to improve how they obey the Lord's commandments.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 5:17–48

Jesus Christ teaches His disciples how to become perfect like Heavenly Father

Before class, write the following question on the board: *Which commandment do you think is the most difficult for people to keep?* When class begins, ask students to respond to the question. List their answers on the board.

Invite a student to read Matthew 5:48 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a commandment that is difficult to keep. You may want to suggest that students mark the Joseph Smith Translation in Matthew 5:48, footnote a.

- How does the commandment to be perfect make you feel?
- What do you think it means to be perfect?

Invite students to read Matthew 5:48, footnote b, silently, looking for the meaning of the word *perfect*, and ask them to report what they find. Explain that to become complete or fully developed means to become like Heavenly Father.

As students continue their study of the Savior's Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, invite them to look for principles they need to follow in order to progress toward becoming perfect like our Father in Heaven.

Summarize Matthew 5:17–20 by explaining that the Savior taught that He came to fulfill the law of Moses, not to destroy, or do away with, any of the eternal truths in the law of Moses. Jesus Christ restored the fulness of the gospel that had been lost due to wickedness and apostasy, corrected false teachings, and fulfilled the prophecies made by Old Testament prophets. Eventually, as part of the restoration of the fulness of the gospel, some aspects of the law of Moses were discontinued, such as circumcision and animal sacrifice.

Explain that Matthew 5:21–48 includes the Savior's teachings about various laws and traditions the Jews had developed or added under the law of Moses. As Jesus Christ explained the true meaning of the laws, He taught a higher way of righteousness. Members of His kingdom must live this higher law. These higher laws provided guidance to help disciples of Jesus Christ avoid breaking God's commandments.

To help students recall some of what they learned about the higher law in their home-study lesson, you might want to write the following sentences on the board: *Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

Ask students to explain what Jesus Christ taught His disciples about these laws. (If students can't remember, invite them to refer to Matthew 5:21–26 and Matthew 5:27–30, respectively.)

- What are some dangers of not controlling our anger?
- Why is it important to control our thoughts?

Summarize Matthew 5:31–37 by explaining that the Lord taught about divorce, marriage, and making oaths.

Invite students to imagine that a peer at school says cruel and unkind things about them. Ask students how they would respond.

Invite a student to read Matthew 5:38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the law of Moses taught about punishing individuals for their sins or offenses. Ask them to report what they find. Explain that the phrase “an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth” means that under the law of Moses, the punishment had to match the seriousness of the offense.

Divide the students into pairs. Invite one partner to read Matthew 5:39–42 and the second partner to read Matthew 5:43–47. Ask them to look for the higher law. After sufficient time, ask students to discuss the following questions with their partners (you may want to display these questions on the board or provide them on a handout):

According to the Savior, what is the higher law?

What does the higher law teach us about how we should act toward those who offend us?

After sufficient time, invite a few students to share their answers with the class.

Invite a student to reread Matthew 5:45 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what will happen if we love our enemies and do good to those who hate us.

- What will happen if we love our enemies and do good to those who hate us?
- Knowing that we are all spirit children of God, what do you think it means in this verse to be children of our Father in Heaven? (It means to be like Him and become heirs of His kingdom.)

- How did the Savior exemplify loving His enemies and doing good to others during His life?

Invite students to reflect on what they have learned in Matthew 5 about what we need to do to become perfect like Heavenly Father.

- What are some things we need to do to become perfect like our Father in Heaven? (Students may use different words, but they should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we follow the Savior's teachings and commandments, we can become perfect like our Father in Heaven.**)

Remind students that it is only through Jesus Christ and by His grace that we can become perfected (see Moroni 10:32).

To help students understand the process of becoming perfect, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“We need not be dismayed if our earnest efforts toward perfection now seem so arduous [difficult] and endless. Perfection is pending. It can come in full only after the Resurrection and only through the Lord. It awaits all who love him and keep his commandments” (“Perfection Pending,” *Ensign*,

Nov. 1995, 88).

- According to President Nelson, when will we reach perfection?
- How might this statement help someone who feels overwhelmed and discouraged by his or her imperfections?

Encourage students to continue to obey God's commandments so that they can eventually become like our Heavenly Father.

Next Unit (Matthew 6:1–13:23)

To help prepare students for the next unit, invite them to consider the following questions: What is the Golden Rule? What did the Lord teach about judging others? What happens to those who serve two masters? What did people have to do to be healed by the Savior? Explain that in the next unit students will have the opportunity to learn the answers to these questions and to learn about the Savior's charge to His Apostles.

LESSON 11

Matthew 6

Introduction

Jesus continued His Sermon on the Mount. He taught that righteous acts of devotion should be done for the right reason and emphasized that they should be done

to please our Heavenly Father. He also instructed His disciples to seek first to build the kingdom of God.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 6:1–18

The Savior teaches His disciples to do righteous works

Bring small rewards to class (such as pieces of candy). As students arrive and you see them do something good (such as getting out their scriptures, kindly greeting someone, or helping plan a devotional), give them a reward and announce their good deed to the class. Some students might replicate their peers' good deeds to receive their own reward. Continue rewarding students until it is time for class to begin.

To begin class, ask students why they did the good deeds you rewarded them for. Explain that as recorded in Matthew 6, the Savior continued His Sermon on the Mount and taught about different motives a person may have for doing righteous acts. As the students study Matthew 6, invite them to look for principles that can help them perform righteous acts for the right reasons.

Invite a student to read Matthew 6:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior said was an improper motive for doing righteous acts. (Point out that alms are acts of religious devotion, such as giving to the poor [see verse 1, footnote *b*].)

- According to these verses why do some people perform alms?
- What did the Savior call these people? (You may want to point out that the Greek word translated as “hypocrites” refers to those who are pretenders [see verse 2, footnote *a*].)
- What do you think the phrase “they have their reward” means?

Invite a student to read Matthew 6:3–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught about how His disciples should perform righteous acts.

- Why do you think the Lord would want His disciples to perform acts of service “in secret”?
- What does doing righteous acts in secret suggest about a person’s motivation for doing them? (He or she wants to please Heavenly Father and serve others rather than seek attention from others.)
- What did the Savior promise to those who performed righteous acts for the right reasons?
- What principle can we learn from the Savior’s teachings about performing acts of devotion? (Help students identify the following principle: **If we perform acts of devotion to please Heavenly Father rather than to seek the attention of others, then He will reward us openly.** Write this principle on the board.)
- What does it mean to you that Heavenly Father will reward us openly?

Assign students to work in pairs. Invite one student in each pair to read Matthew 6:5–6 and the other to read Matthew 6:16–18. Invite each student to look for an example the Savior used to illustrate the principle of performing righteous acts to please Heavenly Father. Invite them to share with each other what they found. Then ask the class:

- In these two passages, which religious practices did Jesus emphasize should be performed in secret?

Ensure that students understand that public prayer is not wrong simply because it is not done in secret. Prayer and other religious practices can be performed publicly if they are performed with sincerity and devotion.

Help students learn to identify doctrines and principles

One central purpose of studying the scriptures is to learn doctrines and principles of the gospel. Identifying doctrines and principles from the scriptures is a fundamental of gospel teaching and learning. Learning how to identify them takes thoughtful effort and practice. As you help students identify doctrines and principles, be sure to help them clearly and simply state these truths to ensure they understand them.

- According to the verses you studied, why do hypocrites pray and fast?

You may want to explain that the phrases “sad countenance” and “they disfigure their faces” in verse 16 referred to individuals who made outward displays of their fasting to draw attention to themselves.

Refer again to the principle on the board. Invite students to think of a time when they performed acts of devotion—such as praying or fasting—in order to please Heavenly Father. Ask them to ponder ways they felt blessed for their sincere worship. You might ask a few students to share the blessings they received, if they feel comfortable doing so.

Summarize Matthew 6:7–15 by explaining that the Savior provided instruction and a pattern for the proper way to pray. His own example of prayer is known as the Lord’s Prayer. Invite students to briefly review these verses looking for what we can learn about prayer from the Lord’s example. Invite students to report what they find. (As part of this discussion, you may want to explain the Lord’s warning against “vain repetitions” is not necessarily a prohibition against using the same or similar words each time we pray. The Lord is also warning against prayers that are mechanical, shallow, or empty. Our prayers should be humble, heartfelt, and expressed with faith.)

Matthew 6:19–24

Jesus Christ teaches the multitude to lay up treasures in heaven

Display a picture of a treasure chest. Explain that a treasure is anything that we value greatly.

- What is something you consider to be a treasure?

Invite a student to read Matthew 6:19–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught about treasures.

- What type of treasures did the Savior teach His disciples to seek?
- What did the Savior say the difference was between treasures stored up on earth and treasures stored up in heaven?

Write the following on the board:

Treasures on earth Treasures in heaven

Invite students to come to the board and list examples of treasures on earth and treasures in heaven.

Invite a student to read Matthew 6:22–24 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the Savior taught that can help us lay up treasures in heaven.

- What did the Savior teach in verses 22–23 that can help us lay up treasures in heaven? (Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation of verse 22 reads “if therefore thine eye be single to the glory of God” [in Matthew 6:22, footnote *b*]. You may want to remind students that God’s work and glory is to “bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” [Moses 1:39].)
- What can we do to keep our eye single to the glory of God?
- What truth did the Savior teach at the end of verse 24 that can help us remember to lay up treasures in heaven? (Students should identify the following truth: **We cannot serve both God and mammon.** Explain that the word *mammon* refers to riches.)
- What do you think it means to “serve” mammon? (To set our hearts on worldly things in a way that leads us away from God.)

To illustrate the truth students identified in Matthew 6:24, tape two drinking straws together near the top of the straws. Display a cup of water that is about half full, and place the straws so that one straw is in the water and the other is outside of the cup. Invite a student to try to drink the water using the straws. (Ensure the student sucks simultaneously from both straws for the object lesson to work.) Then ask the student:

- Why were you unable to drink the water efficiently?

Ask the class:

- If the straws represent us, what might the water represent? (Our efforts to serve God.)
- Why do you think we can’t serve God and mammon at the same time? (See also James 1:8.)



- What must we do with the straws in order to drink the water? How does this relate to our efforts to serve God?

Invite students to ponder their responses to the following question. You may want to invite students to record their responses in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

- In your life, what is an example of how setting your heart on worldliness could distract you from serving God and laying up treasures in heaven?

Matthew 6:25–34

The Savior instructs His disciples to seek first the kingdom of God

Summarize Matthew 6:25–34 by explaining that the Savior instructed His disciples to not be excessively anxious about providing for their basic needs. The Joseph Smith Translation for Matthew 6:25–27 helps us understand that the Savior was speaking specifically to those who would go forth to preach His gospel.

Invite a student to read Matthew 6:31–34 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught His disciples to seek first in their lives. (Point out the wording from the Joseph Smith Translation in verse 33, footnote *a*.)

- What did the Savior teach His disciples to seek first in their lives?
- What did Jesus Christ promise those who are seeking to build up the kingdom of God (or His Church) rather than seeking to attain the things of the world? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we seek first to build up the kingdom of God, then He will bless us with what He knows we need.**)

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson:



“We must put God in the forefront of everything else in our lives. . . .

“When we put God first, all other things fall into their proper place or drop out of our lives. Our love of the Lord will govern the claims for our affection, the demands on our time, the interests we pursue, and the order of our priorities.

“We should put God ahead of *everyone else* in our lives” (“The Great Commandment—Love the Lord,” *Ensign*, May 1988, 4).

- When have you experienced Heavenly Father’s blessings as you have sought to put Him first in your life?

Consider sharing your testimony of the blessings that come from placing Heavenly Father first in our lives.

Invite students to again briefly consider how they might be tempted to set their hearts on worldliness. Encourage them to set a goal to overcome this temptation by writing in their class notebooks or scripture study journals one way they will seek to place their Heavenly Father first in their lives.

Commentary and Background Information

Matthew 6:22. “If therefore thine eye be single”

“*Single*, as used in this verse, comes from a Greek word meaning ‘sound, healthy, simple, sincere.’ Knowing this definition helps us understand the Savior’s instructions concerning the giving of alms, praying, and fasting. These should all be done with a simple and sincere focus on our Father in Heaven or on the recipient. We might

consider such questions as: When I give to the poor, do I hope to bring glory to God or to myself? When I serve the Lord, am I doing so to receive approval from the Lord or from men? When I pray in public, am I addressing God or those in the congregation? (See 2 Nephi 2:30; D&C 88:67–68; Moses 4:2; Joseph Smith—History 1:46)” (*New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 29).

LESSON 12

Matthew 7

Introduction

Jesus Christ continued His Sermon on the Mount by teaching His disciples to judge righteously. He also

taught about receiving personal revelation and doing Heavenly Father's will.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 7:1–5

As part of His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus Christ teaches His disciples about judging righteously

Before class begins, write the following question on the board: *Should we or should we not judge others?* As class begins, invite students to respond to the question.

Display the picture *The Sermon on the Mount* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 39; see also LDS.org). Explain that as Jesus continued His Sermon on the Mount, He taught His disciples about judging.



Sermon on the Mount, by Carl Heinrich Bloch. Courtesy of the National History Museum at Frederiksborg Castle in Hillerød, Denmark. Do not copy.

Invite a student to read Matthew 7:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught about judging. Point out that verse 1 is often misunderstood to mean that we should never judge. Ask a student to read Matthew 7:1, footnote *a*.

- What did the Savior teach about judging?
- What do you think it means to judge righteously?

Invite a student to read Matthew 7:2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what will happen to us based on the way we judge others. Invite students to report what they find.

- What will happen if we judge others righteously? (After students respond, help them identify the following principle: **If we judge others righteously, God will extend the same mercy and fairness to us.**)

If possible, distribute copies of the following statement from *True to the Faith* to each student. Invite a student to read it aloud. Ask half of the class to follow along, looking for the types of judgment we should and should not make. Ask the other half of the class to look for how we can judge righteously.

“Sometimes people feel that it is wrong to judge others in any way. While it is true that you should not condemn others or judge them unrighteously, you will need to make judgments of ideas, situations, and people throughout your life. . . .

“Judgment is an important use of your agency and requires great care, especially when you make judgments about other people. All your judgments must be guided by righteous standards. Remember that only God, who knows each individual’s heart, can make final judgments of individuals (see Revelation 20:12; 3 Nephi 27:14; D&C 137:9). . . .

“. . . As much as you can, judge people’s situations rather than judging the people themselves. Whenever possible, refrain from making judgments until you have an adequate knowledge of the facts. Always be sensitive to the Holy Spirit, who can guide your decisions” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 90–91).

- What types of judgments should we make?
- How can we judge righteously?

Display a small sliver of wood and a long, thick piece of wood. Explain that as the Savior taught His disciples about judging, He referred to a small sliver of wood as a *mote* and a large piece of wood as a *beam*. Invite a student to read Matthew 7:3 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the Savior taught about judging others.

- What might the mote and beam represent in the Savior’s analogy?
- How would you restate the Savior’s teaching in verse 3?

Invite two students to come to the front of the class. Instruct one student to hold the beam over his or her eyes. Ask the second student:

- Would you like your classmate with the beam to remove a speck of wood from your eye? Why not?

Ask the student with the beam:

- What would you need to do to see clearly enough to remove the speck of wood from your classmate’s eye?

Invite the student with the beam to read the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:

“This business of beams and motes seems to be closely related to our inability to see ourselves clearly. I’m not sure why we are able to diagnose and recommend remedies for other people’s ills so well, while we often have difficulty seeing our own” (“Lord, Is It I?” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 56).

Invite the two students to be seated. Ask a student to read Matthew 7:4–5 aloud, and invite the class to look for whose faults the Savior said we should worry about.

- Should our concern and correction be focused on others’ faults or on our own? Why?
- What principle can we learn from these verses that can help us avoid judging others unrighteously? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we focus on removing our own sins and weaknesses, then we will be less likely to judge others unrighteously.**)
- How can this principle help us when we see a flaw in someone else?

You could give students a small piece of wood to keep to remind them of this principle. Invite students to ponder the sins or weaknesses they could remove from their own lives. Encourage them to ask the Lord for help to remove their own flaws instead of judging others unrighteously.

Matthew 7:6–14

The Savior teaches about seeking personal revelation

Summarize Matthew 7:6 by explaining that the Joseph Smith Translation of this verse helps us understand that Jesus Christ called His disciples to go into the world to preach. They were to teach repentance but keep the mysteries of the kingdom to themselves. In other words, they were not to discuss sacred subjects with people who were not ready to receive them. (See Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 7:9–11 [in the Bible appendix].)

Explain that according to the Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 7:7 begins with the phrase “Say unto them, Ask of God” (see Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 7:12 [in the Bible appendix]). Invite a student to read verse 7 aloud, beginning with this phrase. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior told His disciples to teach.

- What were the disciples told to say to people who wanted to receive knowledge from God?
- What principle can we learn from verse 7 about how we can come to understand sacred knowledge from God? (After students respond, help them identify the following principle: **As we ask, seek, and knock in our search for truth, Heavenly Father will answer and bless us with personal revelation.**)
- What do the words *ask*, *seek*, and *knock* indicate we must do to receive personal revelation?

Invite a few students to share a time when their asking, seeking, and knocking invited personal revelation.

Summarize Matthew 7:9–11 by explaining that the Savior taught that just as a loving father would not give a stone or a snake when his son asks for bread or fish, Heavenly Father will not deny the gift of personal revelation to His children who ask for it.

Encourage students to exercise faith by asking, seeking, and knocking to invite personal revelation and understanding of the gospel. Testify that as they do this in faith and patience, Heavenly Father will answer.

Invite a student to read Matthew 7:12–14 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for additional truths the Savior told His disciples to teach. Invite students to report what they find.

Matthew 7:15–27

The Savior promises salvation to those who do the Father’s will

Ask students to list on the board some ideas that are commonly accepted by the world but that are contrary to Heavenly Father’s plan.

- Why is it important to be able to discern if an individual or a group is promoting an idea that is contrary to Heavenly Father’s plan?

Invite a student to read Matthew 7:15 aloud. Then ask:

- What did the Lord warn the disciples of? How did He say these false prophets might be disguised?



Explain that Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum on the Twelve Apostles warned of false prophets in our day that include “both men and women, who are self-appointed declarers of the doctrines of the Church” as well as “those who speak and publish in opposition to God’s true prophets and who actively proselyte others with reckless disregard for the eternal well-being of those whom they seduce” (“Beware of False Prophets and False Teachers,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 63).

Invite a student to read Matthew 7:16–20 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for one way we can discern whether someone is a false prophet or false teacher.

- What is one way we can discern whether someone is a false prophet or false teacher? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **We can discern false prophets by their fruits.**)

Show students two types of fruit. Ask students which kinds of plants produce each fruit. Explain that similar to identifying plants by their fruits, we can identify false prophets and false teachers by their teachings, actions, and ideas.

- Based on this truth, how can we recognize individuals and groups we should beware of?
- How does the list of ideas on the board relate to this truth?

Summarize Matthew 7:21–23 by explaining that not everyone who declares belief in Jesus Christ will enter His kingdom, but those who do the will of Heavenly Father and come to know Him will enter the kingdom of heaven.

Display a rock and a tray of sand. Ask students whether they would prefer to build their home on rock or on sand. Invite them to explain why.

Ask a student to read Matthew 7:24–27 aloud.

- According to verse 24, what actions did the Savior say would make someone like a wise man who built on rock?
- According to verse 26, what actions did the Savior say would make someone like a foolish man who built on sand?
- What do you think the rain, floods, and wind represent in these analogies? (See verse 27; see also Helaman 5:12.)
- What principles about acting on the Lord’s teachings can we learn from these analogies? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principles: **If we hear and act on the Lord’s teachings, then He will strengthen us to endure our trials. If we hear the Lord’s teachings but do not follow them, then we will not have the support we need when trials come.**)

Invite students to consider what the Lord taught in the Sermon on the Mount (see Matthew 5–7). Invite them to be like the wise man by deciding to act on the principles the Savior taught. You may want to give students time to write how they will apply one or more of the principles from this lesson or the previous three lessons.

Understand the meaning of doctrines and principles

As students identify doctrines and principles in the scriptures, you can guide them through discussions that will help them analyze and better understand the meaning of these truths. When students understand a gospel doctrine or principle, it means they comprehend the identified truth, its relationship with other doctrines and principles in the Lord’s plan, and the circumstances in which it might be applied in their lives.

LESSON 13

Matthew 8–10

Introduction

As Jesus Christ traveled through Galilee, He performed many miracles. He also called the Twelve Apostles,

empowered and instructed them, and sent them out to minister to the people.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 8:1–9:34

Jesus performs many miracles

At the beginning of class, ask students to respond to the following question:

- If you knew that the Savior were coming to visit your city or town today, whom would you bring to Him to be healed? Why?

Copy the following scripture references on the board: *Matthew 8:1–4; Matthew 8:5–13; Matthew 8:14–15; Matthew 8:23–27; Matthew 8:28–32; Matthew 9:1–8; Matthew 9:18–19, 23–26; Matthew 9:20–22; Matthew 9:27–31; and Matthew 9:32–33.* Assign one of the scripture references to each student. (If you have a small class, some students may need to read more than one scripture passage.)

Invite students to read their assigned scripture passages and look for miracles Jesus performed. After sufficient time, ask them to briefly report what they learned. (*Note:* Students will study these miracles in more depth in Mark 1–5.)

Invite a student to read Matthew 8:16–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a prophecy Jesus Christ fulfilled as He performed these miracles. Invite students to report what they find.

- What truth about Jesus Christ can we learn from the accounts of these miracles? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Jesus can heal us of our infirmities and sicknesses.** You may need to explain that an *infirmity* is an illness, frailty, or weakness.)
- How can the Savior heal us or strengthen our weaknesses if He is not walking among us today? (Through His Atonement. See Alma 7:11–13.)

Matthew 9:35–10:8

Jesus calls twelve Apostles

Display a picture or pictures of the current Apostles of the Church, including the First Presidency. (Such images can be found on LDS.org [see Meet Today’s Prophets and Apostles] and in the general conference issues of the *Ensign* or *Liahona*.)

- What makes these individuals unique among all the people on the earth today?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Matthew 9–10 about the role of Apostles and the blessings they can bring into our lives.

Invite a student to read Matthew 9:35 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Jesus did in addition to healing others.

- In addition to healing others, what did Jesus do during His ministry?

Explain that as Jesus preached the gospel and performed miracles throughout Judea, the number of people who followed and sought after Him increased.

Invite a student to read Matthew 9:36–38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom the Savior said He needed to help Him minister to all those who followed Him.

- According to verses 37–38, whom did Jesus say He needed to help Him take care of those who followed Him?

Studying the Gospels sequentially

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John each recorded events and details of the Savior’s life that are unique to their account. However, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke also share much of the same content. Notes to the teacher are given at various locations in the manual to help you know where certain events will be taught in greater detail. For example, the miracles recorded in Matthew 8 and 9 will be addressed in greater depth in the lessons for Mark 1–5.

Invite a student to read Matthew 10:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus did to help meet the people’s needs.

- What did Jesus do to help the multitudes of people who followed Him?
- What doctrine can we learn from these verses about one way Jesus Christ ministers to the people of the earth? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following doctrine: **Jesus Christ calls Apostles and confers His authority upon them.** You may want to suggest that students write this doctrine next to Matthew 10:1–4.)

Invite a student to read Matthew 10:5–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus Christ commanded His Apostles to do.

- What did Jesus command His Apostles to do?

Explain that the word *apostle* comes from a Greek word that means “one sent forth.” At first the Apostles were sent only among the house of Israel. Later, the resurrected Savior commanded that the gospel also be preached among the Gentiles, or those who are not of the house of Israel.

- What similarities did you notice between the works Jesus did and the works He commanded His Apostles to do?
- What truth can we learn from these verses about what Jesus Christ calls Apostles to do? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **The Lord calls Apostles to preach His gospel and do His works.** Consider writing this truth on the board.)

Refer again to the pictures of the current Apostles. Ask students to give examples of how the current Apostles preach and minister as Jesus Christ would if He were here.

To help students feel the importance of the truth they identified above, read or show a portion of a recent talk given by a modern Apostle that is relevant to youth. After reading the statement or showing the video clip, ask:

- How can understanding that Apostles are called by Jesus Christ to do His work influence how we respond to what they teach and counsel us to do?
- In what ways have the ministries and messages of modern Apostles influenced your life?

Invite students to faithfully seek opportunities to listen to, study, and apply the words of the Lord’s chosen Apostles.

Matthew 10:9–42

Jesus instructs the Twelve Apostles before they go forth to preach and minister

Summarize Matthew 10:9–16 by explaining that the Lord instructed the Apostles to trust in Heavenly Father to provide for their needs as they traveled to preach the gospel. The Savior also taught them to bless the people who received and housed them.

Ask students to think of a time when someone not of their faith asked them a difficult question about the gospel or asked them about something controversial regarding the Church.

- How confident were you in knowing what you should say in that situation? Why?

Invite students to look for a principle in Jesus’s teachings to His Apostles in the remainder of Matthew 10 that can help us when we need to explain the gospel or share our testimony.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 10:16–20. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the kinds of challenges Jesus said the Apostles would face as they traveled and preached.

- What challenges did Jesus say His Apostles would face as they went forth to preach the gospel?
- According to verses 19–20, how were the Apostles to know what to say in these challenging situations? (You may need to explain that the phrase “take no thought” means to “not be anxiously concerned” [see verse 19, footnote a].)
- What principle can we learn from these verses about speaking to others when we are in the service of the Lord? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **When we are in the service of the Lord, He will inspire us with what to say when needed.**)

Help students feel the truth and importance of doctrines and principles

After students identify and understand gospel principles and doctrines as found in the scriptures, they may not apply them until they feel their truth and importance through the Spirit and sense some degree of urgency to incorporate the principles in their own lives. One of the most effective ways to help students do this is to encourage them to reflect on and share personal experiences related to those truths.

- When have you felt the Lord inspire you to know what to say to another person? (You may want to give students a moment to think before asking them to respond to this question.)

Summarize Matthew 10:21–42 by explaining that Jesus Christ continued to give His Apostles instructions, warnings, and comfort about the challenges they would face. To help students study the Savior’s words in Matthew 10:37–39, divide them into pairs or small groups and give each pair or group a copy of the accompanying handout. Invite students to follow the instructions on the handout by studying the assigned verses together and discussing their answers to the questions.

Matthew 10:37–39

In pairs or small groups, study the assigned verses together and discuss your answers to the questions.

Read Matthew 10:37–38, looking for the sacrifices the Savior said we must be willing to make as His disciples. The phrase “worthy of me” in these verses means to be a worthy representative of the Lord and be deserving of His blessings.

- Why do you think it is necessary for disciples of Jesus Christ to love Him above all others—including their own family members?

The cross mentioned in verse 38 alludes to the physical cross Jesus Christ carried and was lifted upon to fulfill His Father’s will. Figuratively, Jesus Christ called upon His followers to likewise “take up [their] cross, and follow [Him]” (Matthew 16:24).

Read Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 16:26 (in Matthew 16:24, footnote *e*), and look for what it means for us to take up our cross and follow Jesus Christ.

Read Matthew 10:39, looking for principles Jesus Christ taught about sacrifice. The Joseph Smith Translation clarifies the beginning of this verse to read, “He who seeketh to save his life . . .” (see verse 39, footnote *a*). In this context, the phrase “save his life” means to live selfishly rather than seeking to serve God and His children.

- In what ways do you think people who focus on their own will and selfish desires will eventually “lose” their lives?

Based on what you read, complete the following principle:

If we seek to save our lives, then _____.

Consider marking in verse 39 the promise that the Savior made to those who lose their lives for His sake. To lose our lives for His sake is more than being willing to die for Him. It means to be willing to give of ourselves each day to serve Him and the people around us.

- What do you think it means that we will find our lives as we lose them for His sake?

Based on what you read, complete the following principle:

If we lose our lives for the sake of Jesus Christ, then _____.

Read the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson and then discuss your answers to the questions that follow.



“I believe the Savior is telling us that unless we lose ourselves in service to others, there is little purpose to our own lives. Those who live only for themselves eventually shrivel up and figuratively lose their lives, while those who lose themselves in service to others grow and flourish—and in effect save their lives” (“What Have I Done for Someone Today?” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 85).

- Who do you know who has chosen to lose his or her life for the sake of Jesus Christ? What effect has this decision had on this person?

After students have completed the handout, you might ask a few to summarize for the class what they have learned.

You may want to share your testimony of the principle students identified concerning losing our lives for the sake of Jesus Christ. Invite students to list in their class notebooks or scripture study journals some things they can do today or in the near future to lose their lives in the service of Jesus Christ and others. Invite them to set a goal and act upon that goal.



LESSON 14

Matthew 11–12

Introduction

Jesus Christ testified that John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way before Him, and He promised rest to all who come unto Him. Jesus responded to the Pharisees'

allegations that His power came from the devil. He warned them against making false accusations and seeking signs, and He taught the parable of the empty house.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 11

Jesus Christ testifies that John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way before Him

Show students a picture of a police officer, a doctor, and Jesus Christ.

- Why is it important to know that these people truly are who they appear to be? How can you know that they are who they appear to be?

Explain that during Jesus Christ's mortal ministry, many were seeking to know if He was who He appeared to be. Ask students to look for truths as they study Matthew 11 that can help them develop their own testimony of who Jesus Christ is.

Explain that King Herod had arrested and imprisoned John the Baptist. Invite a student to read Matthew 11:2–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the question John sent his disciples to ask Jesus.

- What did John send his disciples to ask Jesus?

Point out that with this question in verse 3, John's disciples were asking Jesus if He was the Messiah. Remind students that John the Baptist already knew that Jesus was the Messiah (see Matthew 3:11, 13–14; John 1:29–34).

- Why do you think John the Baptist sent his disciples to find out if Jesus was the Messiah when John already knew who Jesus was? (He wanted his disciples to receive their own witness of Jesus Christ.)

Invite a student to read Matthew 11:4–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Jesus answered their question.

- Rather than simply confirming that He was the Messiah, what did Jesus invite John the Baptist's disciples to do?

You may want to explain that Jesus could have easily told John's disciples that He was the Messiah. Instead, He invited them to "hear and see" (verse 4), or consider, His works and then return to John the Baptist and testify of the things they had heard and seen Jesus do.

- How might Jesus's answer have helped John's disciples receive a more powerful witness of the Savior than if He had just told them who He was?
- What principle can we learn from this account about how we can strengthen our witness of the Savior? (Although they may use other words, students should identify the following truth: **As we seek to learn of Jesus Christ and as we testify of Him, our own testimony of Him can be strengthened.**)

Invite students to write down how they have come to know for themselves that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. You may wish to invite a few students to share with the class what they have written.

Summarize Matthew 11:7–27 by explaining that after the two disciples left, Jesus told the multitude that John the Baptist was the prophet chosen to prepare the way for the Messiah. Jesus condemned those who rejected John the Baptist as well as those who had witnessed clear evidence of the Lord's divinity yet rejected Him. (*Note: Jesus's teachings about John the Baptist in these verses will be discussed in greater detail in the lesson on Luke 7:18–35.*)

Jesus then offered a promise to all those who accept Him as the Messiah. To help students review Matthew 11:28–30, which you introduced in lesson 1, invite a student to read these verses aloud and ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord invites us to do.

- What does the Lord invite us to do? What does He promise us in return? (After students have shared their responses, write the following truth on the board: **If we come unto Jesus Christ, He will ease our burdens and give us rest.**)
- How can understanding the truths in this scripture mastery passage help you this year?

Matthew 12:1–42

Jesus Christ rebukes the Pharisees for their false accusations and sign seeking

(Note: The events in Matthew 12:1–21 will be taught in greater depth in the lesson on Mark 2–3.)

Summarize Matthew 12:1–30 by explaining that after Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath day, some of the Pharisees began seeking to destroy Him. When He healed someone possessed of a devil, they attempted to discredit Him in front of the people by accusing Him of performing those works by the power of the devil. Jesus knew their thoughts and asserted that, on the contrary, by casting out devils He was demonstrating that He was the Messiah and was establishing God’s kingdom. Ask students to read Matthew 12:30 silently, looking for what Jesus taught about those who don’t join with Him. Ask students to report what they found.

- According to verse 30, if we desire to be part of God’s kingdom, what must we do? (As students share their responses, be sure to emphasize this truth: **If we desire to be part of God’s kingdom, we must be fully committed to Jesus Christ.**)
- What are some ways that we can demonstrate our full commitment to Jesus Christ?

Summarize Matthew 12:31–42 by explaining that Jesus affirmed again that His good works were evidence that He was of God and not the devil. He also warned the Pharisees that God would hold them accountable for their accusing words. Some of the scribes and Pharisees then asked for a sign, and Jesus rebuked them for sign seeking and failing to see that He was greater than any former prophet or king in Israel.

Matthew 12:43–50

Jesus teaches the parable of the empty house and that those who do His Father’s will are numbered among His family

Ask students to imagine that one of their friends has asked for advice on how to avoid returning to a sin he or she is trying to forsake.

- What counsel would you give your friend to help him or her resist temptation?

Explain that Matthew 12:43–45 contains a parable about an unclean spirit that is cast out of a man. Invite students to look for a principle in this parable that could help their friend overcome temptation. Invite a student to read Matthew 12:43–44 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the unclean spirit did after being cast out of the man.

- What did the unclean spirit do after finding no rest anywhere?
- What words describe the state of the “house,” or the man, when the unclean spirit returned?

Invite another student to read Matthew 12:45 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the unclean spirit did after finding the “house,” or the man, empty. Ask students to report what they found.

- After he had removed the devil, what did the man in the parable fail to do that allowed the evil spirit to return? (He did not replace the evil with righteous thoughts, feelings, words, and actions.)
- How could the experience of the man in this parable represent someone who is repenting of sin and trying to resist temptation?



Matthew

11:28–30 is a scripture mastery passage.

Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

For an explanation of scripture mastery and a list of additional activities to help students master these selected passages, see the appendix of this manual.

After students respond, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball:



"In abandoning sin one cannot merely *wish* for better conditions. He must *make* them. . . .

". . . The things which engaged him and caught his fancy and occupied his thoughts are gone, and better substitutions have not yet filled the void. This is Satan's opportunity" (*The Miracle of Forgiveness* [1969], 171–72; emphasis added).

- What principle can we learn from this parable that can help us know how to continue to repel evil influences after we have removed them from our lives? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **We can repel evil influences after removing them from our lives by replacing them with righteousness.**)

To help students to understand this truth, ask a student to read the following statement aloud. Ask the class to listen for why it is not enough to simply rid our lives of sin.

"It is not enough to simply try to resist evil or empty your life of sin. You must fill your life with righteousness and engage in activities that bring spiritual power. . . .

"Full obedience brings the complete power of the gospel into your life, including increased strength to overcome your weaknesses. This obedience includes actions you might not initially consider part of repentance, such as attending meetings, paying tithing, giving service, and forgiving others" (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 135).

- As we repent, what are some things we can do to fill our lives with righteousness so that we don't return to sin? (You might invite a student to write responses on the board.)
- How can doing these things bring greater spiritual power into our lives and enable us to overcome evil influences?

Testify that filling our lives with righteousness will give us greater power to repel evil.

Encourage students to ponder how they can fill their lives with more righteousness and to follow the inspiration they receive as they ponder.

Summarize the rest of Matthew 12 by explaining that while Jesus was teaching, someone told Him that some members of His family wanted to speak to Him. The Lord then taught that all who do the will of the Father are numbered among His family.

Scripture Mastery—Matthew 11:28–30

To help students memorize Matthew 11:28–30, invite the class to create actions that could represent words or phrases in each verse and then recite the passage while performing the actions. Have students practice reciting it at the beginning of class for several days until they can recite it from memory.

LESSON 15

Matthew 13:1–23

Introduction

While the Savior was in Galilee, a great multitude came to Him. The Savior taught the people using parables, beginning with the parable of the sower.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 13:1–17

The Savior begins to teach in parables

Show students a small container filled with soil.

- What are some characteristics of fertile soil? Of soil that is not fertile?

Explain that in Matthew 13:1–23, we read that the Savior compared different kinds of soil to the degrees of openness or spiritual receptivity of people’s hearts. Invite students as they study these verses to consider which kind of soil is most like the current condition of their heart.

Invite a student to read Matthew 13:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Jesus taught the multitude in Galilee.

- How did Jesus teach the multitude? (In parables.)

Invite students to silently read the first two paragraphs under the entry “Parables” in the Bible Dictionary.

- What is a parable?

Explain that a parable is “a simple story used to illustrate and teach a spiritual truth or principle. A parable is based on comparing an ordinary object or event to a truth” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Parable,” scriptures.lds.org).

- According to Matthew 13:3, what was the Savior’s parable about? (Explain that to *sow* means to spread or plant seed.)

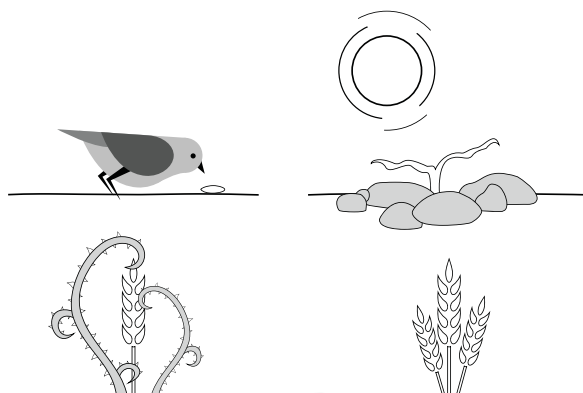
Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 13:4–9. Invite the class to follow along, looking for the four types of soil the sower’s seeds fell on.

- What kinds of soil did the sower’s seeds fall on?

Draw on the board illustrations that depict the four types of soil, and invite the students to make similar drawings in their class notebooks or on paper you provide for them.

Explain that a wayside is a path near fields that becomes hardened as people walk on it. The hardness of the wayside prevents seeds from taking root in the soil. Stony places are rocky surfaces covered by a thin layer of soil. Though seeds can develop shallow roots, the rock that lies just below the surface prevents the roots from going deeper. The ground with thorns is fertile soil, but the thorns crowd out the plants by depriving them of light, water, and needed nutrients. The good ground is fertile soil with sufficient depth for healthy roots.

Summarize Matthew 13:10–13 by explaining that the Savior’s disciples asked Him why He taught in parables. The Savior explained that parables revealed the mysteries or truths of the kingdom of heaven to those who were ready to receive them, while hiding the meaning from those who were spiritually unprepared (see *New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 45).



Invite a student to read Matthew 13:14–15 aloud, and ask the class to look for what prevented the people from understanding the truths the Savior taught.

- What did the Savior say prevented the people from seeing, hearing, and understanding the truths He taught? (Explain that the phrase “this people’s heart is waxed gross” means the people’s hearts had become hard and insensitive.)

On the board next to the drawing of the wayside soil, write the following incomplete statement: *If we harden our hearts, then . . .*

- According to verse 15, what blessings can we lose if we harden our hearts? (After students respond, complete the statement on the board so it conveys the following principle: **If we harden our hearts, then we will not understand the word of God, be converted to the Savior, and be healed by Him.**)
- What does it mean to be converted to the Savior and healed? (To be changed and purified through His Atonement so that our beliefs, heart, and life are in harmony with Heavenly Father’s will and we are freed from the burden of sin.)

Summarize Matthew 13:16–17 by explaining that Jesus told His disciples that they were blessed because they had eyes to see and ears to hear.

Matthew 13:18–23

The Savior provides the interpretation of the parable of the sower

Refer again to the drawing on the board of the wayside soil. Invite a student to read Matthew 13:18–19 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior compared to the seed, the wayside, and the birds mentioned in Matthew 13:4.

- What does the seed represent? (Label the drawing of the seed *The word of God.*)
- What kind of heart does the wayside represent? (Label the drawing of the wayside *Understands not the truth [a hardened heart].*)
- What do the birds represent? Who is “the wicked one”? (Label the drawing of the birds *Satan and his servants.*)
- How might the Savior’s teachings about the wayside help us further understand the principle that if we harden our hearts, then we will not understand the word of God, be converted to the Savior, and be healed by Him?

Refer to the drawing on the board of the stony ground.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 13:20–21 and Luke 8:13. Invite the class to follow along, looking for the Savior’s interpretation of the stony places.

- What do the plants that grew in the stony places represent? (Label the drawing of the plants in the stony places *Testimony that is not deeply rooted.*)
- What does the heat of the sun represent? (Above the drawing of the plants with shallow roots, write *Tribulations, persecutions, and temptations.*)

Write the following incomplete statement on the board next to the drawing of the stony ground: *Unless we strive to deepen our testimonies . . .*

- Based on what you learned from Matthew 13:20–21 and Luke 8:13, how would you complete this statement? (After students have responded, complete the statement on the board so that it conveys the following principle: **Unless we strive to deepen our testimonies, we may lack the strength necessary to endure tribulations, persecutions, and temptations.**)

Refer to the drawing on the board of the thorny ground. Invite students to read Matthew 13:22 silently and look for what the thorns represent.

- What do the thorns represent? (Label the drawing of the thorns *Cares of the world.*)
- What are some examples of the “cares of the world”? (Worldliness, greed, or temporal distractions that take us away from God.)
- What principle can we learn from this verse about what the cares of the world can do to our faith and testimony? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board next to the drawing of the thorny ground: **The cares of the world can distract us, remove our focus from the Lord, and choke our faith and testimony of the word of God.**)

Refer to the drawing on the board of the good soil. Invite a student to read aloud Matthew 13:23 and the portion of Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 13:21, found in Matthew 13:23, footnote *b*. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the good soil represents.

To help students understand the significance of the word *endureth* in Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 13:21, point out that the plants in the good ground were exposed to the same heat of the sun (representing tribulations, persecutions, and temptations) as the withered plants in the stony ground.

- How would you summarize what the good soil represents? (Label the drawing of the good soil *One who hears and understands the word of God and endures tribulations, persecutions, and temptations*.)
- Based on what we learned in Matthew 13:15, what could the fruit mentioned in verse 23 represent? (Conversion to Jesus Christ.)
- What principle can we learn from the Savior’s teachings about the good soil? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board next to the drawing of the good soil: **As we receive the word of God, understand it, and endure tribulations, persecutions, and temptations, we will become converted to the Savior.**)

To help students further understand the principles they have identified, invite four students to each read one of the following scenarios aloud. After each is read, invite the class to explain which principle the scenario illustrates:

1. A young man spends most of his time studying so he can be accepted to a prestigious university. When he is not studying, he is busy working. He tells himself that he doesn’t have time to read the scriptures, pray, or attend church.
2. A young woman used to love attending church each Sunday. However, as she grew older some of her friends began to mock her because of her standards. She has begun to break some of the commandments. She no longer feels comfortable at church and has lost the desire to attend.
3. A young man regularly attends church, but he rarely participates and does not open his heart to the influence of the Holy Ghost. He has been reading information online that challenges important Church doctrines, and he questions whether he still believes in the truthfulness of the gospel.
4. A young woman attends church and quietly prays that she can be receptive to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. When she receives promptings, she acts on them. She feels close to the Lord and is grateful for the ways she has been inspired to overcome temptation.

Explain to students that hearts, like soil, can change and be improved. Write the following questions on the board or provide them to students as a handout. Invite students to read and discuss the questions with a partner:

What could be done to change or maintain each type of soil so it would be a favorable place to grow healthy, fruitful plants?

How could we liken the improvement of each soil to what we can do to be more receptive to the word of God?

After sufficient time, invite a few students to report their responses to the class.

- How has seeking to receive and understand the word of God helped you become more deeply converted to the Savior?

Invite students to ponder which soil best represents the condition of their heart right now. Invite students to set a goal regarding what they will do to better receive and understand the word of God and to endure tribulations, persecutions, and temptations. If time permits, invite students to write their goals in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

Invite students to respond in writing

Inviting students to respond to a question in writing before sharing their thoughts with the class gives them time to formulate their ideas and receive impressions from the Holy Ghost. Students may be more inclined to share their thoughts when they have written them first, and what they share will often be more meaningful.

Home-Study Lesson

Matthew 6:1–13:23 (Unit 3)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Matthew 6:1–13:23 (unit 3) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Matthew 6–7)

As students continued their study of the Sermon on the Mount, they learned the following: If we perform acts of devotion to please Heavenly Father rather than to seek the attention of others, then He will reward us openly. We cannot serve both God and mammon. As we ask, seek, and knock in our search for truth, Heavenly Father will answer and bless us with personal revelation. We can discern false prophets by their fruits.

Day 2 (Matthew 8–10)

In this lesson, students learned that Jesus can heal us of our infirmities and sicknesses and that He calls Apostles and confers His authority upon them. Students also discovered that when we are in the service of the Lord, He will inspire us with what to say when needed, and if we lose our lives (give of our time) for the sake of Jesus Christ, then we will find purpose in our lives.

Day 3 (Matthew 11–12)

Students learned that as we seek to learn of Jesus Christ and as we testify of Him, our own testimony of Him can be strengthened, and if we come unto Jesus Christ, He will ease our burdens and give us rest. In addition, students learned about being fully committed to God and replacing evil influences in their lives with good ones.

Day 4 (Matthew 13:1–23)

As students studied the parable of the sower, they learned that the cares of the world can distract us, remove our focus from the Lord, and choke our faith and testimony of the word of God. To prevent this from occurring and to become converted to the Savior, we must receive the word of God and strive to deepen our testimonies.

Introduction

As recorded in Matthew 7, Jesus Christ continued His Sermon on the Mount by teaching His disciples to judge righteously. He also taught about receiving personal revelation and doing Heavenly Father's will.

Suggestions for Teaching

Note: During the home-study lesson for unit 1 and the day 3 lesson this week, students studied the scripture mastery passage in Matthew 11:28–30. Consider spending a few moments reviewing the passage with students.

Matthew 7:1–5

As part of His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus Christ teaches His disciples about judging righteously

Before class begins, write the following question on the board: *Should we or should we not judge others?* As class begins, invite students to respond to the question.

Display the picture *The Sermon on the Mount* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 39; see also LDS.org). Explain that as Jesus continued His Sermon on the Mount, He taught His disciples about judging.

Invite a student to read Matthew 7:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught about judging. Point out that verse 1 is often misunderstood to mean that we should never judge. Ask a student to read Matthew 7:1, footnote a.

- What did the Savior teach about judging?
- What do you think it means to judge righteously?

Invite a student to read Matthew 7:2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what will happen to us based on the way we judge others. Invite students to report what they find. (You may want to explain that the phrase “what measure ye mete” means the way you measure or judge.)

- What will happen if we judge others righteously? (After students respond, help them identify the following principle: **If we judge others righteously, God will extend the same mercy and fairness to us.**)

If possible, distribute copies of the following statement from *True to the Faith* to each student. Invite a student to read it aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the types of judgment we should and should not make and how we can judge righteously.

“Sometimes people feel that it is wrong to judge others in any way. While it is true that you should not condemn others or judge them unrighteously, you will need to make judgments of ideas, situations, and people throughout your life. . . .

“Judgment is an important use of your agency and requires great care, especially when you make judgments about other people. All your judgments must be guided by righteous standards. Remember that only God, who knows each individual’s heart, can make final judgments of individuals (see Revelation 20:12; 3 Nephi 27:14; D&C 137:9). . . .

“. . . As much as you can, judge people’s situations rather than judging the people themselves. Whenever possible, refrain from making judgments until you have an adequate knowledge of the facts. Always be sensitive to the Holy Spirit, who can guide your decisions” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 90–91).

- What types of judgments should we make?
- How can we judge righteously?
- What are some examples of times when a person would need to make a righteous judgment?

Display a small sliver of wood and a long, thick piece of wood. Explain that as the Savior taught His disciples about judging, He referred to a small sliver of wood as a *mote* and a large piece of wood as a *beam* (see Matthew 7:3, footnotes *b* and *c*). Invite a student to read Matthew 7:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught about judging others.

- What might the mote and beam represent in the Savior’s analogy? (They represent small and large faults, weaknesses, or sins.)
- How would you restate the Savior’s teaching in verse 3?

Invite two students to come to the front of the class. Instruct one student to hold the beam over his or her eyes. Ask the second student:

- Would you like your classmate with the beam to remove a speck of wood from your eye? Why not?

Ask the student with the beam:

- What would you need to do to see clearly enough to remove the speck of wood from your classmate’s eye?

Invite the two students to be seated. Ask a student to read Matthew 7:4–5 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for whose faults the Savior said we should worry about.

- Should our concern and correction be focused on others’ faults or on our own? Why?
- What principle can we learn from these verses that can help us avoid judging others unrighteously? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we focus on removing our own sins and weaknesses, then we will be less likely to judge others unrighteously.** Write this principle on the board.)

- How can this principle help us when we see a flaw in someone else?

You could give students a small piece of wood to keep to remind them of this principle. Invite students to ponder the sins or weaknesses they could remove from their own lives. Encourage them to ask the Lord for help to remove their own flaws instead of judging others unrighteously.

Matthew 7:24–27

The Savior promises salvation to those who do the Father’s will

Display a rock and a tray of sand. Ask students whether they would prefer to build their home on rock or on sand. Invite them to explain why.

Ask a student to read Matthew 7:24–27 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus said is like building a house on rock and what is like building a house on sand.

- According to verse 24, what actions did the Savior say would make someone like a wise man who built on rock?
- According to verse 26, what actions did the Savior say would make someone like a foolish man who built on sand?
- What do you think the rain, floods, and wind (see verse 27; see also Helaman 5:12) represent in these analogies?
- What principles about acting on the Lord’s teachings can we learn from these analogies? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principles: **If we hear and act on the Lord’s teachings, then He will strengthen us to endure our trials. If we hear the Lord’s teachings but do not follow them, then we will not have the support we need when trials come.**)

Invite students to be like the wise man by deciding to act on the principles the Savior taught. You may want to give students time to write how they will apply one or more of the principles from this lesson or from their study of the rest of the Savior’s Sermon on the Mount.

Next Unit (Matthew 13:24–17:27)

Tell students that during the next week they will read about the evil plot that led to the death of John the Baptist. They will also learn answers to the following questions: Why did Herod have John beheaded? Why did Peter sink into the water after successfully walking on it? Ask students to consider what it feels like to have a close friend or family member die. Invite them, as they study the next unit, to watch for how the Savior responded to the death of a loved one and what happened on the Mount of Transfiguration.

LESSON 16

Matthew 13:24–58

Introduction

The Savior gave parables to teach about the kingdom of heaven, the Restoration and growth of His Church in

the latter days, the gathering of the righteous, and the destruction of the wicked at His Second Coming.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43

The Savior teaches and explains the parable of the wheat and the tares

Before class, write the following questions on the board:

Have you ever been frustrated or upset because there is so much evil in the world?

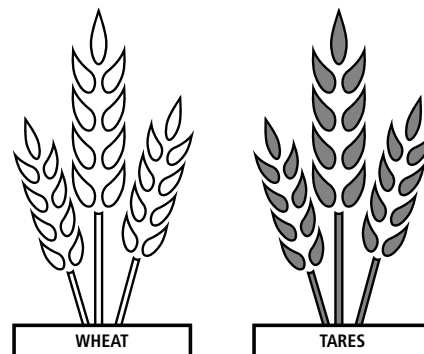
Why doesn't the Lord just remove the evil that surrounds us?

Why should I choose to be righteous when some people around me don't seem to experience negative consequences of their unrighteous choices?

At the beginning of the lesson, ask students to ponder the questions on the board and then invite them to share their thoughts with the class. As students study Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43, invite them to look for a truth that will help them find comfort while striving to live righteously in a wicked world.

Display the accompanying picture of wheat and tares, or draw it on the board. Explain that tares are a type of poisonous weed. Wheat and tares are almost identical when they sprout, but they can be distinguished once they mature.

Explain that the Savior taught a parable about wheat and tares. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 13:24–30 and from the portion of Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 13:29, found in Matthew 13:30, footnote *b*. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to the wheat and the tares.



- What happened to the wheat and the tares? (They were sowed [planted] and allowed to grow together. Then the wheat was gathered to the barn and the tares were bundled and burned.)
- Why do you think the sower of good seed told his servants to allow the wheat and tares to “grow together until the harvest”? (If reapers tried to pull out the tares before the wheat and tares matured, they would likely destroy much of the wheat as well.)
- According to Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 13:29, which was gathered first—the wheat or the tares?

Explain that after the Savior gave the parable of the wheat and the tares, His disciples asked Him to explain its meaning. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 13:36–43. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior’s explanation of the parable.

- Who sowed, or planted, the good seed? (The Savior.)
- Who sowed, or planted, the tares? (The devil.)
- What did the wheat and tares represent? (The righteous and the wicked. Explain that the wicked are those who choose not to repent [see Doctrine and Covenants 29:17].)

Help students understand the content of the scriptures

Ask questions that help students analyze and understand the content of the scriptures. For example, you might ask questions that help them (1) examine one scripture passage in the light of other passages or gospel principles, (2) clarify the meaning of words or phrases, or (3) analyze the details of the story line for greater meaning. As students answer such questions, they will be prepared to identify doctrines and principles.

Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation clarifies that “the harvest” or “the end of the world” mentioned in verse 39 refers to the destruction of the wicked at the Savior’s Second Coming. The Joseph Smith Translation also helps us understand that in the last days the Lord will send forth angels and messengers to help separate the righteous from the wicked (see Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 13:39–44 [in the Bible appendix]).

- According to this parable, what will happen to the righteous and the wicked in the last days? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The Lord will gather the righteous during the last days and then destroy the wicked at His coming.** Using students’ words, write this truth on the board.)
- How might this truth bring us comfort while we live in an evil world? (The Lord will eventually remove wickedness from the earth and reward the faithful.)

Explain to students that because of our agency, we determine by our choices whether we will be gathered with the righteous or suffer with the wicked.

- What must we do to be gathered by the Lord?

To help students understand what we must do to be gathered by the Lord, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“The Lord gathers His people when they accept Him and keep His commandments. . . .

“ . . . The Lord gathers His people to worship, to build up the Church, for a defense, and to receive counsel and instruction. . . .

“The Prophet Joseph Smith declared that in all ages the divine purpose of gathering is to build temples so that the Lord’s children can receive the highest ordinances and thereby gain eternal life [see *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 416–17]” (“The Spirit and Purposes of Gathering” [Brigham Young University–Idaho devotional, Oct. 31, 2006], byui.edu).

- According to Elder Bednar, what do we need to do to be gathered by the Lord?
- What blessings have come into your life as you have been gathered by the Lord?

Display the pictures Missionaries: Elders; Missionaries: Sisters; and Salt Lake Temple (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], nos. 109, 110, 119; see also LDS.org).

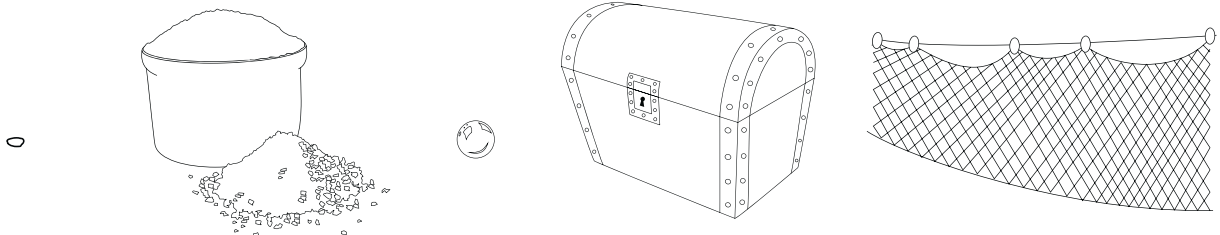
- What can we do to assist the Savior in gathering Heavenly Father’s children?
- What blessings have you received as you have helped the Lord gather the righteous through missionary work or temple work?

Assure students that because we all make mistakes, the Savior invites us to repent so that we can be gathered with the righteous. Invite students to ponder what they can do to gather themselves, their families, and others to the Savior and His Church. Invite students to act on any promptings they receive.

Matthew 13:31–35, 44–52

Jesus uses parables to teach about the kingdom of heaven

Display pictures of the following items or draw them on the board: a mustard seed, leaven or yeast (or bread—explain that leaven is used in cooking and is added to bread dough to help it rise before baking), a pearl, a small treasure chest, and a net.



Mustard Seed

Yeast

Pearl

Treasure Chest

Net

Explain that in several different parables the Savior compared each of these items to the kingdom of heaven. Remind students that the kingdom of heaven represents the Savior's Church and gospel. Write the following references on the board: *Matthew 13:31–32; Matthew 13:33; Matthew 13:44; Matthew 13:45–46; Matthew 13:47–50*. Divide students into pairs or small groups, and assign each pair or group one of the references on the board. Invite each pair or group to complete the following activities (you may want to provide this list on a handout):

1. *Read your assigned verses together.*
2. *Discuss what object(s) the Savior likened to His Church and His gospel.*
3. *Discuss what truth you think the Savior was teaching in this parable about His Church and His gospel. Write that truth in your class notebooks or scripture study journals.*

After sufficient time, invite a student assigned to the parable of the leaven and a student assigned to the parable of the mustard seed to read their parables aloud to the class.

Invite a few students to read to the class the truths they wrote down. (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify a truth similar to the following: **The restored Church of Jesus Christ will grow from a small beginning to fill the whole earth.** Write this truth on the board.)

Invite a student to read the following statement by President Joseph F. Smith, who taught how followers of Jesus Christ can be likened to leaven:

“While it may be said, and it is in a measure true, that we are but a handful in comparison with our fellowmen in the world, yet we may be compared with the leaven of which the Savior spoke, that will eventually leaven the whole world” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 74).

- What can we do as Latter-day Saints to help the Savior's Church grow?

Invite a student assigned to the parable of the treasure in a field, a student assigned to the parable of the pearl of great price, and a student assigned to the parable of the net to read their parables aloud to the class. Invite a few students to read to the class the truths they wrote down. (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify a principle similar to the following: **Because the blessings of the gospel are of eternal value, they are worth any sacrifice.** Using students' words, write this truth on the board.)

To help students understand this principle, write the following headings on the board:

Blessings of the gospel Sacrifices to obtain blessings

Ask students to list some of the blessings of the gospel (examples may include knowledge from the scriptures, guidance from living prophets, saving ordinances, and eternal marriage). For each blessing listed, ask students to explain what sacrifices they may need to make to obtain that blessing. Write students' responses on the board.

Ask students to choose a blessing listed on the board and explain why obtaining that blessing is worth any sacrifice.

- When have you or someone you know sacrificed something in order to receive a blessing of the gospel?

Write the following questions on the board and invite students to respond to them in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

What blessing of the gospel do you desire to obtain?

Why do you desire that blessing?

How might you have to sacrifice to receive that blessing?

Matthew 13:53–58

Jesus teaches in Nazareth and is rejected by His own people

Summarize Matthew 13:53–58 by explaining that the people of Nazareth rejected the Savior and His teachings. Because of their unbelief, the Savior did not perform many miracles among them (see also Moroni 7:37).

LESSON 17

Matthew 14

Introduction

After learning of John the Baptist's death, Jesus sought solitude but was followed by a multitude of people. He had compassion on them, healed their sick, and

miraculously fed more than five thousand of them. That night, Jesus walked on the sea to His disciples who were struggling on the Sea of Galilee against a powerful storm.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 14:1–21

Jesus seeks solitude and then feeds more than five thousand people

Ask students to think of a time when they experienced great sadness. Invite them to reflect on what they did to endure and overcome their sadness.

- What are some different ways people try to endure and overcome sadness?

Invite students as they study Matthew 14 to look for ways they can endure and overcome sorrow, trials, and doubts.

Summarize Matthew 14:1–11 by explaining that at the urging of his new wife (Herodias), King Herod had unjustly imprisoned John the Baptist. After his wife's daughter (Salome) danced before him, Herod publicly promised that she could have "whatever she would ask" (Matthew 14:7). The daughter consulted with her mother and asked for the head of John the Baptist, and as a result, Herod had John beheaded.

Remind students that John the Baptist was a friend and relative of Jesus Christ and was chosen by God to be the prophet who would prepare the way for the Messiah.

- Imagine being a close friend of John the Baptist. How would you have responded upon hearing of his unjust death?

Invite a student to read Matthew 14:12–13 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Jesus did when He heard about John's death.

- What did Jesus do when He heard about John's death? (You may want to explain that "a desert place apart" refers to a solitary place [see Mark 6:31, footnote *a*].)
- What happened when Jesus tried to be alone?
- How would you feel if you were sad and wanted to be alone, but others were seeking your attention?

Invite a student to read Matthew 14:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Jesus responded when He saw the multitude following Him.

- What example did the Savior set for us to follow when we experience sadness? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **By showing compassion for others even when we are experiencing sadness, we follow the example of Jesus Christ.**)
- Why can it be difficult to show compassion for others when we are suffering?
- How can showing compassion for others help us when we ourselves are suffering?
- When have you or someone you know experienced great sadness and still demonstrated compassion for another? In what ways did serving someone else help?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 14:15–21. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Jesus continued to show compassion for the multitude. (Note: The miracle recorded in Matthew 14:15–21 will be taught in greater depth in the lesson that addresses Mark 6:35–44.)

- How did Jesus continue to show compassion for the people who had followed Him?

Ask questions that help students identify doctrines and principles

As students develop their understanding of the context and content of the scriptures, they are better able to identify the doctrines and principles they contain. Questions that require analysis can help students draw conclusions and articulate the doctrines and principles found in the text they are studying.

Matthew 14:22–36

Jesus walks on the sea during a storm

To help students consider circumstances in which they may experience doubt and fear as they follow Jesus Christ, ask two students to read the following scenarios aloud:

1. A young woman feels helpless as she watches her mother suffer from a terminal illness. She begins to question if Heavenly Father is aware of her family's pain. She desperately wants to believe in God, but her doubts are beginning to overwhelm her.
 2. A young man has recently joined the Church. Many of his old friends have been openly critical of his decision to join the Church. He is starting to wonder whether he should continue to be an active and faithful member of the Church.
- What are other ways people may experience doubt or fear as they seek to follow Jesus Christ?

Ask students to look for truths as they study the remainder of Matthew 14 that can help them overcome fears, doubts, and discouragement.

Summarize Matthew 14:22 by explaining that the Savior instructed His disciples to travel by ship to the other side of the Sea of Galilee while He sent the multitudes away. Invite a student to read Matthew 14:23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for where Jesus went once He had sent the multitudes away. Invite them to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Matthew 14:24–25 aloud, and ask the class to look for what happened while the disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee.

- What happened to the disciples while they were crossing the Sea of Galilee?
- What does it mean that “the wind was contrary”? (verse 24). (It was blowing in the opposite direction of their destination.)

According to verse 23, it was evening when Jesus was alone on the mountain and the disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee. The distance to cross the sea was about five miles (about eight kilometers) and should have been crossable in two to three hours in good weather.

- According to verse 25, when did the Savior come to the disciples on the water? (The fourth watch was from 3:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.)
- About how long had the disciples likely been fighting the wind to cross the sea? (Likely around 9 to 12 hours.)

Invite students to read Mark 6:47–48 silently, looking for additional details Mark provided about this event. Ask students to report what they find.

- Could Jesus have spared the disciples from their struggles sooner? What might have been the purpose of letting the disciples struggle for a time before they were delivered?
- What truth can we learn about our own struggles from these accounts of the disciples trying to cross the sea? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **Even though God might not always spare us from struggles, He knows what we are experiencing and will, in His own time, come to our aid.**)
- What good can come from our struggling for a time rather than being immediately delivered from our trials by the Lord?
- How can knowing that the Lord is aware of our struggles strengthen our faith in Him even when He does not immediately deliver us from them?

Ask students to visualize being on a fishing boat in the middle of the night, struggling against powerful wind and waves for many hours, and then seeing someone walking on the water.

- What might you be thinking or feeling if you were in this situation?

Invite a student to read Matthew 14:26–27 aloud, and ask the class to look for how the disciples reacted when they saw Jesus.

- How did the disciples react when they saw Jesus?
- How did Jesus respond to their fear?

Ask another student to read Matthew 14:28 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Peter desired to do when he heard the Lord's voice.

Help students visualize accounts in the scriptures

Visualizing occurs as students picture in their minds what is taking place in the scriptural account. Visualizing can help make a scriptural account more vivid and real for the students.

- What did Peter desire to do when he heard the Lord’s voice?

Hold up a picture of Jesus in front of the class, and ask the class to imagine that they are Peter in the boat. Ask two students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 14:29–30. After each verse is read, ask students what they might be thinking or feeling if they were Peter.

- Why did Peter begin to sink?
- What could the wind and waves in this account represent in our lives that can lead us to experience fear or doubt?
- What can we learn from Peter’s experience about how to avoid being overcome by our fears and doubts? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **if we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ and maintain our faith in Him, we will not be overcome by our fears and doubts.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Howard W. Hunter, and ask the class to listen for the danger of failing to maintain our faith in the Lord:



“It is my firm belief that if as individual people, as families, communities, and nations, we could, like Peter, fix our eyes on Jesus, we too might walk triumphantly over ‘the swelling waves of disbelief’ and remain ‘unterrified amid the rising winds of doubt.’ But if we turn away our eyes from him in whom we must believe, as it is so easy to do and the world is so much tempted to do, if we look to the power and fury of those terrible and destructive elements around us rather than to him who can help and save us, then we shall inevitably sink in a sea of conflict and sorrow and despair” (“The Beacon in the Harbor of Peace,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 19).

- How do you think we can “fix our eyes” on Jesus Christ, as Peter did initially?
- When have you seen an individual’s faith in Jesus Christ enable him or her to avoid being overcome by fear or doubt?

Testify that as we “fix our eyes” on Jesus Christ and maintain our faith in Him, we will find hope and courage to face our challenges. Invite students to consider changes they can make in their lives to better focus on and maintain their faith in Jesus Christ and to set a goal to make those changes.

Explain that like Peter, we might sometimes fail to maintain our faith in Jesus Christ and might succumb to fear, doubt, and discouragement.

Display a picture of Jesus Christ walking on the water (see *Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 43; see also LDS.org). Invite a student to read Matthew 14:30–32 aloud.

- According to verse 30, what did Peter do when he realized he was sinking?
- What can we learn from this account about what the Lord will do if we seek His help when our faith wanes? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we seek God’s help when our faith wanes, He can lift us from our fears and doubts.**)
- In what ways does God lift us from our fears and doubts?


Invite a student to read Matthew 14:33 aloud, and ask the class to look for how the disciples in the boat responded after Jesus and Peter got into the boat.

Summarize Matthew 14:33–36 by explaining that after this event, Jesus and His disciples continued their journey and arrived on the far shores of Galilee. When the people learned that Jesus was there, they brought to Him people who were suffering from disease. Many were healed simply by touching the hem of His clothing.

Conclude by encouraging students to apply what they learned in this lesson by acting on any impressions they have received.



Supplemental Teaching Idea

 **Matthew 14:28–31. Video presentation—“Mountains to Climb”**

To help students understand the importance of calling upon the Lord when they experience struggles, consider

sharing the video “Mountains to Climb” (5:05). This video is available on LDS.org. Ask the class to watch for how the Lord can lift us above our struggles.

Matthew 15

Introduction

While in Galilee, Jesus explained why His disciples did not follow the tradition of ritually purifying themselves before they ate. He then traveled to the Mediterranean

coast, where He healed the daughter of a Gentile woman. Jesus then returned to Galilee, where He healed many and miraculously fed more than four thousand people.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 15:1–20

The scribes and Pharisees ask why Jesus’s disciples do not wash their hands before they eat

Invite three students to read the following scenarios aloud. Ask the class to listen for what the scenarios have in common.

1. A young woman is encouraged by her friends to wear an inappropriate outfit to a school dance. The young woman knows that the outfit does not meet the Lord’s standards of modesty, even though it is generally accepted in her culture to wear outfits like it.
2. A young man belongs to a Latter-day Saint family that loves sporting events. When popular sporting events are shown on television, the family routinely sets aside family prayer, scripture study, family home evening, and Sunday Church meetings in order to watch the events.
3. A young couple is preparing for marriage. They live in a place where it is widely accepted to participate in premarital sexual relations. Some people have told this couple that they are old-fashioned and odd because they are waiting to be married before engaging in sexual intimacy.

- What do these scenarios have in common? (Each scenario presents a conflict between obeying God’s commandments and acting according to traditions or customs.)

Explain that traditions or customs include the beliefs and practices of a culture, community, family, or group of friends.

Ask students to name one or more traditions or customs that could prevent them from obeying God’s commandments. Invite students to look for truths in Matthew 15 that can help them when they must choose between obeying God’s commandments and participating in traditions and customs.

Invite a student to read Matthew 15:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the tradition that the scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus about.

- What tradition were Jesus’s disciples not following?

Explain that the washing of hands mentioned by the scribes and Pharisees refers to a ceremonial washing for the sake of ritual purity and does not refer to washing for sanitation.

Invite a student to read Matthew 15:3 aloud, and ask the class to look for Jesus’s response to the scribes and Pharisees’ question.

- What did the Savior say the scribes and Pharisees were doing by participating in their traditions?

Summarize Matthew 15:4–6 by explaining that Jesus identified an example of how the scribes and Pharisees transgressed a commandment of God by participating in their traditions. They taught that people “shall be free” (verse 6) of their obligation to take care of their aging parents by declaring that their money was reserved as a gift to God, or *Corban* (see Mark 7:10–12). However, Jesus taught that in doing so, they violated the commandment to honor one’s father and mother.

Invite a student to read Matthew 15:7–9 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the scribes and Pharisees had led people to do by using their traditions as an excuse to not obey God’s commandments.

- What had the scribes and Pharisees led people to do?
- What principle can we learn from these verses about what we must do if we desire to draw near to God? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we desire to draw near to God, we must place His commandments above any traditions and customs we may have.**)

Invite students to reread aloud the scenarios from the beginning of the lesson. After each scenario is read, ask:

- What could the individual or individuals in this scenario do to obey God’s commandments?
- How would doing this help the individual or individuals draw nearer to God?

After you have discussed each scenario, ask the class:

- When have you chosen to obey God’s commandments rather than participate in a commonly accepted tradition or custom? How did this help you draw nearer to Heavenly Father? (You may want to share an experience of your own as well.)

Invite students to consider the traditions and customs they named earlier. Encourage them to choose to obey God’s commandments rather than follow these traditions or customs so they can draw nearer to God.

Remind students that the scribes and Pharisees believed that eating with unwashed hands would defile a person, or make that person spiritually unclean. Invite a student to read Matthew 15:10–11 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the Savior taught truly defiles us.

- What did the Savior say defiles us?

Point out that the Savior said, “That which cometh out of the mouth . . . defileth a man” (verse 11). After telling His disciples not to concern themselves with the Pharisees, who were offended by His words (see Matthew 15:12–16), He explained further about what truly defiles us.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 15:17–20. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior meant when He said, “That which cometh out of the mouth . . . defileth a man” (verse 11).

- What did the Savior mean when He said, “That which cometh out of the mouth . . . defileth a man”?

Point out that in the scriptures, the heart often represents our thoughts and desires. Write the following statement on the board: *If we choose to entertain evil or inappropriate thoughts and desires, then . . .*

- How would you complete this principle based on the Savior’s teachings recorded in verses 19–20? (Use students’ words to complete the principle so it conveys the following truth: **If we choose to entertain evil or inappropriate thoughts and desires, then those thoughts and desires will defile us.**)
- In what ways can we become defiled or spiritually unclean if we choose to entertain evil or inappropriate thoughts and desires?
- In what way do the words that come out of our mouths, as well as our actions, reflect the thoughts and desires of our hearts?

You may want to testify of this principle and invite students to choose to maintain pure thoughts and desires.

Matthew 15:21–28

The Savior heals the daughter of a Gentile woman

Ask students to come to the board and list one or more of their righteous desires.

Invite students to look for principles in Matthew 15 that can help them understand what they need to do to receive their righteous desires.

Ask students to turn to Bible Map no. 11, “The Holy Land in New Testament Times.” Ask them to locate the cities of Tyre and Sidon on the map. Explain that as Jesus traveled from Galilee to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, He met a Canaanite woman. Like many other people in that region, this woman was a Gentile—meaning she was not a Jew. At that point in time, Jesus and His disciples proclaimed the gospel only to the Jews and not yet to the Gentiles (see Matthew 10:5–6). The doors would be opened later for the Gentiles to receive the message of salvation (see Acts 10).

Invite students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 15:21–27 with a partner. Ask them to look for answers to the following questions (you may want to write these questions on the board):

- What righteous desire did the Canaanite woman have?
- What did the woman do and say that demonstrated her faith in Jesus Christ?

Ask students to report their answers.

- How did the woman’s response to this analogy further demonstrate her faith in Jesus Christ?

Invite a student to read Matthew 15:28 aloud, and ask the class to follow along and look for what the Savior did for this woman.

- What did the Savior do for this woman? Why?
- What principle can we learn from this account about what can happen as we exercise our faith in Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we exercise faith in Jesus Christ, we can receive blessings according to our righteous desires.**)
- In addition to faithfully asking the Lord to bless us according to our righteous desires, what else can we do to exercise faith in Jesus Christ?

To help students further understand what they can do to exercise faith in Jesus Christ, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“When we have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we must have trust in him. We must trust him enough that we are content to accept his will, knowing that he knows what is best for us. . . .

. . . Faith, no matter how strong it is, cannot produce a result contrary to the will of him whose power it is. . . . We cannot have true faith in the Lord without also having complete trust in the Lord’s will and in the Lord’s timing” (“Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,” *Ensign*, May 1994, 99, 100).

- How can Elder Oaks’s explanation of what it means to exercise faith in Jesus Christ help us when the Lord does not immediately bless us according to our righteous desires?

Invite students to review the list of righteous desires on the board and to explain what they can do to exercise faith in Jesus Christ as they seek to obtain those desires.

- When have you (or someone you know) received your righteous desires (according to the Lord’s will and timing) as you exercised faith in Jesus Christ?

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they will do to exercise faith in Jesus Christ as they seek to receive their righteous desires from Him. Encourage students to act on what they wrote.

Matthew 15:29–39

Jesus feeds more than four thousand followers from seven loaves and a few fishes

Summarize Matthew 15:29–39 by explaining that Jesus returned to Galilee. While He was there, over four thousand people gathered to Him, bringing with them people who were suffering from various physical ailments and disabilities. The Savior healed them, and after the people spent three days with Him, He performed another miracle by feeding all of them with only seven loaves of bread and a few small fishes. (*Note:* The miracle of the feeding of the four thousand will be covered in greater detail in the lesson on Mark 8.)

You may want to conclude the lesson by sharing your testimony of the truths and principles students identified in Matthew 15.

Ask questions that help students understand doctrines and principles

After identifying doctrines and principles, students must understand them before they can meaningfully apply them. To help students understand a doctrine or principle, ask questions that lead to a clearer understanding of its meaning, that encourage students to think about it in a modern context, or that invite students to explain their understanding of it.

LESSON 19

Matthew 16

Introduction

Jesus Christ rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees who sought a sign of His divinity. Peter bore testimony that Jesus is the Christ and was promised the keys of the

kingdom. Jesus taught His disciples to take up their cross and follow Him.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 16:1–12

The Pharisees and the Sadducees seek a sign from the Savior

Before class, write the following phrases on the board:

Through the appearance of an angel

Through the Holy Ghost

Through believing the words of a friend or family member

Through witnessing a miracle

To begin the lesson, ask students to choose the phrase on the board that best describes how they would like to receive a testimony of the gospel. Invite a few students to report which phrase they chose and explain why they chose it.

Invite students as they study Matthew 16 to look for truths concerning how the Lord helps us to receive and strengthen our testimonies of the gospel.

Invite a student to read Matthew 16:1 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Pharisees and Sadducees wanted from Jesus.

- What did the Pharisees and Sadducees want from Jesus?
- What do you think it means that the Pharisees and Sadducees were “tempting” Jesus when they asked for a sign? (One meaning of the verb *tempt* is to try or to test.)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 16:2–4. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior’s response to the Pharisees and Sadducees.

- What sign did the Lord say He would provide?

Explain that Jesus was referring to the Old Testament prophet Jonah, who had been swallowed by a “great fish” (Jonah 1:17). Jonah’s “burial” in and then coming forth from the belly of the fish after three days symbolized the death, burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the tomb on the third day.


- What did the Savior do after He rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees?
- What can we learn from this experience about the improper way to seek spiritual truth? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **We do not receive spiritual truth by seeking for signs.**)

Summarize Matthew 16:5–12 by explaining that the Savior warned His disciples of the Pharisees’ and Sadducees’ false teachings. (Note: This event will be addressed in greater detail in the lesson on Mark 8.)

Matthew 16:13–20

Peter testifies of Jesus Christ and is promised the keys of the kingdom

Explain that after Jesus rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees for seeking a sign, He taught His disciples how to receive a testimony of the truth. Invite a student to read Matthew 16:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the question Jesus asked and the response His disciples gave.

 **Matthew 16:15–19** is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

- What did the Savior ask His disciples? How did they answer? (You may need to explain that Elias and Jeremias are the Old Testament prophets Elijah and Jeremiah.)
- What can their response tell us about how well people understood who Jesus was at this point in His ministry?

Invite a student to read Matthew 16:15–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the second question the Savior asked.

- What was the second question the Savior asked? How did Peter respond?
- According to verse 17, how did Peter know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? (Point out that Heavenly Father had revealed this truth to him through the Holy Ghost.)
- What truth can we learn from these verses about how we can gain a testimony of Jesus Christ? (Students’ answers should reflect the truth that **we gain a testimony of Jesus Christ through revelation from the Holy Ghost.**)
- Why do you think it is important for us to receive a testimony through revelation from the Holy Ghost rather than by some other way?

To help students further understand the role of the Holy Ghost in helping us gain a testimony of the Savior, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith:



“The Spirit of God speaking to the spirit of man has power to impart truth with greater effect and understanding than the truth can be imparted by personal contact even with heavenly beings. Through the Holy Ghost the truth is woven into the very fibre and sinews of the body so that it cannot be forgotten” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Fielding Smith* [2013], 183–84).

- What are some things we can do to prepare ourselves to receive revelation through the Holy Ghost?
- How did you come to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and your Savior? What did you do to prepare to receive that witness from the Holy Ghost?

Invite students to ponder their testimonies of the Savior. Encourage them to record in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how they might strengthen their testimonies or what they may need to do to receive a testimony through the Holy Ghost.

Invite two students to come to the front of the classroom and participate in a role play. Assign one student to represent himself or herself and the other student to represent a friend who is not a member of the Church. Give the student representing the nonmember friend a piece of paper containing the two questions below. Invite the student to read the questions aloud one at a time, and ask the other student to reply. (You may want to encourage the class to suggest possible responses the student answering the questions can give.)

1. I heard that your church claims to be the only true church of Jesus Christ. Is that what you believe?
2. My church also believes in Jesus Christ, so why do you think that your church is the only true one?

Thank the students for participating, and invite them to return to their seats.

Invite students as they continue to study Matthew 16 to look for truths that can help us understand and explain to others what distinguishes The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as the Lord’s Church upon the earth.

Remind students that when Jesus asked His disciples the questions about His identity, they were in a region called Caesarea Philippi (see Matthew 16:13). If possible, display an image of Caesarea Philippi (see Bible Photographs, no. 26, “Caesarea Philippi”). Ask students to identify what is behind the river and trees in this picture. Explain that the large rock formation at Caesarea Philippi would have provided a meaningful setting as the Savior continued His discussion with His disciples.

Invite a student to read Matthew 16:18–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior used the concept of a rock to describe the foundation of His Church.

- What do you think the Savior meant when He said He would build His Church “upon this rock”? (verse 18).



Caesarea Philippi

To help students understand this phrase, invite a student to read aloud the following statements by the Prophet Joseph Smith:



“Jesus in His teachings says, ‘Upon this rock I will build my Church. . . .’ [Matthew 16:18.] What rock? Revelation” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 195).

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was founded upon direct revelation, as the true Church of God has ever been, according to the Scriptures (Amos 3:7, and Acts 1:2)” (*Teachings: Joseph Smith*, 195).

- How would you summarize the Savior’s teaching about His Church recorded in verse 18? (Students should identify something similar to the following principle: **Jesus Christ’s Church is built upon revelation from God.** Write this truth on the board.)
- How can knowing that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is built on revelation from God strengthen your testimony of the gospel?
- According to verse 19, what did the Savior promise to give Peter?
- What doctrine can we learn from the promise the Savior gave to Peter? (Make sure students identify the following truth: **Jesus Christ entrusts the keys of His kingdom to His chosen prophets and apostles.**)
- What are the keys of the kingdom? (The directing power, right, and authority necessary to preside over the kingdom of God on the earth, or the Church of Jesus Christ.)

To help students understand what priesthood keys are, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“Priesthood keys are the authority God has given to priesthood [holders] to direct, control, and govern the use of His priesthood on earth’ [*Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 2.1.1]. Every act or ordinance performed in the Church is done under the direct or indirect authorization of one holding the keys for that function” (“The Keys and Authority of the Priesthood,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 49).

- What did Jesus say that Peter would be able to do because of the keys he would be given?

Explain that among the keys the Savior promised to Peter were the keys of the sealing power. This power allows the ordinances performed under the authority of Church leaders to be valid in heaven. It is also used to bind families together for eternity. In our day, the sealing power is held by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

- How would you summarize why the Lord gives priesthood keys to His prophets and Apostles? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **Priesthood keys are necessary to administer the Lord’s Church upon the earth.**)

Ask a student to read aloud the questions from the role play. Invite the class to explain how they would respond to these questions using the truths they have identified in Matthew 16:18–19. You may also want to invite students to share their testimonies of these truths.

Consider displaying a picture of the current First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (see LDS.org [for example, Meet Today’s Prophets and Apostles] and the general conference issues of the *Ensign* or *Liahona*) and testifying that the same keys given to Peter and the other Apostles anciently are held and used today by the Lord’s living prophets and Apostles.

Matthew 16:21–28

Jesus teaches what it means to follow Him

Summarize Matthew 16:21–28 by explaining that Jesus spoke of His atoning sacrifice. He also taught His disciples that they must be willing to deny the natural man (see Mosiah 3:19), be obedient, and sacrifice in order to cheerfully follow Him.

Scripture Mastery—Matthew 16:15–19

Encourage students to share with their families what they learned from Matthew 16. Consider choosing a portion of Matthew 16:15–19 to memorize as a class during the coming days. You can find ideas for memorization in the appendix of this manual.

Matthew 17

Introduction

Jesus Christ, Moses, and Elijah conferred priesthood keys upon Peter, James, and John on the Mount of Transfiguration. After descending from the mount, Jesus cast

a devil out of a boy. In Capernaum, Jesus miraculously provided tribute money for Himself and Peter.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 17:1–13

Moses and Elias appear to Peter, James, and John

Hold up a driver’s license, or invite a student with a driver’s license to show it to the class.

- What does possessing a driver’s license authorize a person to do?

Display or show a picture of car keys.

- Why is it important to have access to car keys in addition to having a driver’s license?
- How might having a driver’s license and keys to drive a car be compared to the authority and keys of the priesthood necessary to direct God’s work? (Just as those who hold driver’s licenses are authorized to drive, many men hold the authority of the priesthood. But just as car keys enable a driver to operate only a particular vehicle, priesthood keys authorize an individual to operate or direct the work of God within a particular sphere. The President of the Church holds and uses priesthood keys to preside over and direct all of the Lord’s work upon the earth.)

Remind students that in Matthew 16:19 we read that the Lord promised to give Peter the keys of the kingdom, or the authority to direct God’s work on the earth. At that time, Peter and each of the other Apostles had already been given priesthood authority, but they had not yet been given the keys of the kingdom.

Invite students as they study the scriptures today to look for how Peter received the keys of the kingdom and how these same keys were later conferred upon Joseph Smith and others in our day.

Invite a student to read Matthew 17:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify where the Savior took Peter, James, and John to prepare them to receive priesthood keys. You may want to point out that the Savior may have selected Peter, James, and John to go with Him because they would serve as the First Presidency of the Church following the Savior’s Resurrection and Ascension into heaven (see Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 3:152).

- Where did Jesus take Peter, James, and John?
- What happened to the Savior on the mount?
- What does it mean to be transfigured?

Help students understand that *transfiguration* refers to “the condition of persons who are temporarily changed in appearance and nature—that is, lifted to a higher spiritual level—so that they can endure the presence and glory of heavenly beings” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Transfiguration,” scriptures.lds.org). Peter, James, and John were also transfigured at this time (see D&C 67:11–12).

Write the following heading on the board: *Individuals who were present on the Mount of Transfiguration*. Under this heading write *Jesus Christ, Peter, James, and John*.

Invite a student to read Matthew 17:3 aloud, and ask the class to look for who appeared to Jesus and the Apostles on the mount.

- Who appeared on the mount? (Explain that *Elias* refers to Elijah, the Old Testament prophet [see Matthew 17:3, footnote b].)

Add *Moses* and *Elijah* to the list on the board.

To help students understand why Moses and Elijah appeared on the mount, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith:

“The Savior, Moses, and Elias [Elijah], gave the keys [of the priesthood] to Peter, James, and John, on the mount, when they were transfigured before him” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 105).

- According to Joseph Smith, why did Elijah and Moses appear on the mount? (To give priesthood keys to Peter, James, and John. You may also want explain that Moses and Elijah appeared in the Kirtland Temple on April 3, 1836, to restore priesthood keys: Moses restored the keys of the gathering of Israel [see D&C 110:11], and Elijah restored the keys associated with the sealing power [see D&C 110:13–16]. These appearances in Kirtland provide a pattern for understanding what took place on the Mount of Transfiguration.)

Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible clarifies that John the Baptist—whom Herod had killed—also appeared on the mount (see Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 9:3 [in Mark 9:4, footnote *a*]; see also Bible Dictionary, “Elias”). Add *John the Baptist* to the list on the board.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 17:4–9. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who else was present on the Mount of Transfiguration.

- Who else was present on the Mount of Transfiguration? (Add *God the Father* to the list on the board.)

Briefly remind students that a gospel dispensation is a period of time in which Heavenly Father dispenses priesthood authority, ordinances, and knowledge of His plan of salvation to people on the earth through His authorized servants. Invite a student to come to the board and place a star next to each of the individuals listed on the board who appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith in our dispensation. (The student should place a star next to each individual listed on the board.)

Ask the class to explain when each of these visits occurred and their purpose. (As students explain, you may want to display the following pictures: The First Vision; John the Baptist Conferring the Aaronic Priesthood; Melchizedek Priesthood Restoration; and Elijah Appearing in the Kirtland Temple [*Gospel Art Book* (2009), nos. 90, 93, 94, 95; see also LDS.org].)

- What truth can we learn from these events regarding the conferral of priesthood keys in each dispensation? (Students may use different words, but help them identify the following truth: **In each dispensation, God confers priesthood keys upon His chosen servants so they can direct His work upon the earth.**)
- Why is it important to know that the same pattern of conferring priesthood keys that occurred during the time of Jesus Christ was repeated in our day with the Prophet Joseph Smith?
- Do the current prophets and apostles hold the same keys Joseph Smith received? (Yes.) How did they receive those keys? (The keys were passed down from Joseph Smith through Brigham Young and subsequent prophets.)

Consider inviting students to share their feelings about priesthood authority and the blessing of having keys conferred in our dispensation just as they were during Jesus Christ’s mortal ministry.

Matthew 17:14–23

Jesus casts a devil out of a boy

Summarize Matthew 17:14–23 by explaining that a father brought his son to the Savior to be healed. After Jesus healed the child, He taught His disciples that some blessings can be obtained only by prayer and fasting. He also prophesied of His death and Resurrection. (*Note:* These events will be discussed in greater depth in the teaching idea for Mark 9:14–29.)



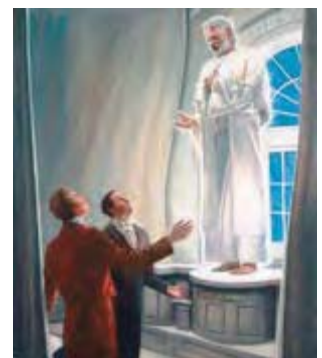
Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appear to Joseph Smith



John the Baptist restores the Aaronic Priesthood



Peter, James, and John restore the Melchizedek Priesthood



Elijah restores sealing keys in the Kirtland Temple

Matthew 17:24–27

Jesus miraculously provides tribute money for Himself and Peter

As students study Matthew 17:24–27, invite them to look for a truth that can help us understand how our examples influence others.

To help students understand the context of this passage, explain that under the law of Moses all Israelite males over the age of 20 were required to pay an annual temple tax, called *tribute* (see Exodus 30:13–16). This money was used to support costs associated with operating the temple. Some of the priests and rabbis among the people were excluded by the ruling council from having to pay this tax.

Invite a student to read Matthew 17:24–26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the questions the tax collectors and Jesus asked Peter.

- What did the tax collectors ask Peter? What was Peter’s response?
- What did Jesus ask Peter? What was Peter’s response?

Explain that the word *strangers* in this passage refers to everyone in a kingdom who is not one of the king’s children. The “strangers” must pay taxes, while the king’s children are exempt. Jesus was teaching Peter that because He was the Son of God and the temple was His Father’s house (see Matthew 17:25–26; John 2:16), He didn’t need to pay this tax and could have chosen not to do so. However, the tax collectors expected Jesus to pay the tax because they didn’t understand who He was.

Invite students to read Matthew 17:27 silently, looking for what Jesus instructed Peter to do next.

- What did the Savior instruct Peter to do?
- Why did Jesus say He would pay the tax?

Write the word *offend* on the board, and explain that in this context the phrase “lest we should offend them” is likely referring to the fact that the Savior did not want to do anything that could cause others to stumble spiritually. (If He had not paid the tax, some Jews might have looked unfavorably upon Him and His followers and become less receptive toward the gospel message.)

- What principle can we learn from the Savior’s example? (Although students may say it differently, they should identify the following principle: **We can follow the Savior’s example by avoiding actions that may cause others to stumble spiritually.** Write this principle on the board.)
- What are some other situations in which this principle could guide us to make correct choices?
- How have you been blessed as you have tried to follow the Savior’s example and avoid actions that could cause others to stumble spiritually?

Conclude the lesson by inviting students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals something they will do to better live the principle they identified above.

Scripture Mastery Review

When students can locate scripture mastery passages easily, they will be able to more confidently study the gospel, apply gospel principles in their lives, and teach from the scriptures.

Scripture mastery review activities are placed throughout this manual to introduce a variety of methods for helping students review scripture mastery verses regularly. Additional review activities can be found in the appendix of this manual.

Quizzes can help students remember what they have learned and measure their learning. Invite students to read the three scripture mastery passages that have already been introduced in this manual. You could also include a few new passages. (You may want to suggest that students mark these passages in their scriptures.) After students have read, quiz them by giving a key word from the passage or by reading a phrase from the seminary book-mark. Then ask students to locate the correct passage in their scriptures.

Ask questions that invite feelings and testimony

After students understand a doctrine or principle taught in the scriptures, ask questions that help students reflect on past spiritual experiences related to that doctrine or principle. These questions can help students feel more deeply the truthfulness and importance of that gospel truth in their lives. Often those feelings will engender a stronger desire to live a gospel principle more faithfully.

Home-Study Lesson

Matthew 13:24–17:27 (Unit 4)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Matthew 13:24–17:27 (unit 4) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Matthew 13:24–58)

From the parable of the wheat and the tares, students learned that the Lord will gather the righteous during the last days and then destroy the wicked at His Coming. In additional parables they learned about the restored Church of Jesus Christ filling the whole earth and the eternal blessings that come to those who sacrifice to obtain the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Day 2 (Matthew 14)

From Matthew 14 students came to understand that by showing compassion for others even when we are experiencing sadness, we follow the example of Jesus Christ. They also learned that if we seek God’s help when our faith weakens, He can lift us from our fears and doubts.

Day 3 (Matthew 15)

From the Savior’s instruction to the scribes and Pharisees, students learned that if we desire to draw near to God, we must place His commandments above any traditions and customs we may have. They also learned that if we choose to entertain evil or inappropriate thoughts and desires, then those thoughts and desires will defile us, and that as we exercise faith in Jesus Christ, we can receive blessings according to our righteous desires.

Day 4 (Matthew 16–17)

In their study of Matthew 16–17, students learned that Jesus Christ’s Church is built upon revelation from God. They also learned about priesthood keys that were conferred anciently and in our day that allow the Lord’s servants to administer His Church upon the earth.

Introduction

Jesus Christ rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees who sought a sign of His divinity. Peter bore testimony that Jesus is the Christ and was promised the keys of the kingdom of heaven. The following teaching ideas can help students understand how to strengthen their testimonies.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 16:1–12

The Pharisees and the Sadducees seek a sign from the Savior

Before class, write the following phrases on the board:

Through the appearance of an angel

Through the Holy Ghost

Through believing the words of a friend or family member

Through witnessing a miracle

To begin the lesson, ask students to choose the phrase on the board that best describes how they would like to receive a testimony of the gospel. Invite a few students to report which phrase they chose and explain why they chose it.

Invite students as they study Matthew 16 to look for truths concerning how the Lord helps us to receive and strengthen our testimonies of the gospel.

Invite a student to read Matthew 16:1 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Pharisees and Sadducees wanted from Jesus.

- What did the Pharisees and Sadducees want from Jesus?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 16:2–4. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior’s response to the Pharisees and Sadducees.

- What sign did the Lord say He would provide?

Explain that Jesus was referring to the Old Testament prophet Jonah, who had been swallowed by a “great fish” (Jonah 1:17). Jonah’s “burial” in and then coming forth from the belly of the fish after three days symbolized the death, burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the tomb on the third day.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained the sign of the prophet Jonas: “Jonah’s burial in and coming forth from the ‘great fish’ (Jonah 1:15–17; 2) symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 711–12).

- What did the Savior do after He rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees?
- What can we learn from this experience about the improper way to seek spiritual truth? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **We do not receive spiritual truth by seeking for signs.**)

Summarize Matthew 16:5–12 by explaining that the Savior warned His disciples of the Pharisees' and Sadducees' false teachings.

Matthew 16:13–20

Peter testifies of Jesus Christ and is promised the keys of the kingdom

Explain that after Jesus rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees for seeking a sign, He taught His disciples how to receive a testimony of the truth. Invite a student to read Matthew 16:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the question Jesus asked and the response His disciples gave.

- What did the Savior ask His disciples? How did they answer? (You may need to explain that Elias and Jeremias are the Old Testament prophets Elijah and Jeremiah.)
- What can their response tell us about how well people understood who Jesus was at this point in His ministry?

Note: In the lesson for day 4, students studied the scripture mastery passage Matthew 16:15–19. Consider spending a few minutes reviewing the passage with them.

Invite a student to read Matthew 16:15–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the second question the Savior asked.

- What was the second question the Savior asked? How did Peter respond?
- According to verse 17, how did Peter know that Jesus is the Son of God? (Point out that Heavenly Father had revealed this truth to him through the Holy Ghost.)
- What truth can we learn from these verses about how we can gain a testimony of Jesus Christ? (Students may use different

words, but they should identify the following truth: **We gain a testimony of Jesus Christ through revelation from the Holy Ghost.**)

- Why do you think it is important for us to receive a testimony through revelation from the Holy Ghost rather than by some other way?

To help students further understand the role of the Holy Ghost in helping us gain a testimony of the Savior, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith:



"The Spirit of God speaking to the spirit of man has power to impart truth with greater effect and understanding than the truth can be imparted by personal contact even with heavenly beings. Through the Holy Ghost the truth is woven into the very fibre and sinews of the body so that it cannot be forgotten" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Fielding Smith* [2013], 183–84).

- What are some things we can do to prepare ourselves to receive revelation through the Holy Ghost?
- How did you come to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and your Savior? What did you do to prepare to receive that witness from the Holy Ghost?

Invite students to ponder how they might strengthen their testimonies or what they may need to do to receive a testimony through the Holy Ghost. Encourage them to act on any impressions they receive.

Next Unit (Matthew 18–22)

Ask students to consider a time when it was difficult for them to forgive another person. Invite them to consider the following questions: Why did you feel justified in not forgiving this person? Why should we forgive others of their trespasses even if we feel justified in not forgiving them? Invite students to look for answers to these questions as they continue their studies in the coming week.

LESSON 21

Matthew 18

Introduction

Jesus Christ taught His disciples principles that would help them lead His Church after His Ascension. The

Lord also gave the parable of the unmerciful servant in response to Peter's question about forgiveness.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 18:1–20

Jesus Christ teaches His disciples principles that will help them lead the Church

List the following offenses on the board: *being lied to; having something stolen; being betrayed by a friend*. Ask students to silently rate each offense on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the easiest to forgive and 10 being the hardest. Invite a few willing students to report how they rated each of the offenses.

Invite students to ponder why we should forgive others even when it's difficult to do so.

Invite students as they study Matthew 18 to look for truths that can help them understand why we should forgive others.

Summarize Matthew 18:1–14 by explaining that Jesus instructed His disciples to humble themselves and become as little children. He also explained that those who “offend” little children, lead them astray, or cause them to stumble in the faith, would be subject to the justice of God (see verses 6–7, including verse 6, footnote *a*). The Savior then counseled His disciples to remove from their lives those things that could offend them, or cause them to stumble (see verse 9). (*Note:* The Savior's teachings found in Matthew 18:1–14 will be discussed in greater depth in the lessons on Mark 9 and Luke 15.)

Explain that after the Savior counseled His disciples to remove from their lives those things that could cause them to stumble, He told them what a person should do if someone trespasses, or sins, against him or her. He also taught the Apostles principles of Church discipline.

Invite a student to read Matthew 18:15 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Jesus told His disciples to do if someone trespassed against them.

- What can we learn from this verse about what should we do if someone trespasses against us?

Summarize Matthew 18:16–17 by explaining that the Savior told His Apostles that if a person refused to acknowledge his or her wrongdoing and confess his or her sin, and two or more witnesses testified against him or her, that person would be cut off from the Church. You may also want to explain that, today, those who preside over Church disciplinary councils where such decisions are made always seek the Lord's will regarding whether an individual should be cut off from the Church, or excommunicated.

Invite a student to read Matthew 18:18–20 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what authority the Apostles had received.

- What authority did the Apostles have given to them? (Explain that the Savior had given the Apostles the keys of the priesthood, which gave them authority, under the direction of Peter, to perform sealing ordinances and make binding decisions regarding the Church, including whether a sinner could remain a member [see Matthew 16:19].)
- What did the Lord promise His Apostles in verses 19–20? (You may want to suggest that students mark the promise in verse 20.)

Matthew 18:21–35

The Lord gives the parable of the unmerciful servant

Invite a student to read aloud the following account, related by President Thomas S. Monson, of a family whose two-month-old baby had died:



“[The] father was a cabinetmaker and fashioned a beautiful casket for the body of his precious child. The day of the funeral was gloomy, thus reflecting the sadness they felt in their loss. As the family walked to the chapel, with Father carrying the tiny casket, a small number of friends had gathered. However, the chapel door was locked. The busy bishop had forgotten the funeral. Attempts to reach him were futile. Not knowing what to do, the father placed the casket under his arm and, with his family beside him, carried it home, walking in a drenching rain” (“Hidden Wedges,” *Ensign*, May 2002, 19).

- If you had been a member of that family, how would you have felt when the bishop failed to show up for the funeral?
- Why would it be difficult to forgive the bishop?

Explain that after the Savior instructed the Apostles, Peter asked the Lord a question about forgiveness. Invite a student to read Matthew 18:21 aloud, and ask students to look for Peter’s question.


- What did Peter ask the Savior?

Explain that some religious leaders in Peter’s day taught that an individual did not need to offer forgiveness to another person more than three times. In asking the Lord if he should forgive someone seven times, Peter may have thought he was being generous (see Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 4 vols. [1979–81], 3:91). Invite students to read Matthew 18:22 silently, looking for the Savior’s response to Peter.

- How many times did the Savior say we should forgive those who offend or sin against us? (Explain that “seventy times seven” is a way of saying we should put no limit on the number of times we forgive others.)
- What truth can we learn from the Savior about forgiving others? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The Lord has commanded us to forgive those who offend or sin against us.**)
- What does it mean to forgive others? (Explain that to forgive others is to treat with love the person who has offended or hurt us and to have no unkind feelings toward him or her [see Guide to the Scriptures, “Forgive,” scriptures.lds.org; D&C 64:9–11]. Forgiving does not mean that we continue to allow others to harm us or that the offender should not be held accountable for his or her actions, legally or otherwise.)

Explain that after answering Peter’s question, the Savior taught His disciples a parable that can help us understand why we should forgive others.

Group students into pairs and invite each pair to read Matthew 18:23–35 together, looking for why we should forgive others. After sufficient time, invite students to report what they found.

 Instead of having students read Matthew 18:23–35, consider showing the video “Forgive Every One Their Trespases: The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant” [6:06]. As students watch the video, invite them to look for why we should forgive others. After the video, invite students to report what they found. This video is available on LDS.org.

To help students deepen their understanding of this parable, copy the following words on the board:

King	Servant	Fellowservant

- How much did the servant owe the king? (Write *owed the king 10,000 talents* under *Servant*.)

Explain that in Jesus's day "10,000 talents equaled 100,000,000 denarii [Roman currency]. One denarius was a typical day's wage for a common laborer" (Jay A. Parry and Donald W. Parry, *Understanding the Parables of Jesus Christ* [2006], 95). Ask students to calculate how many years it would take for the servant to pay off this debt by dividing 100,000,000 denarii by 365 days ($100,000,000/365 = 273,973$). Write *273,973 years* on the board under *owed the king 10,000 talents*.

- How much did the fellow-servant owe the servant? (Write *owed the servant 100 pence* under *Fellow-servant*.)

Explain that 100 pence equaled 100 denarii. Therefore, the fellow-servant owed the servant roughly 100 days' worth of work, or nearly one-third of his yearly salary. Write *100 days* on the board under *owed the servant 100 pence*.

- Why do you think the king told the servant he was wicked for not forgiving his fellow-servant this debt?

Ask students who they think each of the three people in the parable could represent. After they respond, write the following possible representations on the board: *King = Heavenly Father, Servant = Us, Fellow-servant = Those who have offended us*.

- What principle do you think the Savior was trying to teach His disciples about why we should forgive others? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we want God to forgive us, then we must be willing to forgive others.** Write this principle on the board.)
- What can a person do if he or she is struggling to forgive someone?

To help students understand what we can do to be more willing to forgive others, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President James E. Faust of the First Presidency. If possible, make a handout for each student.



"We need to recognize and acknowledge angry feelings. It will take humility to do this, but if we will get on our knees and ask Heavenly Father for a feeling of forgiveness, He will help us. The Lord requires us 'to forgive all men' [D&C 64:10] for our own good because 'hatred retards spiritual growth' [Orson F. Whitney, *Gospel Themes* (1914), 144]. Only as we rid ourselves of hatred and bitterness can the Lord put comfort into our hearts. . . .

". . . When tragedy strikes, we should not respond by seeking personal revenge but rather let justice take its course and then let go. It is not easy to let go and empty our hearts of festering resentment. The Savior has offered to all of us a precious peace through His Atonement, but this can come only as we are willing to cast out negative feelings of anger, spite, or revenge. For all of us who forgive 'those who trespass against us' [Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 6:13], even those who have committed serious crimes, the Atonement brings a measure of peace and comfort" (James E. Faust, "The Healing Power of Forgiveness," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 69).

- What did President Faust tell us to do that will help us forgive others?
- According to President Faust, what can happen when we forgive others?

Remind students of President Monson's story shared earlier in class and ask a student to read the conclusion of the account:

"If the family were of a lesser character, they could have blamed the bishop and harbored ill feelings. When the bishop discovered the tragedy, he visited the family and apologized. With the hurt still evident in his expression, but with tears in his eyes, the father accepted the apology, and the two embraced in a spirit of understanding" ("Hidden Wedges," *Ensign*, May 2002, 19).

- How has the Lord helped you forgive someone who has sinned against or offended you?
- What has helped you forgive others? (Consider inviting students to respond to this question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.)

Invite students to ponder whom they may be withholding forgiveness from. Invite them to pray for a desire to forgive and the ability to let go of hurt and anger so that Jesus Christ can help them feel peace and comfort through His Atonement.

Ask questions and make invitations that encourage application

The aim of gospel teaching is to help students apply the principles and doctrines found in the scriptures, become converted, and receive the blessings promised to the faithful and obedient. Questions and invitations that encourage application can help students see how they can apply these principles and doctrines in their current situations and in the future.

LESSON 22

Matthew 19–20

Introduction

Jesus Christ taught about the sanctity of marriage. He emphasized the importance of choosing eternal life over worldly wealth and taught the parable of the laborers

in the vineyard. Jesus also foretold His death and taught His disciples to serve others.

Be sensitive to the needs and feelings of students

As you discuss the Savior's teachings on marriage and divorce, be sensitive to students who may have experienced pain or worry due to the separation or divorce of parents or other family members. Prayerfully seek and follow the guidance of the Holy Ghost as you prepare and teach. Remember to listen carefully as students ask questions or share their thoughts and feelings.



Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 19:1–12

The Savior teaches about the sanctity of marriage

Display a picture of a happily married couple who has been sealed in the temple. Point out that the Lord's doctrine concerning marriage and divorce differs from many of the world's beliefs.

- What are some of the world's beliefs about marriage and divorce? (*Caution:* Avoid spending too much time on topics that could take time away from other important principles in today's lesson.)

Invite students as they study Matthew 19:1–12 to look for the Lord's teachings about marriage and divorce and consider the importance of these teachings for them.

Ask a student to read Matthew 19:1–3 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for the question the Pharisees asked Jesus. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that the phrase "to put away his wife for every cause" (Matthew 19:3) refers to a man divorcing his wife for any reason, even if it is trivial or selfish.

Invite a student to read Matthew 19:4–6 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the Savior taught about marriage and divorce.

- What truths about marriage do we learn from the Savior's response to the Pharisees? (Students may identify several truths, but be sure to emphasize that **marriage between a man and a woman is a sacred relationship designed and established by God.**)

Invite a student to read Matthew 19:7 aloud, and ask the class to look for another question the Pharisees asked the Savior.

- What did the Pharisees ask the Savior?

Invite a student to read Matthew 19:8–9 aloud, and ask the class to look for the Savior's response.

- According to the Savior, why did Moses allow divorce among the Israelites? (Because of the hardness of the people's hearts.)

To help students understand how this teaching relates to our day, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"The kind of marriage required for exaltation—eternal in duration and godlike in quality—does not contemplate divorce. In the temples of the Lord, couples are married for all eternity. But some marriages do not progress toward that ideal. Because 'of the hardness of [our] hearts' [Matthew 19:8], the Lord does not currently enforce the consequences of the celestial standard. He permits divorced persons to marry again without the stain of immorality specified in the higher law" ("Divorce," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 70).

Consider inviting students to share their testimonies that God designed and established marriage as a sacred relationship between a man and a woman.

Matthew 19:13–30; 20:1–16*Jesus teaches of eternal life and gives the parable of the laborers in the vineyard*

Invite a student to come to the front of the class. Tell the student that if he or she can do 10 push-ups, he or she will receive a small reward (such as 10 small pieces of candy). After the student does 10 push-ups, give him or her the reward, and then ask for another volunteer. Ask the second student to do one push-up, and then ask the class what reward they think this student should receive and why. Invite the two students to return to their seats. Inform the class that later in the lesson the second student will receive a reward based on what the class learns in the scriptures.

Summarize Matthew 19:13–27 by explaining that Jesus encouraged His followers to seek eternal life rather than worldly wealth. Peter asked what the disciples would receive because they had given up their worldly possessions to follow the Savior. (*Note:* The events discussed in these verses will be taught in detail in the lesson on Mark 10.)

Invite a student to read Matthew 19:28–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior’s response to Peter.

- According to verse 29, what will everyone who forsakes all to follow the Savior inherit?

Explain that the Savior then taught His disciples a parable to help them understand Heavenly Father’s desire to give all His children the opportunity to receive eternal life. In this parable, a man hires laborers at different times throughout the day to work in his vineyard. A normal working day in New Testament times would have been from about 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., with slightly varied lengths at different seasons of the year.

Copy the following chart on the board or provide it to students as a handout:

Laborers (Start Time)	Salary Agreed On	Hours Worked	Amount Paid
Early in the morning (6:00 a.m.)			
3rd hour (9:00 a.m.)			
6th hour (12:00 p.m.)			
9th hour (3:00 p.m.)			
11th hour (5:00 p.m.)			

Invite students to work in small groups. Ask them to read Matthew 20:1–7 in their groups, looking for how long each group of laborers worked and the salary they agreed on. (“A penny” refers to a denarius, which was a Roman coin roughly equal to a laborer’s wages for a day.)

After sufficient time, invite a few students to come to the board and fill in the first two columns of the chart (or invite them to fill them in on the copies you have provided).

- Who do you think should be paid the most?

Invite a student to read Matthew 20:8–10 aloud, and ask the class to look for the payment each group of laborers received.

- What payment did each group of laborers receive? (After students respond, write *1 penny* in each of the boxes in the column labeled “Amount Paid.”)
- If you were among the laborers who worked all day, what thoughts or feelings might you have had as you received the same reward as those who worked for only an hour?

Invite a student to read Matthew 20:11–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what those who labored all day said to the lord of the vineyard and what he replied to them.

- What was the complaint of those who had worked all day?
- What did the lord of the vineyard say in response?
- How had the lord of the vineyard been just (or fair) with those who had worked all day?

To help students identify a truth from this parable, explain that the wage of one penny can represent everlasting or eternal life, as mentioned in Matthew 19:29. Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *God gives eternal life to all people who . . .*

- If the reward in this parable represents eternal life, what could the labor represent? (Students may give a variety of answers, but be sure to emphasize that the labor in this parable can represent making and keeping sacred covenants with God. After students respond, complete the truth on the board as follows: **God gives eternal life to all people who choose to make and keep sacred covenants with Him.**)

Point out that this truth helps us understand Heavenly Father’s mercy for individuals who do not make or keep covenants early in life and for those who do not have the opportunity to do so until after they die (see D&C 137:7–8).

- Why do you think it is important for us to know that God gives eternal life to all people who choose to make and keep sacred covenants with Him, regardless of when that may occur?

Remind students of the second student who did only one push-up, and ask:

- What reward do you think this student should receive for doing one push-up? (Give the student the same reward you gave to the student who did 10 push-ups.)

Ask a student to read Matthew 20:15–16 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for how the lord of the vineyard responded to those who complained about his kindness toward the other laborers.

- What do you think the lord of the vineyard meant when he asked, “Is thine eye evil, because I am good?” (verse 15).

Explain that Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles paraphrased this question as follows: “Why should *you* be jealous because *I* choose to be kind?” (“The Laborers in the Vineyard,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 31).

- What does it mean in verse 16 that “many [are] called, but few chosen”? (To be *called* means to be invited to participate in Heavenly Father’s work. To be *chosen* means to receive His blessings—including the blessing of eternal life.)
- What principle can we learn from verse 16? (Students may identify a number of principles, including the following: **If we choose to be jealous of Heavenly Father’s blessings upon others, then we may lose the blessings He wants to give us.**)

Read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, and invite students to ponder how they might be tempted to be jealous of the blessings Heavenly Father gives to others:



“There are going to be times in our lives when someone else gets an unexpected blessing or receives some special recognition. May I plead with us not to be hurt—and certainly not to feel envious—when good fortune comes to another person? We are not diminished when someone else is added upon. We are not in a race against each other to see who is the wealthiest or the most talented or the most beautiful or even the most blessed. The race we are *really* in is the race against sin. . . .

“. . . Coveting, pouting, or tearing others down does *not* elevate *your* standing, nor does demeaning someone else improve your self-image. So be kind, and be grateful that God is kind. It is a happy way to live” (“Laborers in the Vineyard,” 31, 32).

Share your testimony of the truths students identified as they studied the parable of the laborers in the vineyard.

Write the following statement on the board. Give students time to complete the statement in their class notebooks or scripture study journals: *Based on what I have learned from this parable, I will . . .*

After sufficient time, invite a few students who feel comfortable doing so to share with the class what they wrote.

Matthew 20:17–34

Jesus foretold His own death and taught His disciples to serve others

Summarize Matthew 20:17–34 by explaining that the Savior foretold that He would be betrayed and condemned to death when He returned to Jerusalem. He taught His disciples that rather than striving for position and authority, they should follow His example and serve others.

LESSON 23

Matthew 21:1–16

Introduction

Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem at the beginning of the last week of His life. While there, He

cleansed the temple for the second time and healed the blind and the lame who came to Him.

Suggestions for Teaching

Note: At the end of this lesson is a one-page visual titled “Jesus Christ’s Last Week, Atonement, and Resurrection.” This brief overview of the last week of the Savior’s mortal life can help you and your students understand the events that led up to Jesus Christ’s death and Resurrection. You may want to use this overview in Mark, Luke, and John as well.

Matthew 21:1–11

Jesus Christ makes His triumphal entry into Jerusalem

Display an item of food or write the name of a food on the board. Ask students to indicate whether they have tasted this food and would recommend it to others. Invite a student who would recommend the food to come to the front of the class. Ask him or her to imagine that no one else has tasted this food. Instruct the student to demonstrate what he or she would say or do to help someone develop a desire to try this food. Invite the student to return to his or her seat when finished. Then ask the class:

- If you had not tasted this food before, how likely would you be to want to try it now? Why?

Display a picture of the Savior. Explain that many people have little knowledge of Jesus Christ and His gospel and that we have the responsibility to help others learn about Him.

Ask students to ponder what they could do to help someone want to know more about Jesus Christ. Invite them to look for a principle as they study Matthew 21:1–11 that can help them as they encourage others to learn more about Jesus Christ.

Explain that Matthew 21 records the events that took place five days before the Savior’s Crucifixion. Remind students that a multitude of people followed Jesus and His Apostles as they traveled to Jerusalem from Jericho (see Matthew 20:17–18, 29).

Invite a student to read Matthew 21:1–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus instructed two of His disciples to do.

- What did Jesus instruct these disciples to do?

Explain that the prophecy referenced in Matthew 21:4–5 is found in Zechariah 9:9–10.

(Invite students to consider writing this reference next to verse 5.) This prophecy was about the promised Messiah, or “the anointed Prophet, Priest, King, and Deliverer whose coming the Jews were eagerly expecting” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Messiah,” scriptures.lds.org).

Point out that in biblical times, the donkey “was a symbol of Jewish royalty. . . . Riding on a donkey . . . showed that Jesus came as a peaceful and ‘lowly’ Savior, not as a conqueror upon a warhorse” (*New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 64).

- What are some actions in different cultures that show respectful acknowledgment of royalty?

Invite a student to read Matthew 21:6–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what “a very great multitude” (verse 8) did as Jesus rode into Jerusalem. (You may want to point out to students that Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 21:5 [in Matthew 21:7, footnote *a*], clarifies that only one animal was brought and ridden.)

- What did the multitude do to respectfully acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah? (You might point out that the Gospel of John specifies that the multitude used “branches of palm trees” [John 12:13]. Palm branches were a Jewish symbol of victory and triumph over enemies. Providing a carpeted path, like the one the multitude created using branches and clothing, was a gesture used to honor royalty or conquerors. By doing this, the multitude acknowledged and welcomed Jesus as their Deliverer and King.)



Marking and annotating the scriptures

Marking and annotating the scriptures is one of the most helpful ways for students to retain what they learn. Students can do this by underlining, shading, or outlining key words or phrases. They can also write definitions, principles, prophetic commentary, or personal insights and impressions in the margins of their scriptures.



Display the picture Triumphal Entry (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 50; see also LDS.org). Ask students to imagine that they are one of the people in this picture. Read the first part of Matthew 21:9 aloud, and invite the class to read aloud in unison the multitude's cry in the second half of the verse as if they were part of the multitude.

- What word did the people repeat? (*Hosanna*.)

Explain that *hosanna* means "save now" (Bible Dictionary, "Hosanna"). Ask students to consider writing this definition in their scriptures next to verse 9.

Explain that part of the multitude's cry fulfilled the messianic prophecy found in Psalm 118:25–26. You may want to suggest that students write this reference next to Matthew 21:9. Explain that the royal and messianic title "Son of David" (verse 9) was reserved for the heir to the throne of David.

- By making this cry, who were the people declaring Jesus was?
- If you had been living in Jerusalem at this time, what thoughts or feelings might you have had as you witnessed the Savior's triumphal entry?

Point out that thousands of additional people were in Jerusalem at that time to celebrate the Passover. Invite a student to read Matthew 21:10–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the effect of the multitude's behavior on others in Jerusalem.

- What question did others ask because of the multitude's behavior?
- As illustrated in this account, what can happen as we publicly acknowledge and speak about Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **As we publicly acknowledge and speak about Jesus Christ, we can help others develop a desire to know more about Him.** You might want to write this principle on the board.)
- What are some settings outside of Church meetings where we can publicly acknowledge and speak about Jesus Christ? (Help students understand that, when appropriate, we can do this in formal settings, through social media, and during conversations with friends, family members, and neighbors.)
- How can we publicly acknowledge and speak about Jesus Christ in a way that will help others want to know more about Him?
- How would you answer if you were asked who Jesus Christ is?

Write the following questions on the board, and invite students to respond to one of them in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

When have another person's efforts to publicly acknowledge and speak about Jesus Christ led you to want to know more about Him?

When have you (or someone you know) helped someone want to know more about Jesus Christ because you publicly acknowledged and spoke about Him?

After sufficient time, invite several students who are willing to do so to share what they wrote.

Encourage students to look for and take opportunities to appropriately acknowledge and speak about Jesus Christ.

Matthew 21:12–16

Jesus cleanses the temple and heals the blind and the lame

Display a picture of a Latter-day Saint temple located close to where you live. Invite students to ponder and describe the thoughts and feelings they had the last time they visited the temple. If students have never been to the temple, ask them to describe how they think they would feel inside the temple.

- What happens in the temple that enables us to experience these feelings?

Display the picture My Father's House (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 52; see also LDS.org). Explain that after the Savior entered Jerusalem, He went to a courtyard on the temple grounds. Invite a student to read Matthew 21:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what some people were doing that was offensive to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

- How were some people treating God's house?



Explain that the visitors who came to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover needed to purchase animals to offer as sacrifices in the temple as part of their worship. Moneychangers exchanged Roman and other currencies for temple currency so the animals could be purchased, and other merchants sold the animals.

- What was wrong about conducting this type of business on the grounds of the temple?

You may want to point out that even though this business was necessary and served a good purpose, handling it where and how the merchants did was disrespectful and irreverent. Verse 13 suggests that the moneychangers and merchants were more interested in making a financial profit than in worshipping God and helping others to do so.

- What truth about the temple can we learn from the Savior’s words and actions? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The house of the Lord is a sacred place, and He desires that we treat it with reverence.**)
- How can we show reverence for the house of the Lord?
- How can worthily attending the temple show reverence for it?

Invite a student to read Matthew 21:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior did in the temple after cleansing it.

- What did the Savior do for the blind and the lame who came to Him in the temple?
- What can we learn from this account about what the Lord can do for us as we attend the temple? (Make sure students identify the following truth: **As we attend the temple, the Lord can heal us.**)
- In addition to physical ailments, what other illnesses and challenges can the Lord heal as we attend the temple?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President James E. Faust of the First Presidency. Ask students to listen for President Faust’s testimony of the truth they identified.



“The Lord has provided many avenues by which we may receive [His] healing influence. I am grateful that the Lord has restored temple work to the earth. It is an important part of the work of salvation for both the living and the dead. Our temples provide a sanctuary where we may go to lay aside many of the anxieties of the world. Our temples are places of peace and tranquillity. In these hallowed sanctuaries God ‘healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.’ (Ps. 147:3)” (“Spiritual Healing,” *Ensign*, May 1992, 7).

- Why does worshipping in the Lord’s house help us experience His healing influence?

Explain that the healing we experience as we worship in the temple can be immediate, as it was for the blind and the lame described in this account, or it can take place over time.

- When have you, or someone you know, experienced the Lord’s healing influence by worshipping in the temple? (You may also want to share an experience of your own.)

Summarize Matthew 21:15–16 by explaining that the chief priests and scribes were displeased with what Jesus did in the temple and with the people crying “Hosanna” to Him there. Jesus pointed out that the people’s public acknowledgment of Him fulfilled a prophecy (see Psalm 8:2).

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths discussed in this lesson.

Jesus Christ's Last Week, Atonement, and Resurrection

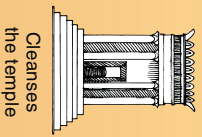


Fifth day
before Passover



Triumphal entry

Fourth day
before Passover



Cleanses the temple

Third day
before Passover



Rebukes Pharisees and teaches at the temple



Teaches about the widow's mite



Foretells signs of His Second Coming



Gives parables of the ten virgins, talents, and sheep and goats

Last day
before Passover



Preparation for the Passover



Jewish leaders conspire with Judas to arrest Jesus

Passover



Last Supper



Washes the feet of the Twelve



Institutes the sacrament



Offers the Intercessory Prayer

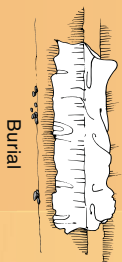


Suffers in Gethsemane

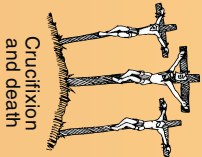
Jewish Sabbath



Ministers in the spirit world



Burial



Crucifixion and death

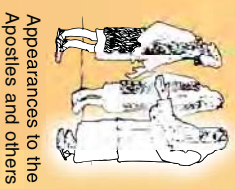


Arrest, trials, and scourging

Sunday



Resurrection and appearance to Mary Magdalene



Appearances to the Apostles and others

(The events of the second day before Passover are unknown.)

(The Jews measured a day from sundown to sundown. Many of the events on this day occurred at night.)

LESSON 24

Matthew 21:17–22:14

Introduction

After staying the night in the village of Bethany, Jesus returned to the temple. On His way, He cursed a fig tree. Leaders of the Jews came to Him in the temple

and questioned His authority. Jesus reproved them and taught several parables that illustrate the consequences of rejecting or accepting Him and His gospel.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 21:17–32

Jesus curses a fig tree and reproves the leaders of the Jews

Before class, write the following question on the board: *What are some times when you discovered that something was not as good as it appeared to be?*

To begin the lesson, invite one or more students to share their responses to the question on the board.

Explain that Matthew 21 presents an account of a time when Jesus Christ encountered something that was not as good as it appeared to be. Invite students to look for truths in Matthew 21 that can guide us not only to appear righteous to others but also to actually live righteously.

To provide context for Matthew 21, explain that after Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem and cleansed the temple, He stayed in Bethany, a small village near Jerusalem. Invite a student to read Matthew 21:18–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior did the next day as He traveled from Bethany back to the temple in Jerusalem.

- What did the Savior do to the fig tree?

Display a picture of a fig tree with leaves. Explain that leaves on a fig tree normally indicate that the tree has fruit. In the spring (when the Savior encountered the fig tree that was barren of fruit), fig trees generally produce early figs. If they do not, it means they will not produce any fruit during that year. The tree described in this account had the appearance of being a fruit-producing tree, but it had not produced any fruit. One reason the Savior may have cursed the fig tree was to teach His disciples about the corrupt religious leaders of the Jews.

- Based on what you have learned about the Jewish religious leaders in the Savior's day, how were many of them like the fig tree described in this account? (They gave the appearance of following God but failed to produce actual fruits, or works, of righteousness.)

Summarize Matthew 21:23–27 by explaining that some of these Jewish leaders approached the Savior in the temple and questioned the authority by which He had made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem and cleansed the temple. The Savior responded by asking them whether the baptism (or ministry) of John the Baptist had been commissioned by God or by man. These leaders would not answer the Savior's question for fear of condemning themselves or offending people who accepted John as a prophet. The Savior said He would not answer their questions either and then related three parables that illustrate the actions of the corrupt Jewish leaders. The first parable describes the different ways in which two sons responded to their father.

Invite a student to read Matthew 21:28–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for which of the sons was more like the Jewish leaders.

- Which of the sons was more like the Jewish leaders? In what way?

Invite a student to read Matthew 21:31–32 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught the corrupt Jewish leaders through this parable. (You may need to



Fig tree

© Jose Ramiro Laguna/Shutterstock.com

explain that publicans were tax collectors and that harlots were prostitutes. Jewish leaders looked down on both of these groups of people, considering them to be sinners.)

- How were the publicans and harlots like the first son?
- What truth can we learn from the Savior’s teachings about who will enter the kingdom of God? (Students may use different words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **To enter the kingdom of God, we must obey our Heavenly Father and repent of our sins rather than only saying or pretending that we obey Him.**)

To help students understand the relevance of this truth, invite a student to read aloud the following scenario:

A young man often tells his parents that he is attending Church activities when he actually goes to a friend’s house instead. When he is around Church leaders and instructors, he talks and acts as though he keeps Heavenly Father’s commandments, but outside of those settings he knowingly breaks many of the commandments.

- How could this young man’s choices prevent him from entering the kingdom of God?
- If you were this young man’s friend, what might you say to him to help him change his behavior?

Invite another student to read aloud the following scenario:

A young woman gossips with her friends about several girls in her school but pretends to be friendly to these girls when they are around. She regularly attends church and partakes of the sacrament, but during the meetings she often sends her friends text messages containing criticisms of those around her.

- In what ways might this young woman merely be pretending to keep Heavenly Father’s commandments?
- In addition to the examples in these scenarios, what are other ways we might be tempted to pretend to obey Heavenly Father rather than actually obeying Him?

Invite students as they continue to study Matthew 21 to look for what they can do to avoid being like the fig tree that produced no fruit.

Matthew 21:33–22:14

Jesus teaches the parables of the wicked husbandmen and the marriage of the king’s son

Divide students into pairs. If possible, provide each pair with a copy of the following chart. Invite students to read Matthew 21:33–41 aloud together with their partners and complete the chart by writing what they think the final three symbols represent.

The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen

Matthew 21:33–41	
Symbol	Meaning
Householder	Heavenly Father
Husbandmen	
Servants	
The householder’s son	

After students have completed this activity, invite several pairs to report what they wrote. As needed, clarify that the husbandmen represent the corrupt Israelite leaders, the servants represent God’s prophets, and the householder’s son represents Jesus Christ.

- What was Jesus illustrating through this parable? (Over the centuries some of the leaders of Israel had rejected Old Testament prophets, and the present Jewish leaders intended to kill Jesus [see *New Testament Student Manual* (Church Educational System manual, 2014), 65]).

Invite a student to read Matthew 21:43 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who would be given the kingdom of God (meaning the Church of Jesus Christ and the blessings of the gospel) after the Jewish leaders had rejected it.

- To whom would the kingdom of God be given?

Explain that Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 21:53, identifies the Gentiles as the nation to whom the kingdom of God would be given. You may want to explain that the word *Gentile* can refer to “people of non-Israelite . . . [or] non-Jewish lineage” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Gentiles,” scriptures.lds.org) or nations that do not have the fulness of God’s authority, ordinances, laws, and teachings. The transfer of the kingdom to the Gentiles began when the gospel was first taken to the Gentiles by the Apostles after the Savior’s Resurrection (see Acts 10–11; see also Matthew 20:16). It has continued in the last days with the Restoration of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith, who lived in a Gentile nation. As members of Jesus Christ’s Church, we are among those to whom God has given His kingdom.

- According to verse 43, what are we responsible to do as members of the Church of Jesus Christ? (Make sure students identify something similar to the following truth: **As members of the Church of Jesus Christ, we are responsible to bring forth fruits of righteousness.** Using students’ words, write this principle on the board.)

Invite students to come to the board and draw pictures of fruit on the fig tree. Ask them to label the fruit with words describing righteous things that we should do as members of the Church of Jesus Christ. Invite students to explain what they wrote by asking:

- Why do you think it is important for us to bring forth that fruit?
- How have you been blessed as you have tried to bring forth one of these fruits of righteousness?

Summarize Matthew 21:45–46 by explaining that the chief priests and Pharisees became angry when they realized that the wicked husbandmen in the parable represented them. However, they refrained from laying hands on the Savior because they feared the people’s reaction if they did so.

Explain that in Matthew 22:1–10 we read that Jesus Christ related a parable in which He compared the blessings of the gospel to a wedding feast a king gave for his son. The people who were first invited to the feast (who represent many of the Jews, including the leaders) refused to come. Those who were invited next (who represent the Gentiles) chose to come and enjoy the feast.

Invite a student to read Matthew 22:11–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened at the wedding feast.

- Why was this guest cast out from the feast?

Explain that the king had fulfilled an ancient custom by giving his guests clean and appropriate clothing to wear at the wedding. However, this man had chosen not to wear the clothing the king had provided.

- In this parable, what might the wedding garments represent? (You may want to explain that in the scriptures, clean garments and robes often symbolize the righteousness and purity of those who have become clean through the Atonement of Jesus Christ [see *New Testament Student Manual* (Church Educational System manual, 2014), 66; see also 3 Nephi 27:19].)

Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 22:14 adds that not everyone at the feast will be wearing the wedding garment (see footnote *b*). In other words, not everyone who acknowledges the Savior, is called, and accepts the invitation to be part of the kingdom will be prepared and worthy to dwell eternally with Him and Heavenly Father. Some will have disqualified themselves from rich blessings because they are not clothed with the garment of righteousness.

- How does this parable further illustrate the principle written on the board?

Testify of the importance of the eternal blessings we have been invited to receive. Ask students to ponder what they are currently doing to accept Heavenly Father’s invitation to receive all of the blessings of the gospel. Encourage them to apply what they have learned by preparing themselves to receive these blessings.

Sharing thoughts, feelings, and experiences

Sharing insights and relevant experiences can help clarify students’ understanding of doctrines and principles. As students share their experiences, the Holy Ghost often leads them to a deeper understanding and testimony of the very thoughts they are expressing. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, the thoughts, feelings, and experiences students share can also have a significant impact on the hearts and minds of other students.

LESSON 25

Matthew 22:15–46

Introduction

While Jesus continued teaching at the temple, the Pharisees and the Sadducees tried to entrap Him by asking Him difficult questions. He successfully responded to

their questions and taught them to obey the laws of the land and to keep the two great commandments.

Lead students through the learning process

Help students better understand and internalize gospel principles by leading them through the learning process. Encourage them to search the scriptures for understanding, and help them discover gospel truths for themselves. Also give students opportunities to explain the gospel in their own words and to share and testify of what they know and feel. This will help students not only understand the gospel but feel its truthfulness in their hearts.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 22:15–22

The Pharisees try to entrap the Savior by asking Him if it is lawful to pay tribute

- What are some important laws the government has established in our society? Why do you think they are important?

Ask students to silently consider if there are any laws they don't obey as well as they should. As students study Matthew 22:15–22, invite them to look for what Jesus Christ taught about obeying the laws of the land.

Remind students that during the last week of the Savior's life, He taught daily at the temple in Jerusalem (see Luke 19:47; 22:53). Invite a student to read Matthew 22:15 aloud, and ask the class to follow along and look for what the Pharisees tried to do to the Savior.

- What does the phrase "entangle him in his talk" mean?

Invite a student to read Matthew 22:16–17 aloud, and ask the class to look for how the Pharisees tried to trick the Savior. Explain that the word *tribute* in verse 17 means taxes, and that Caesar was the emperor of the Roman Empire, which ruled over Israel at that time.

- How was the question they asked Jesus Christ a potential trap? (If the Savior said it was right to pay taxes to the Roman Empire, the Jews would consider Him a supporter of Rome and disloyal to His own people. If the Savior told them it was not lawful to pay taxes, the Pharisees could accuse Jesus of treason and report Him to the Roman authorities.)

Invite a student to read Matthew 22:18–21 aloud, and ask the class to look for how the Savior responded to the Pharisees' question. Explain that the phrase "render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's" in verse 21 refers to our obligation to obey civil laws, such as the law to pay taxes. Hold up a coin and ask:

- Why was the Savior's answer a perfect response to the Pharisees' question?
- What truth can we learn from the Savior's teaching that we should "render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's"? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The Lord expects us to be good citizens and obey the laws of the land** [see also Articles of Faith 1:12].)
- Why do you think it is important for us as disciples of Jesus Christ to be good citizens and obey the laws of the land? (See D&C 58:21.)

Invite students to read Matthew 22:22 silently, looking for how the Pharisees reacted to the Savior's response. Ask students to report what they find.

Matthew 22:23–34

The Savior teaches the Sadducees about marriage and the Resurrection

Explain that in addition to the Pharisees, the Sadducees also tried to trap the Savior in His words as He taught in the temple. To help students understand the Sadducees' beliefs, invite them to silently read the entry "Sadducees" in the Bible Dictionary. Ask students to look for what the Sadducees believed and did not believe.

- What beliefs did the Sadducees reject?

Invite a student to read Matthew 22:23–28 aloud, and ask the class to look for how the Sadducees tried to trick the Savior.

- How would you summarize the question the Sadducees asked the Savior?

Explain that the Sadducees intentionally misapplied an Old Testament custom that was designed to provide for widows (see Deuteronomy 25:5–6; Bible Dictionary, “Levirate marriage”). They attempted to exaggerate this custom to discredit the doctrine of the Resurrection.

Invite a student to read Matthew 22:29–30 aloud, and ask the class to look for the Savior’s response to the Sadducees’ question.

- How did the Savior respond to the question?

To help students understand the Savior’s response, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“[Jesus Christ] is not *denying* but *limiting* the prevailing concept that there will be marrying and giving in marriage in heaven. He is saying that as far as ‘they’ (the Sadducees) are concerned, that as far as ‘they’ (‘the children of this world’) are concerned, the family unit does not and will not continue in the resurrection. . . .

“Therefore, when they [those who will not, do not, or cannot live the law of eternal marriage] are out of the world they neither marry nor are given in marriage’ [D&C 132:16].

“That is, there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage in heaven for those to whom Jesus was speaking; for those who do not even believe in a resurrection, let alone all the other saving truths” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:606).

To help students further understand the Savior’s message in Matthew 22:29–30, explain that the Lord revealed many important truths regarding eternal marriage to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 132:15–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord revealed to Joseph Smith about marriage.

- Who did the Lord say would not “marry nor [be] given in marriage” (verse 16) in the Resurrection?
- What truth did the Savior teach in Matthew 22:30 and Doctrine and Covenants 132:15–17 about marriage and postmortal life? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Those who are not sealed by priesthood authority to their spouses in mortality or through proxy ordinances in temples will not be married in the world to come.**)

Invite a student to read Matthew 22:31–33 aloud, and ask the class to look for what other truths the Savior taught the Sadducees about the Resurrection.

- What did the Savior say in verse 32 that indicates that the Resurrection is real?
- How did the people respond when they heard the Savior teach these doctrines?

Matthew 22:34–40

The Savior teaches about the two great commandments


Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals as many commandments as they can think of in one minute. Ask students to report how many commandments they were able to write.

Explain that Judaism teaches that the law of Moses contains 613 commandments. Invite a student to read Matthew 22:35–36 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the question one of the Pharisees asked the Savior concerning these commandments.

- What question did the Pharisee ask the Savior?

Before students look at the Savior’s answer, invite them to circle a commandment on their list that they think is the “great,” or most important, commandment. Ask a few students to report which commandment they circled and explain why they circled it.

Invite a student to read Matthew 22:37–40 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior responded to the Pharisee’s question.

 **Matthew 22:36–39** is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

- What is the greatest commandment? What is the second greatest commandment? (Explain that these two commandments were found in the law of Moses [see Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18]. Also explain that the Lord’s direction to “love thy neighbor” refers to how we treat others.)
- Why do you think these commandments are considered the greatest commandments?
- What does it mean in verse 40 that “on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets”? (Help students understand that all the commandments God revealed in the law of Moses and through the Old Testament prophets were designed to help the people show their love for God and for their neighbor.)
- If every commandment is designed to help us keep the two great commandments, what principle can we learn from verse 40 about the importance of keeping all of God’s commandments? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we truly love God and love our neighbor as ourselves, we will strive to keep all of God’s commandments.**)

To illustrate this principle, invite students to refer to the list of commandments they created in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Ask them to put a star by the commandments that show love for God and a square by those commandments that show love for our neighbor. (Some commandments may be marked with both a star and a square.) Ask students to choose one of the commandments on their list and explain how obeying that commandment allows us to show our love for God, our love for our neighbor, or both.

- What feelings have you had when you have chosen to obey a particular commandment to show your love for God or for another person?

Share your testimony of the principle that if we truly love God and love our neighbor as ourselves, we will keep all of God’s commandments. Invite students to think of a commandment they could obey more faithfully to show their love for Heavenly Father or for another person, and encourage them to set a goal to do so. Invite them to write this goal in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

Matthew 22:41–46

The Savior asks the Pharisees what they think of Christ

Explain that after the Savior successfully answered the Pharisees’ and Sadducees’ questions, He asked the Pharisees some questions.

Invite a student to read Matthew 22:41–42 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the Savior asked the Pharisees.

- What questions did Jesus Christ ask the Pharisees?
- How did the Pharisees respond?

Explain that most Jews knew that Christ, or the Messiah, would be a descendant of King David. The Pharisees believed the Messiah would be crowned king of Israel and help them defeat foreign enemies (such as Rome) and receive their freedom, as King David had done previously. Summarize Matthew 22:43–46 by explaining that Jesus taught the Pharisees that according to their own scriptures, Christ was *more than just* the son of David—He was also the Son of God. Or, as later revealed to John the Beloved, Christ is both “the root and the offspring of David” (Revelation 22:16); He is both David’s Lord and his descendant.

Invite students to consider how they would answer the question “What think ye of Christ?” Conclude by sharing your testimony of the Savior.

Scripture Mastery—Matthew 22:36–39

Give students time to write the words from Matthew 22:36–39 on notecards or small pieces of paper. Invite students to carry their cards with them and refer to them periodically throughout the day to help them remember to keep the first and second commandments.

Home-Study Lesson

Matthew 18–22 (Unit 5)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Matthew 18–22 (unit 5) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Matthew 18–20)

From the parable of the unmerciful servant, students learned that if we want God to forgive us, then we must be willing to forgive others. They also learned of the sanctity of marriage.

Day 2 (Matthew 21:1–16)

As students studied about the Savior's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, they learned that as we publicly acknowledge and speak about Jesus Christ, we can help others develop a desire to know more about Him. From the Savior's cleansing of the temple, students learned that the house of the Lord is a sacred place, and He desires that we treat it with reverence. They also learned that as we attend the temple, the Lord can heal us.

Day 3 (Matthew 21:17–22:14)

Students studied about how the Savior cursed a fig tree and then used several parables while He taught at the temple. They learned that to enter the kingdom of God, we must obey our Heavenly Father and repent of our sins rather than only saying or pretending that we obey Him. Another truth students learned was that as members of the Church of Jesus Christ, we are responsible to bring forth fruits of righteousness.

Day 4 (Matthew 22:15–46)

Students learned that Jesus continued His instruction at the temple and taught the people that the Lord expects us to be good citizens and obey the laws of the land. The Savior taught that those who are not sealed by priesthood authority to their spouses in mortality or through proxy ordinances in temples will not be married in the world to come. Students also learned that if we truly love God and love our neighbor as ourselves, we will strive to keep all of God's commandments.

Introduction

This lesson can help students understand the importance of making and keeping sacred covenants with God. They can also learn the importance of rejoicing when others are blessed by God.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 19:28–20:16

Jesus teaches about eternal life and gives the parable of the laborers in the vineyard

Invite a student to come to the front of the class. Tell the student that if he or she can do 10 push-ups, he or she will receive a small reward (such as 10 small pieces of candy). After the student does 10 push-ups, give him or her the reward, and then ask for another volunteer. Ask the second student to do one push-up, and then ask the class what reward they think this student should receive and why. Invite the two students to return to their seats. Inform the class that later in the lesson the second student will receive a reward based on what the class learns in the scriptures.

Explain that when Jesus was teaching in the coast of Judea, Peter asked what the disciples would receive because they had given up their worldly possessions to follow the Savior.

Invite a student to read Matthew 19:28–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior's response to Peter.

- According to verse 29, what will everyone who forsakes all to follow the Savior inherit?

Explain that the Savior then taught His disciples a parable to help them understand Heavenly Father's desire to give all His children the opportunity to receive eternal life. In this parable, a man hires laborers at different times throughout the day to work in his vineyard. You may want to explain that a normal working day in New Testament times would have been from about 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., with slightly varied lengths at different seasons of the year.

Copy the following chart on the board or provide it to students as a handout:

Laborers (Start Time)	Salary Agreed On	Hours Worked	Amount Paid
Early in the morning (6:00 a.m.)			
3rd hour (9:00 a.m.)			
6th hour (12:00 p.m.)			
9th hour (3:00 p.m.)			
11th hour (5:00 p.m.)			

Invite students to work in small groups. Ask them to read Matthew 20:1–7 in their groups, looking for how long each group of laborers worked and the salary they agreed on. (Explain that “a penny” refers to a denarius, which was a Roman coin roughly equal to a laborer’s wages for a day.)

After sufficient time, invite a few students to come to the board and fill in the first two columns of the chart (or invite them to fill them in on the copies you have provided).

- Who do you think should be paid the most?

Invite a student to read Matthew 20:8–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the payment each group of laborers received.

- What payment did each group of laborers receive? (After students respond, write *1 penny* in each of the boxes in the column labeled “Amount Paid.”)
- If you were among the laborers who worked all day, what thoughts or feelings might you have had as you received the same reward as those who worked for only one hour?

Invite a student to read Matthew 20:11–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what those who labored all day said to the lord of the vineyard and what he said to them.

- What was the complaint of those who worked all day?
- What did the lord of the vineyard say in response?
- How had the lord of the vineyard been just (or fair) with those who had worked all day?

To help students identify a truth from this parable, explain that the wage of one penny can represent everlasting or eternal life, as mentioned in Matthew 19:29. Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *God gives eternal life to all people who . . .*

- If the reward in this parable represents eternal life, what could the labor represent? (Students may give a variety of answers, but be sure to emphasize that the labor in this parable can represent making and keeping sacred covenants with God. After students respond, complete the truth on the board as follows: **God gives eternal life to all people who choose to make and keep sacred covenants with Him.**)

Point out that this truth helps us understand Heavenly Father’s mercy for individuals who do not make or keep covenants early in life and for those who do not have the opportunity to do so until after they die (see D&C 137:7–8).

- Why do you think it is important for us to know that God gives eternal life to all people who choose to make and keep sacred covenants with Him, regardless of when that may occur?

Remind students of the second student who did only one push-up, and ask:

- What reward do you think this student should receive for doing one push-up? (Give the student the same reward you gave to the student who did 10 push-ups.)

Ask a student to read Matthew 20:15–16 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for how the lord of the vineyard responded to those who complained about his kindness toward the other laborers.

- What do you think the lord of the vineyard meant when he asked, “Is thine eye evil, because I am good?” (verse 15).

Explain that Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles paraphrased this question as follows: “Why should *you* be jealous because *I* choose to be kind?” (“The Laborers in the Vineyard,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 31).

- What does it mean in verse 16 that “many [are] called, but few chosen”? (To be *called* means to be invited to participate in Heavenly Father’s work. To be *chosen* means to receive His blessings—including the blessing of eternal life. See also D&C 121:34–40.)
- What principle can we learn from verse 16? (Students may identify a number of principles, including the following: **If we choose to be jealous of Heavenly Father’s blessings upon others, then we may lose the blessings He wants to give us.**)

Read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, and invite students to ponder how they might be tempted to be jealous of the blessings Heavenly Father gives to others:



“There are going to be times in our lives when someone else gets an unexpected blessing or receives some special recognition. May I plead with us not to be hurt—and certainly not to feel envious—when good fortune comes to another person? We are not diminished when someone else is added upon. We are not in a race against each other to see who is the wealthiest or the most talented or the most beautiful or even the most blessed. The race we are *really* in is the race against sin. . . .

“ . . . Coveting, pouting, or tearing others down does *not* elevate *your* standing, nor does demeaning someone else improve your self-image. So be kind, and be grateful that God is kind. It is a happy way to live” (“Laborers in the Vineyard,” 31, 32).

Share your testimony of the truths students identified as they studied the parable of the laborers in the vineyard.

Write the following statement on the board. Give students time to complete the statement in their class notebooks or scripture study journals: *Based on what I have learned from this parable, I will . . .*

After sufficient time, invite a few students who feel comfortable doing so to share with the class what they wrote.

Next Unit (Matthew 23:1–26:30)

To help prepare students for the next unit, invite them to consider how they might best prepare themselves for the Lord’s Second Coming. What truths were being taught when Jesus Christ gave the parables of the ten virgins, the talents, and the sheep and the goats? What ordinance did the Savior institute to replace the Passover? Invite students to look for answers in their study during the next week.

LESSON 26

Matthew 23

Introduction

During the last week of the Savior's mortal ministry, He condemned the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees

and lamented that the people of Jerusalem would not accept His love and protection.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 23:1–12

The Savior condemns the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees

Invite students to show their sets of scriptures to each other and to determine who has the largest set.

- How would you respond if someone claimed that the person with the largest set of scriptures was the most righteous?
- Why would this be an ineffective way to determine an individual's righteousness?
- What might happen if we determined others' righteousness by outward appearances? (Among other problems, it might lead some people to act hypocritically.)
- What is hypocrisy? ("The word generally denotes one who pretends to be religious when he is not" [Bible Dictionary, "Hypocrite"]. It could also refer to someone who pretends not to be religious when he or she really is.)

Explain that as part of the Savior's final public message given at the temple in Jerusalem during the last week of His mortal ministry, He condemned the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees.

Invite students to look for truths in Matthew 23 that will help them know how to respond when they see others acting hypocritically and what they can do to overcome hypocrisy in their own lives.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 23:1–7. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior said about the ways in which the scribes and Pharisees were being hypocritical. Explain that the phrase "sit in Moses' seat" (verse 2) means the scribes and Pharisees occupied a position of authority to teach the doctrine and interpret and administer the law. The phrase could also refer to a literal seat that was found in some ancient synagogues that was reserved for those who considered themselves more worthy than anyone else in the synagogue.

- In what ways were the scribes and Pharisees being hypocritical?

If available, display a picture of someone wearing phylacteries, also called *tefillin*. Explain that it was customary for the Jews to wear phylacteries, which were small leather boxes strapped onto the forehead and arm. Inside the phylacteries were small rolls of parchment that contained excerpts from the Hebrew scriptures. The Jews wore phylacteries to help them remember to follow God's commandments (see Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:13–21; Exodus 13:5–10, 14–16). The Lord did not condemn those who wore phylacteries, but He did condemn those who used them hypocritically or enlarged them to cause others to notice them or to appear more important.

- According to Matthew 23:5, why did the scribes and Pharisees enlarge their phylacteries and "the borders of their garments"?
- In what other ways did they seek "to be seen of men" (verse 5) or receive worldly honors?
- According to the Lord's counsel to His disciples in Matthew 23:3, what can we do when we see others acting hypocritically, or pretending to be righteous when they really are not? (Students may use different words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **We can choose to obey God's laws even if we see others acting hypocritically.**)
- Why is this truth important for us to follow in our day?



Jewish man wearing phylacteries

Invite a student to read Matthew 23:8 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the Lord counseled the people not to do. Invite students to report what they find.

Point out the phrase “all ye are brethren” (verse 8) and explain that the Savior taught the people not to consider themselves better than others, because they were all God’s children, equal in His sight.

Summarize Matthew 23:9–10 by explaining that the Savior testified that Heavenly Father is our Creator and that He, Christ, was sent by the Father and is our true Master who gives life (see Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 23:6 [in Matthew 23:9, footnote a]; Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 23:7 [in Matthew 23:10, footnote a]).

Explain that the scribes and Pharisees thought position and status would make them great. Invite a student to read Matthew 23:11–12 aloud, and ask the class to look for who the Savior said He will consider great in the kingdom of God.

- According to verse 11, who will be considered great in God’s kingdom?
- According to verse 12, what will happen if we, like the Pharisees, try to “exalt” (or lift) ourselves above others? (After students respond, make sure they understand the following principle: **If we try to exalt ourselves above others, we will be abased.** Explain that to be *abased* means to be lowered or humiliated or to become less respected.)
- According to verses 11–12, what will happen if we are humble and serve others? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we are humble and serve others, the Lord will exalt us.**)

Explain that the phrase “shall be exalted” (verse 12) implies that the Lord will lift us up and help us become more like Him.

Based on what you have learned in Matthew 23, what does it mean to be humble?

Draw the following continuum on the board. Invite students to ponder their good works at school, home, and church. Ask them to consider where they would place themselves on this continuum based on their motives for doing good works and their efforts to be humble.



Encourage students to remember that all of us are Heavenly Father’s children. You might also encourage them to set a goal to serve someone every day for the next month. Consider inviting them to write about this experience in their personal journals.

Matthew 23:13–36

Jesus Christ declares woes upon the scribes and Pharisees

Before class begins, prepare three nontransparent cups. Smear mud or grease on the outside of the first cup and on the inside of the second cup, and leave the third cup clean. Display the cups, and ask the class which one they would prefer to drink from. Invite a student to examine the insides of the cups and to explain which cup he or she would prefer to drink from and why.

- In what ways do the dirty cups represent hypocrites?

Summarize Matthew 23:13–36 by explaining that the Savior denounced the scribes and Pharisees for being hypocrites. Invite students to scan these verses, looking for a word the Savior repeated at the beginning of several verses. Ask them to report what they find. You may want to suggest that students mark the word *woe* in these verses. Explain that *woe* refers to misery, distress, and sorrow.

Write the following scripture references and questions on the board:

Matthew 23:23–24 (see also verse 24, footnote a)

Matthew 23:25–26

Matthew 23:27–28

Matthew 23:29–36 (see also verse 36, footnote a)

How were the scribes and Pharisees being hypocritical?

What examples of this kind of hypocrisy do we see in our day?

Divide students into pairs. Invite each pair to read aloud each reference on the board and to discuss the questions on the board after they read each reference. (Encourage students to read the Joseph Smith Translation excerpts in the footnotes for their assigned passages.)

After sufficient time, ask students to report their answers.

Invite a student to read Matthew 23:26 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the Savior told the Pharisees to do to overcome their hypocrisy.

- What did the Savior tell the Pharisees to do?
- Based on what the Savior taught the Pharisees, what will happen to us as we strive to become spiritually clean on the inside? (After students respond, make sure they understand the following principle: **As we strive to become spiritually clean on the inside, it will be reflected in our outward choices.**)
- What must we do to become spiritually clean on the inside?
- How might our inner righteousness be reflected in our outward choices?

Invite students to ponder which cup best represents their current spiritual condition. Testify of the preceding principle, and encourage students to set a goal that will help them be spiritually clean.

Matthew 23:37–39

The Savior laments that the people of Jerusalem would not come to Him

Display or draw a picture of a hen protecting her chicks.

- Why do hens gather their chicks under their wings? (To protect them from danger. Point out that a hen would sacrifice her life to protect her chicks.)

Invite a student to read Matthew 23:37–39 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior said He was like a hen.

- How is the Savior like a hen that gathers her chicks?
- What does it mean to be gathered by the Savior?

Point out the phrase “your house is left unto you desolate” (verse 38), and explain that *desolate* means empty or abandoned. Because the people were unwilling to be gathered by the Savior, they were left unprotected. This phrase could refer to the spiritual condition of the people during Jesus’s time as well as in the future when Jerusalem would be destroyed.

- Based on what Jesus taught about a hen and her chicks, what can we receive if we are willing to be gathered by the Savior? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we are willing to be gathered by the Savior, then we will receive His care and protection.**)
- How can we show the Savior we are willing to be gathered by Him? (List students’ responses on the board.)

To help students understand one way they can gather to the Savior, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency:



“More than once [the Savior] has said that He would gather us to Him as a hen would gather her chickens under her wings. He says that we must choose to come to Him. . . .

“One way to do that is to gather with the Saints in His Church. Go to your meetings, even when it seems hard. If you are determined, He will help you find the strength to do it” (“In the Strength of the Lord,” *Ensign or Liahona*,

May 2004, 18).

- What did President Eyring say we can do to show our willingness to be gathered by the Savior?

Ask students to look at the list on the board of ways we can show our willingness to be gathered by Christ. Invite them to share how they have received care and protection by gathering to the Savior in one of those ways.

Invite students to decide what they will do to gather to the Savior so they can continue to receive His care and protection.

Help students fulfill their role in the learning process

Spiritual learning requires effort and the exercise of agency by the learner. For many students, making an effort to learn from the scriptures can seem unfamiliar and somewhat difficult. However, you can help them understand, accept, and fulfill their role in gospel learning. As students actively fulfill their role in gospel learning, they open their hearts to the influence of the Holy Ghost.



Joseph Smith—Matthew; Matthew 24

Introduction

Jesus Christ prophesied of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. He revealed the signs of His Second

Coming and instructed the faithful to watch and prepare for that day.

Improving as a teacher

As you desire to improve and consistently work to teach in a way that is pleasing to our Heavenly Father, He will inspire you in your preparation, strengthen your relationships with students, magnify your efforts, and bless you with His Spirit. He will help you see how you can progress as you strive to teach in a way that leads students to understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ.



Suggestions for Teaching

Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:1–20

Jesus prophesies of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple

Display the picture *The Second Coming* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 66; see also LDS.org). Ask students to ponder questions they have concerning the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and to write these questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Do not seek to answer these questions at this time. Invite students to look for answers as they study Joseph Smith—Matthew.

Point out that Joseph Smith—Matthew is the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 23:39 and Matthew 24. Summarize Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:1–3 by explaining that as Jesus Christ taught at the temple in Jerusalem, His disciples understood that He would return to the earth. Jesus then left the temple, and His disciples came to Him, wanting to know more about when the temple would be destroyed.

Invite a student to read Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for two questions the disciples asked Jesus on the Mount of Olives. Invite students to report what they find, and write the following questions on the board:

1. *When will Jerusalem and the temple be destroyed?*
2. *What is the sign of Jesus Christ's Second Coming and the destruction of the wicked?*

Explain that Jesus Christ addressed the first question in verses 5–21, and the second question is answered in verses 21–55. Divide students into pairs. Instruct them to read Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:5–12 aloud with their partners, looking for the signs related to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Ask students to report what they find.

- Although Jesus said His disciples would suffer during this time, what did He say about those who “[remain] steadfast and [are] not overcome”? (verse 11).
- What principle can we learn from verse 11? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we remain steadfast and are not overcome, then we will be saved.** Using students’ words, write this principle on the board.)
- What does it mean to be steadfast and not overcome? (*Steadfast* suggests being immovable, solid, unshakable, and undefeatable.)

To help students understand the meaning of the word *saved* in verse 11, explain that as we are steadfast, we may not be saved from hardship, but we will ultimately be saved in God’s kingdom.

Invite a student to read the following paragraph aloud. Ask the class to listen for how those who remained steadfast in obeying the Savior’s counsel were saved from destruction:

In Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:13–18 we learn that Jesus warned His disciples to be ready to flee to the mountains and not return to their homes because Jerusalem would be attacked and destroyed. He prophesied that the tribulation of those days would be the worst Israel had ever seen. In A.D. 70, approximately 40 years after Jesus spoke these words, the Romans laid siege to Jerusalem and killed over a million Jews. The temple was destroyed, and not one stone was left on top of another—just as the Savior had prophesied (see Matthew 24:2). However, those who heeded Jesus’s warning safely escaped to Pella, a town about 50 miles northeast of Jerusalem (see Bible Dictionary, “Pella”).

- How does the Jews' experience illustrate the importance of remaining steadfast in obeying the Savior's words?
- When have you been blessed by remaining steadfast in obeying the commandments?

Summarize Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:19–20 by explaining that Jesus prophesied that though the Jews would suffer great trials, they would be preserved because of God's covenant with them.

Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:21–37

Jesus prophesies of the signs of His Second Coming

Explain that in addition to explaining signs that would warn of Jerusalem's destruction, the Savior answered His disciples' second question by prophesying of signs concerning His Second Coming.

Ask a student to read Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:21–23 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for why the Lord revealed the signs of His Second Coming.

- Why is it helpful for disciples of Jesus Christ to know the signs that signal the Second Coming?

Invite a student to read Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:24–26 aloud. Ask the class to look for how the Savior will appear at His Second Coming.

- How will the Savior appear at His Second Coming?
- How can knowing this help the elect avoid being deceived?

Invite students to read Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:27–31 silently, looking for signs that will precede the Second Coming.

- What difficulties will people face before the Second Coming?
- Based on verses 27 and 31, what hopeful signs will precede the Second Coming? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **Before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the Lord's elect will be gathered and the gospel will be preached in all the world.**)
- In what ways do we see this prophecy being fulfilled?

Explain that Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:32–36 describes additional signs associated with the Second Coming.

Remind students of the Savior's warning that in the latter days false Christs and false prophets would seek to "deceive the very elect" (verse 22). Invite a student to read Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:37 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the elect can avoid being deceived.

- How can the elect avoid being deceived?
- What principle can we learn from this verse? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we treasure up the Lord's word, then we will not be deceived.** Write this principle on the board.)

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following account given by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"One of my fine missionaries who served with me when I was the mission president in Toronto [Canada] came to see me some years later. I asked him, 'Elder, how can I help you?'

"'President,' he said, 'I think I'm losing my testimony.'

"I couldn't believe it. I asked him how that could be possible.

"'For the first time I have read some anti-Mormon literature,' he said. 'I have some questions, and nobody will answer them for me. I am confused, and I think I am losing my testimony.'" ("When Shall These Things Be?" *Ensign*, Dec. 1996, 60).

Ask students to ponder whether they, or individuals they know, have experienced something similar to what this former missionary experienced.

- What counsel would you give to someone in this situation? Why?

Invite a student to continue reading Elder Ballard's account aloud:

"I asked him what his questions were, and he told me. They were the standard anti-Church issues, but I wanted a little time to gather materials so I could provide meaningful answers. So we set up an appointment 10 days later, at which time I told him I would answer every one of his questions. As he started to leave, I stopped him.

"'Elder, you've asked me several questions here today,' I said. 'Now I have one for you.'

"'Yes, President?'

"'How long has it been since you read from the Book of Mormon?' I asked.

"His eyes dropped. He looked at the floor for a while. Then he looked at me. 'It's been a long time, President,' he confessed.

"'All right,' I said. 'You have given me my assignment. It's only fair that I give you yours. I want you to promise me that you will read in the Book of Mormon for at least one hour every day between now and our next appointment.' He agreed that he would do that.

"Ten days later he returned to my office, and I was ready. I pulled out my papers to start answering his questions, but he stopped me.

"'President,' he said, 'that isn't going to be necessary.' Then he explained: 'I know that the Book of Mormon is true. I know Joseph Smith is a prophet of God.'

"'Well, that's great,' I said. 'But you're going to get answers to your questions anyway. I worked a long time on this, so you just sit there and listen.'

"And so I answered all his questions and then asked, 'Elder, what have you learned from this?'

"And he said, 'Give the Lord equal time' " ("When Shall These Things Be?" 60).

- How does this experience illustrate the principle we identified in verse 37?
- How have you been blessed as you have treasured the Lord's word?

Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:38–55

Jesus instructs His disciples on being prepared for His Second Coming

Explain that using parables, Jesus instructed His disciples on how to treasure His word and be prepared for His Second Coming.

Divide students into pairs. Assign one student in each pair to study Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:38–46 and the other to study Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:47–54. Invite students to look for doctrines and principles in their assigned verses and to write them down.

After sufficient time, ask students to summarize the parables they read to their partners and to discuss the following questions:

- What truths did you identify?
- How did the Savior illustrate these truths in the verses you studied?

Invite several students to report the truths they identified, which may include the following: **Only Heavenly Father knows when the Savior's Second Coming will occur. If we watch for the signs and obey the Lord's commandments, then we will be prepared for the Savior's Second Coming.**

Review the truths identified in Joseph Smith—Matthew, and ask students to consider how these truths help answer the questions they wrote at the beginning of the lesson. Invite them to testify of truths they have learned.

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (if possible, provide copies to hand out to students):



"What if the day of His coming were tomorrow? If we knew that we would meet the Lord tomorrow—through our premature death or through His unexpected coming—what would we do today? What confessions would we make? What practices would we discontinue? What accounts would we settle? What forgivenesses would we extend? What testimonies would we bear?

"If we would do those things then, why not now?" ("Preparation for the Second Coming," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2004, 9).

Invite students to write a response to the following question: If I knew that I would meet the Savior tomorrow, what would I change today? Encourage them to apply what they wrote.

LESSON 28

Matthew 25:1–13

Introduction

As Jesus Christ privately taught His disciples on the Mount of Olives about His Second Coming, He taught the parable of the ten virgins.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 25:1–13

Jesus Christ teaches the parable of the ten virgins

Invite a student to read aloud the following account told by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles about a young returned missionary who shared a personal experience in a testimony meeting. Invite students to imagine how they might feel if they were the young man in this story.



“He . . . told of coming home from a date shortly after he had been ordained an elder at age 18. Something had happened on this date of which he was not proud. He did not go into any details, nor should he have done so in a public setting. To this day I do not know the nature of the incident, but it was significant enough to him to have affected his spirit and his self-esteem.

“As he sat in his car for a while in the driveway of his own home, thinking things through and feeling genuine sorrow for whatever had happened, his nonmember mother came running frantically from the house straight to his car. In an instant she conveyed that this boy’s younger brother had just fallen in the home, had hit his head sharply and was having some kind of seizure or convulsion. The nonmember father had immediately called for an ambulance, but it would take some time at best for help to come.

“‘Come and do something,’ she cried. ‘Isn’t there something you do in your Church at times like this? You have their priesthood. Come and do something.’ . . .

“. . . On this night when someone he loved dearly needed his faith and his strength, this young man could not respond. Given the feelings he had just been wrestling with and the compromise he felt he had just made—whatever that was—he could not bring himself to go before the Lord and ask for the blessing that was needed” (“The Confidence of Worthiness,” *Liahona*, Apr. 2014, 58–59).

- What would you be thinking if you were the young man in this situation? Why is it so important to always be prepared?

Display the picture Parable of the Ten Virgins (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 53; see also LDS.org). Remind students that while Jesus Christ was on the Mount of Olives with His disciples, He taught them about His Second Coming (see Matthew 24). He then gave the parable of the ten virgins to illustrate how to be prepared for His Second Coming.

Invite a student to read Matthew 25:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the main elements of the parable. Invite them to report what they find. Write the following phrases on the board:

The bridegroom

Wise and foolish virgins

Lamps and oil


Explain that according to Jewish wedding customs, the groom, or bridegroom, accompanied by his close friends, would go at night to the bride’s house for the wedding ceremony. Following the ceremony, the wedding party would proceed to the groom’s house for a feast. Wedding guests who joined the procession were expected to carry their own lamps or torches to indicate they were part of the wedding party and to add to the brightness and beauty of the occasion.

Use stories to engage attention and build understanding

Stories can engage students’ attention and help them understand the gospel through vicarious experiences. By illustrating gospel principles in a modern context or in the context of the scriptures, stories can help students understand how those principles relate to their lives and help them feel a desire to apply them.



Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 25:5–13. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the five wise virgins did and what the five foolish virgins did.

 Instead of having students read Matthew 25:5–13 aloud, you could show students a portion of the video “They That Are Wise” (time code 0:00–5:46), which portrays the parable of the ten virgins. This video is available on *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Visual Resources DVDs* and on LDS.org. Before starting the video, invite students to look for what the five wise virgins did and what the five foolish virgins did.

- What did the five wise virgins do? What did the five foolish virgins do?

Refer to the elements of the parable written on the board. Ask the class to suggest what they think each element might represent.

Write *Jesus Christ* next to *The bridegroom* on the board. Explain that the phrases “while the bridegroom tarried” (verse 5) and “at midnight there was a cry made” (verse 6) refer to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

- What can we learn about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ from these phrases?

Explain that both the wise and the foolish virgins, who were invited to the feast, represent members of the Church (see Dallin H. Oaks, “Preparation for the Second Coming,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2004, 8). Write *Members of the Church* next to *Wise and foolish virgins* on the board.

Invite students to review Matthew 25:8–9 and ponder why the wise virgins did not give their oil to the foolish virgins. Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball. Invite the class to listen for what the oil can represent and why it could not be shared.



“This was not selfishness or unkindness. The kind of oil that is needed to illuminate the way and light up the darkness is not shareable. How can one share obedience to the principle of tithing; a mind at peace from righteous living; an accumulation of knowledge? How can one share faith or testimony? How can one share attitudes or chastity, or the experience of a mission? How can one share temple privileges? Each must obtain that kind of oil for himself. . . .

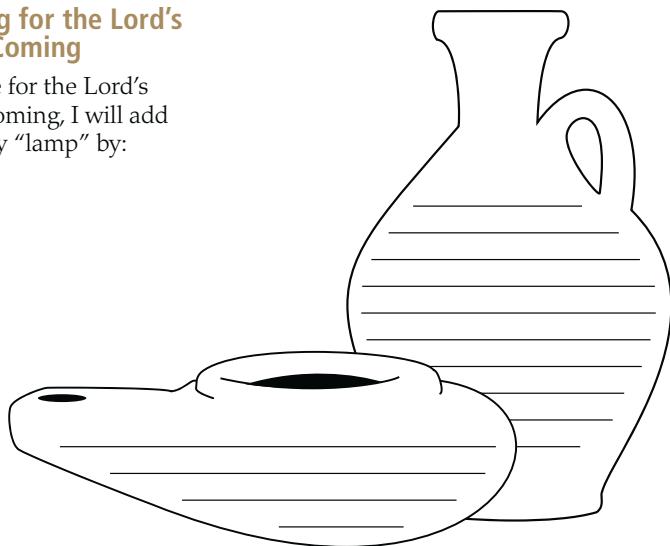
“In the parable, oil can be purchased at the market. In our lives the oil of preparedness is accumulated drop by drop in righteous living. . . . Each act of dedication and obedience is a drop added to our store” (*Faith Precedes the Miracle* [1972], 255–56).

- What does the oil in the parable represent? (Write students’ answers, such as *spiritual preparation, testimony, faith, conversion, and experience*, next to *Lamps and oil* on the board. To provide additional insight into the symbolism of the oil, you may want to suggest that students read Doctrine and Covenants 45:56–57 and cross-reference it with Matthew 25:8.)
- What truth can we learn from the parable and from President Kimball’s comments about borrowing spiritual preparation? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **We cannot borrow spiritual preparation from others.**)
- What truth do we learn from the parable about how to prepare for the Second Coming? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **We prepare for the Second Coming by increasing our testimony and conversion through daily righteousness.** Write this truth on the board.)


Provide students with copies of the accompanying handout. Invite them to list on the handout ways they can acquire the “oil” of spiritual preparedness.

Preparing for the Lord's Second Coming

To prepare for the Lord's Second Coming, I will add "oil" to my "lamp" by:



After sufficient time, ask a few students to share some of their ideas with the class.

 To help students understand other ways in which they can accumulate oil drop by drop through righteous living, consider showing the rest of the video "They That Are Wise" (time code 5:46–8:44). Invite students to add ideas to their lists as they watch the video.

Ask a student to read Matthew 25:10–12 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the bridegroom said to the foolish virgins. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 25:11 clarifies that the bridegroom said, "Ye know me not" (in Matthew 25:12, footnote *a*).

- What does the statement "ye know me not" tell us about the five foolish virgins? How is knowing the Lord different from merely knowing about Him?
- What can we learn from this verse about what we must do to be ready for the Lord's coming? (Help students identify the following principle: **To be ready for the Lord's coming and be worthy to remain in His presence, we must come to know Him.**)
- In what ways have you recently come to know the Savior better?

Remind students of the story from the beginning of the lesson about the young priesthood holder who was unprepared in a moment of need. Explain that the young man rushed to the house of an older man in his ward who lived down the street. The older man gave the younger brother a blessing that stabilized his condition until paramedics arrived. Invite a student to read aloud the young man's testimony as related by Elder Holland:



"No one who has not faced what I faced that night will ever know the shame I felt and the sorrow I bore for not feeling worthy to use the priesthood I held. It is an even more painful memory for me because it was my own little brother who needed me and my beloved nonmember parents who were so fearful and who had a right to expect more of me. But as I stand before you today, I can promise you this," he said. "I am not perfect, but from that night onward I have never done anything that would keep me from going before the Lord with confidence and asking for His help when it is needed. Personal worthiness is a battle in this world in which we live," he acknowledged, "but it is a battle I am winning. I have felt the finger of condemnation pointing at me once in my life, and I don't intend to feel it ever again if I can do anything about it. And, of course," he concluded, "I can do *everything* about it" ("The Confidence of Worthiness," 59).

Ask students to consider what they need to do to be spiritually prepared for the Lord's coming and to be worthy to remain in His presence. You might encourage them to circle one or two of the actions they listed on the handout and to set a goal to act in ways that will increase their spiritual preparedness. Invite them to take their handouts home as a reminder of their goals.

Matthew 25:14–46

Introduction

As Jesus Christ taught His disciples about His Second Coming while on the Mount of Olives, He related the parable

of the talents. He also explained that He will separate the righteous from the wicked when He comes again.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 25:14–30

Jesus Christ teaches His disciples the parable of the talents

Before class, place five coins on one side of the room and two coins on the other side. Place eight other coins in your pocket.

To begin the lesson, invite three students to come to the front of the class to help you act out a parable that Jesus Christ taught His disciples as part of His instruction concerning His Second Coming.

Invite a student to read Matthew 25:14–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what each servant received and what he did with it.

- What did the master give to each of his servants? (Explain that the talents in this parable were sums of money. Take the eight coins out of your pocket, and give five to one student, two to the next student, and one to the third student.)
- What did each servant do with the money he had been given?

Invite the student with five coins to retrieve the additional five coins from one side of the room. Ask the student with two coins to retrieve the additional two coins from the other side of the room. Invite the student with one coin to hide or pretend to bury the coin.

Ask the students to return the coins to you and be seated. Write the following elements of the parable on the board (without the interpretations in parentheses):

The master of the servants (The Lord Jesus Christ)

The servants (The Lord's disciples)

The talents (The gifts and abilities the Lord gives His disciples)

- What might the elements of the parable represent? (Explain that some of the gifts and abilities we have in mortality were received and developed in our premortal life. We can choose to continue to develop those gifts and others in mortality.)
- According to Matthew 25:15, why did the master give each servant a different amount of money? (After students respond, point out that the phrase “according to his several ability” indicates that God gives each of us the gifts and abilities we need according to our circumstances.)

Read aloud the following questions, and invite students to ponder them:

- Which servant do you feel is most like you: the one given five talents, two talents, or one talent? Why?

Invite a student to read Matthew 25:19–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the master said to the servant who had received five talents.

- What did the master say to the first servant?

Explain that being made a “ruler over many things” and “enter[ing] . . . into the joy of thy lord” (Matthew 25:21) refer to fulfilling our divine potential and receiving eternal life with Heavenly Father.

- What principle can we learn from the first servant’s experience? (The following is one principle students may identify: **If we faithfully use the gifts and abilities the Lord has given us, then we can fulfill our divine potential and receive eternal life.**)

- What are some examples of how we can faithfully use the gifts and abilities the Lord has given us?

Point out that the second servant could have complained when he saw that the first servant had received five talents and he had received only two. Instead, he faithfully used the talents he had been given.

Invite a student to read Matthew 25:22–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the master said to the servant who had received two talents.

- What did the master say to the servant who had received two talents?
- Even though the master had given the first two servants different amounts of money, why do you think they both received the same response from their master?
- What principle can we learn from the experience of the man who was given two talents? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **The Lord will bless us if we faithfully use the gifts and abilities He has given us, regardless of how many we have or what they may be.** Using students' words, write this principle on the board.)

Ask the class to ponder if they have ever felt that someone else had more or better gifts and abilities than they had. Point to the principle you just wrote on the board.

- How can remembering this principle help us when we feel that someone else has received more or better gifts than we have?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"The growth in our own talents is the best measure of personal progress. . . . Comparing blessings is almost certain to drive out joy. We cannot be grateful and envious at the same time. If we truly want to have the Spirit of the Lord and experience joy and happiness, we should rejoice in our blessings and be grateful" ("Rejoice!" *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 29, 30).

- How can we discover the gifts and abilities that the Lord has given us?

Give each student a piece of paper and ask them to write their names at the top. Invite them to pass their papers to the student sitting next to them. Ask students to write a gift or ability they see in the person whose name is on the paper. Instruct them to continue passing their papers around the room and writing down gifts and abilities they have observed.

After a few minutes, ask students to return the papers to their original owners. Give students time to read about the gifts and abilities others see in them. Then ask them to write on their papers an answer to the following question:

- What is one way you can use one of your gifts to further the Lord's work?

Point out that the parable of the talents includes warnings about the gifts and abilities we have been given. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 25:24–30. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the master responded to the servant who hid the talent. After verse 27 is read, explain that *usury* means interest (income gained from investing or lending money).

- Why did the last servant hide his talent? How did the master respond to this servant's choice?
- Even though the servant had not lost any of his master's money, what was wrong with the servant's actions?
- How do you think the master would have responded to the servant if he had brought back two talents?
- What happened to the talent the master gave to the servant? (It was taken from him and given to another.)

Invite a student to read the following statement by Elder Sterling W. Sill of the Seventy. Ask the class to listen for why we lose gifts and abilities if we do not use them for good.



"[The third servant's] loss was not because he did anything wrong, but rather because his fear had prevented him [from] doing anything at all. Yet this is the process by which most of our blessings are lost. . . .

". . . When one fails to use the muscles of his arm he loses his strength. . . . When we don't develop our abilities, we lose our abilities. When the people

Cultivate a learning environment of love, respect, and purpose

When students know they are loved and respected by their teacher and other students, they are more likely to come to class ready to learn. The acceptance and love they feel can soften their hearts, reduce their fears, and instill the desire and confidence necessary to share their thoughts, experiences, and feelings in class.

in past ages have not honored the Priesthood, it has been taken from them. . . . Neither spiritual, mental nor physical talents develop while they are buried in the earth" (*The Law of the Harvest* [1963], 375).

- What principles can we learn from the servant who hid the talent? (Although students may suggest a variety of principles, make sure they identify the following truths: **Fear can prevent us from using the gifts and abilities the Lord has given us. If we do not develop and use our spiritual gifts for good, then we will lose them.**)
- In what ways can fear prevent us from doing good with our gifts and abilities?

Invite students to testify of the principles they have discussed. Encourage them to use their gifts and abilities to further the Lord's work.

Matthew 25:31–46

The Savior foretells the separation of the wicked from the righteous at His Second Coming



Display the picture *The Second Coming* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 66; see also LDS.org). Invite a student to read Matthew 25:31–33 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord will do with the people on the earth after His Second Coming.

- What will the Lord do with the people on the earth after His Second Coming?
- What animals did the Lord use to represent the wicked? The righteous?

Divide students into pairs. Invite half of the pairs to read Matthew 25:34–40 aloud together, looking for how the Lord will determine whether someone is a “sheep” (Matthew 25:32–33). Invite the other pairs to read Matthew 25:41–46 aloud together, looking for how the Lord will determine whether someone is a “goat” (Matthew 25:32–33).

After sufficient time, assign each pair to work with a pair that read a different passage. Ask students to summarize what they read and discuss the following questions in their groups:

- How does the Lord distinguish between those who love Him (sheep) and those who do not (goats)?
- What principle can we learn from these verses?

Invite someone from each group to write on the board the principle their group identified. Students should identify principles similar to the following: **As we love and serve others, we show our love for the Lord. As we neglect others' needs, we neglect the Lord.**

To help students understand these principles, ask questions similar to the following:

- How might the kind of person on the Lord's right hand treat his or her little sister who is asking for help with her homework?
- How might a person on the Lord's left hand treat a fellow student who drops his or her books in the hall?
- How can understanding these principles help us to improve our relationships with others?

Invite students to ponder how they have treated others in the past 24 hours. Invite them to consider whether they would choose to act differently if they were in a similar situation in the future. Encourage students to think of ways they can more frequently love and serve others, and invite them to act on their plan. You may want to follow up with students the next time you meet and invite them to report some of their positive experiences.

Supplemental Teaching Idea

Matthew 25:35–40. Video presentation—“The Coat”

To illustrate the concept of helping others in need as described in Matthew 25:35–40, consider showing the

video “The Coat” (2:08), which depicts an event from the childhood of President Heber J. Grant. The video is available on LDS.org. Invite students to watch the video, looking for whom the boy was serving.

LESSON 30

Matthew 26:1–30

Introduction

Two days before the Passover, Judas conspired with Jewish leaders who desired to kill Jesus. On the night of the Passover, Jesus instituted the sacrament.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 26:1–16

Judas conspires with Jewish leaders who desire to kill Jesus

Before class, prepare a table by covering it with a tablecloth and placing on it a few pieces of flatbread (or crackers) and a cup. After the devotional explain that during the time of Christ, these items, among others, would have been found on the Jews' tables during the Passover.

- What was the purpose of the Passover feast? (The Passover was instituted in Moses's time to remind the children of Israel that the destroying angel passed over their houses and slew the firstborn children in Egypt [see Exodus 12:21–28; 13:14–15]. As part of the Passover, the Israelites sacrificed a lamb and sprinkled its blood over their doorposts. This lamb symbolized the coming Messiah, whose atoning sacrifice would save mankind from death and sin [see Guide to the Scriptures, "Passover," scriptures.lds.org].)

Invite a student to read Matthew 26:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus said would occur after the Passover.

- What did Jesus say would occur after the Passover?

Invite a student to read Matthew 26:3–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify who was formulating a plan to kill Jesus at this time.

- Why did the scribes and chief priests decide to wait until after the Passover to kill Jesus?

Summarize Matthew 26:6–13 by explaining that while Jesus was in Bethany, a woman came to Him and anointed Him with very expensive ointment to acknowledge His impending death and burial. Some of His disciples, including Judas, one of the Twelve Apostles and the group's treasurer, complained that the ointment should have been sold to help the poor. However, Judas was not truly concerned for the poor but was a thief who wanted the money for himself (see John 12:4–6). (*Note:* The anointing of Jesus in Bethany is discussed more thoroughly in the lesson on Mark 11–14.)

Invite a student to read Matthew 26:14–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Judas did after the Savior chided him for complaining.

- What did Judas do? (He conspired with the chief priests to help them locate and arrest Jesus.)
- How much did the chief priests pay Judas to deliver Jesus to them?

Explain that "according to the law of Moses, thirty shekels of silver would compensate an owner for the death of a slave (see Exodus 21:32). . . . The betrayal price reflects the low regard Judas and the chief priests had for the Savior" (*New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 81). It also fulfilled an Old Testament prophecy of Judas's betrayal of the Savior (see Zechariah 11:12).

Matthew 26:17–25

Jesus and His disciples eat the Passover meal

Display a mirror and ask:

- What are some ways mirrors can be helpful to us?

Prepare each lesson with your students in mind

As you prepare to teach, consider how you hope students will apply doctrines and principles taught in the lesson. President Thomas S. Monson reminded gospel instructors that "the goal of gospel teaching . . . is not to 'pour information' into the minds of class members. . . . *The aim is to inspire the individual to think about, feel about, and then do something about living gospel principles*" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1970, 107).

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:



“Often we try to avoid looking deeply into our souls and confronting our weaknesses, limitations, and fears. . . .

“But being able to see ourselves clearly is essential to our spiritual growth and well-being. . . .

“May I suggest that the holy scriptures and the talks given at general conference are an effective mirror we can hold up for self-examination” (“Lord, Is It I?” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 58).

- How might the scriptures and the talks given at general conference be like a mirror?

As students study Matthew 26:17–25, invite them to look for a principle that can help them recognize their weaknesses and work to overcome them.

Summarize Matthew 26:17–19 by explaining that Jesus told His disciples to secure a room in Jerusalem for the Passover meal.

Invite a student to read Matthew 26:20–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus told His Apostles during the Passover meal.

- What did Jesus say to His Apostles?
- If you had been one of the Apostles, what might you have been thinking at this moment?

Invite a student to read Matthew 26:22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Apostles’ response to Jesus’s statement.

- What question did the Apostles ask?
- What does the question “Lord, is it I?” teach us about the eleven faithful Apostles?
- Based on this account, what principle can we learn about how disciples of Jesus Christ should respond when they hear the words of the Lord? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **When disciples of Jesus Christ hear the word of the Lord, they examine their own lives to see how it applies to them.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Uchtdorf:

“The disciples didn’t question the truth of what [Jesus] said. Nor did they look around, point to someone else, and ask, ‘Is it him?’

“Instead, ‘they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, *Lord, is it I?*’ [Matthew 26:22].

“I wonder what each of us would do. . . . Would we look at those around us and say in our hearts, ‘He’s probably talking about Brother Johnson. I’ve always wondered about him,’ or ‘I’m glad Brother Brown is here. He really needs to hear this message?’ Or would we, like those disciples of old, look inward and ask that penetrating question: ‘Is it I?’ (“Lord, Is It I?” 56).

- What are some examples of how we might be tempted to disregard the Lord’s words and assume they are meant for someone else?

Invite another student to read aloud the following statement by President Uchtdorf, and ask the class to listen for what President Uchtdorf invites us to do when we hear the words of the Lord:

“In these simple words, ‘*Lord, is it I?*’ lies the beginning of wisdom and the pathway to personal conversion and lasting change. . . .

“We must put aside our pride, see beyond our vanity, and in humility ask, ‘*Lord, is it I?*’

“And if the Lord’s answer happens to be ‘Yes, my son [or daughter], there are things you must improve, things I can help you to overcome,’ I pray that we will accept this answer, humbly acknowledge our sins and shortcomings, and then change our ways by becoming better” (“Lord, Is It I?” 56, 58).

- How have you been blessed as you have applied the words of the Lord and made changes in your life?

Testify of the principle students identified previously. Invite students to examine their own lives whenever they hear or read the words of the Lord and to act quickly on the promptings they receive.

Invite a student to read Matthew 26:23–25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior’s answer to the Apostles’ questions.

Explain that immediately after Jesus identified Judas as the one who would betray Him, Judas left (see John 13:30).

Matthew 26:26–30

Jesus Christ institutes the sacrament during the Passover

Display the picture *The Last Supper* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 54; see also LDS.org). Inform students that as the Savior ate the Passover meal with His Apostles, He instituted the ordinance of the sacrament.



Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals their answers to the following questions (you may want to write these questions on the board before class):

When you last partook of the sacrament, what were you doing? What were you thinking? What did you feel?

Hold up the cup and the bread displayed on the table. Invite a student to read Matthew 26:26–29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord did with the bread and the contents of the cup.

- What did the Lord do with the bread and the contents of the cup?
- According to these verses, what do these emblems of the sacrament represent? (Students should identify the following doctrine: **The emblems of the sacrament represent the body and blood of Jesus Christ, which He sacrificed for us.**)

Explain to students that the Joseph Smith Translation provides additional insight into these verses. Invite students to read silently the excerpt from Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 26:22 that is found in Matthew 26:26, footnote c. Also invite them to read Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 26:24–25 (in the Bible appendix). Ask students to look for what inspired changes were made to these verses, which can help us understand an important purpose of the sacrament.

- Why did Jesus Christ institute the sacrament? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament for us to remember Him and His Atonement for our sins.**)
- What are some things we can do to ensure the sacrament helps us remember Jesus Christ and His Atonement for our sins?
- How has trying to remember the Savior and His Atonement influenced your feelings and experiences while partaking of the sacrament?

To help students identify another principle, ask:

- According to verses 27–28, what does the shedding of Christ’s blood allow us to receive as we partake of the sacrament? (A remission of our sins.)

Point out that merely eating the bread and drinking the water during the sacrament does not automatically qualify us to receive a remission, or forgiveness, of our sins. We must exercise faith in Jesus Christ, repent, and partake of the sacrament with real intent by always remembering Him and striving to keep His commandments. By worthily partaking of the sacrament, we renew our baptismal covenants. Write the following truth on the board: **When we repent and partake of the sacrament with real intent, we can receive a remission of our sins.**

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how they will apply the truths concerning the sacrament that they have identified in Matthew 26. Invite a few students who feel comfortable doing so to share their responses with the class.

Invite a student to reread Matthew 26:29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for when the Savior said He would next partake of the sacrament. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that “the sacrament not only symbolizes the Savior’s Atonement but also looks forward in anticipation to the time when He will return to the earth in glory (see 1 Corinthians 11:26)” (*New Testament Student Manual*, 83). If we keep our covenants and endure to the end, we can be among those who partake of the sacrament with the Savior at this future time (see D&C 27:4–14).

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths identified in today’s lesson.

Home-Study Lesson

Matthew 23:1–26:30 (Unit 6)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Matthew 23:1–26:30 (unit 6) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Matthew 23)

Students studied Jesus's rebuke of Jewish leaders and learned that we can choose to obey God's laws even if we see others acting hypocritically. They learned that if we try to exalt ourselves above others, we will be abased, and if we are humble and serve others, the Lord will exalt us. They also learned that as we strive to become spiritually clean on the inside, it will be reflected in our outward choices, and if we are willing to be gathered by the Savior, then we will receive His care and protection.

Day 2 (Matthew 24)

From the Savior's discourse about His Second Coming, students learned the following: If we remain steadfast and are not overcome, then we will be saved. Before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the Lord's elect will be gathered and the gospel will be preached in all the world. If we treasure up the Lord's word, then we will not be deceived. Only Heavenly Father knows when the Savior's Second Coming will occur. If we watch for the signs and obey the Lord's commandments, then we will be prepared for the Savior's Second Coming.

Day 3 (Matthew 25)

As students studied the parable of the ten virgins, they learned that we cannot borrow spiritual preparation from others and that we prepare for the Second Coming by increasing our testimony and conversion through daily righteousness. They also learned that to be ready for the Lord's coming and be worthy to remain in His presence, we must come to know Him. Students briefly studied the parable of the talents and learned that fear can prevent us from using the gifts and abilities the Lord has given us, and if we do not develop and use our spiritual gifts for good, then we will lose them.

Day 4 (Matthew 26:1–30)

As students studied the final days of Jesus Christ's mortal ministry, they learned that when disciples of Jesus Christ hear the word of the Lord, they examine their own lives to see how it applies to them. They learned that the emblems of the sacrament represent the body and blood of Jesus Christ, which He sacrificed for us, and that Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament for us to remember Him and His Atonement for our sins. They also learned that when we repent and partake of the sacrament with real intent, we can receive a remission of our sins.

Introduction

As Jesus Christ taught His disciples about His Second Coming while on the Mount of Olives, He related the parable of the talents.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 25:14–30

Jesus Christ teaches His disciples the parable of the talents

Before class, place five coins on one side of the room and two coins on the other side. Place eight other coins in your pocket.

To begin the lesson, invite three students to come to the front of the class to help you act out a parable that Jesus Christ taught His disciples as part of His instruction concerning His Second Coming.

Invite a student to read Matthew 25:14–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what each servant received and what he did with it.

- What did the master give to each of his servants? (Explain that the talents in this parable were sums of money. Take the eight coins out of your pocket, and give five to one student, two to the next student, and one to the third student.)
- What did each servant do with the money he had been given?

Invite the student with five coins to retrieve the additional five coins from one side of the room. Ask the student with two coins to retrieve the additional two coins from the other side of the room. Invite the student with one coin to hide or pretend to bury the coin.

Ask the students to return the coins to you and be seated. Write the following elements of the parable on the board (without the interpretations in parentheses):

The master of the servants (The Lord Jesus Christ)

The servants (The Lord's disciples)

The talents (The gifts and abilities the Lord gives His disciples)

- What might the elements of the parable represent? (If needed, help students identify who and what the elements represent. Write the interpretations next to the elements on the board. Explain that some of the gifts and abilities we have in mortality were received and developed in our premortal life. We can choose to continue to develop those gifts and others in mortality.)
- According to Matthew 25:15, why did the master give each servant a different amount of money? (After students respond, point out that the phrase “according to his several ability” indicates that God gives each of us the gifts and abilities we need according to our circumstances. Everyone has been given a spiritual gift from God [see D&C 46:11]. Explain that the amount of talent we have been given is not an indication of our personal worth.)

Read aloud the following questions, and invite students to ponder them:

- Which servant do you feel is most like you: the one given five talents, two talents, or one talent? Why?

Invite a student to read Matthew 25:19–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the master said to the servant who had received five talents.

- What did the master say to the first servant?

Explain that being made a “ruler over many things” and “enter[ing] . . . into the joy of thy lord” (Matthew 25:21) mean fulfilling our divine potential and receiving eternal life with Heavenly Father.

- What principle can we learn from the first servant’s experience? (The following is one principle students may identify: **If we faithfully use the gifts and abilities the Lord has given us, then we can fulfill our divine potential and receive eternal life.**)
- What are some examples of how we can faithfully use the gifts and abilities the Lord has given us?

Point out that the second servant could have complained when he saw that the first servant had received five talents and he had received only two. Instead, he faithfully used the talents he had been given.

Invite a student to read Matthew 25:22–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the master said to the servant who had received two talents.

- What did the master say to the servant who had received two talents?
- Even though the master had given the first two servants different amounts of money, why do you think they both received the same response from their master?
- What principle can we learn from the experience of the man who was given two talents? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **The Lord will bless us if we faithfully use the gifts and abilities He has given us, regardless of how many we have or what they may be.** Using students’ words, write this principle on the board.)

Ask the class to ponder if they have ever felt that someone else had more or better gifts and abilities than they had. Point to the principle you just wrote on the board.

- How can remembering this principle help us when we feel that someone else has received more or better gifts than us?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“The growth in our own talents is the best measure of personal progress. . . . Comparing blessings is almost certain to drive out joy. We cannot be grateful and envious at the same time. If we truly want to have the Spirit of the Lord and experience joy and happiness, we should rejoice in our blessings and be grateful” (“Rejoice!” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 29, 30).

- How can we discover the gifts and abilities that the Lord has given us?

Give each student a piece of paper and ask them to write their names at the top. Invite them to pass their papers to the student sitting next to them. Ask students to write a gift or ability they see in the person whose name is on the paper. Instruct them to continue passing the papers around the room and writing down gifts and abilities they have observed.

After a few minutes, ask students to return the papers to their original owners. Give students time to read about the gifts and abilities others see in them. Then ask them to write on their papers an answer to the following question:

- What is one way you can use one of your gifts to further the Lord’s work?

Point out that the parable of the talents includes warnings about the gifts and abilities we have been given. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 25:24–30. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the master responded to the servant who hid the talent. After verse 27 is read, explain that *usury* means interest (income gained from investing or lending money).

- Why did the last servant hide his talent? How did the master respond to this servant’s choice?
- Even though the servant had not lost any of his master’s money, what was wrong with the servant’s actions?
- How do you think the master would have responded to the servant if he had brought back two talents?

Invite students to share their testimonies of the principles they have discussed. Encourage them to use their gifts and abilities to further the Lord’s work.

Next Unit (Matthew 26:31–Mark 3)

Explain that next week the students will study in detail the Atonement of Jesus Christ, which began with His suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane and continued through the unlawful trials, the mocking, the beatings, and His death through crucifixion, and finally ended with His glorious Resurrection.

LESSON 31

Matthew 26:31–75

Introduction

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus Christ began taking upon Himself the sins of all people as part of His Atonement. Judas betrayed Jesus to the Jewish leaders. Jesus was then illegally tried before Caiaphas, the high

priest, where false charges were brought against Him. Meanwhile, three times Peter denied knowing the Savior to those who identified him as one of Jesus Christ's disciples.



Mount of Olives



Garden of Gethsemane

Teaching about Jesus Christ's suffering in Gethsemane

There are three accounts of the events that occurred in Gethsemane. In this manual, the lesson for Matthew 26 focuses on the Savior's submission to the Father's will. The lesson for Mark 14 addresses what Jesus suffered in Gethsemane. The lesson for Luke 22 emphasizes the severity of His suffering. Teaching students these unique aspects of the Atonement can enable them to have distinctive experiences as they study each account.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 26:31–46

Jesus Christ suffers in the Garden of Gethsemane

Ask students to consider the following scenario: A young man has been told from his youth that it is his duty to serve a full-time mission. As a teenager, he still knows he should serve a mission but struggles with committing to go. He is more interested in other opportunities and worries that a mission will prevent him from having those experiences.

- In what other situations might the desires of young men and women differ from what Heavenly Father wants them to do? (List students' responses on the board.)
- Why can it sometimes be difficult to do what we know Heavenly Father wants us to do?

Invite students to look for principles in Matthew 26:31–46 that can help them when they struggle to obey Heavenly Father's will.

Remind students that as recorded in Matthew 26:1–30, the Lord ate the Passover feast with His Apostles and instituted the sacrament.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 26:31–35. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus prophesied would happen to His Apostles.

- What did Jesus say would happen to the Apostles that night?

Explain that in this context, the word *offended* means to fall or turn away or forsake.

- How did Peter and the other Apostles respond to what the Savior said?

Invite a student to read Matthew 26:36–38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for where Jesus and the Apostles went after the Passover feast. Invite students to report what they find.

Ask students to turn to Bible Photographs, no. 11, "Mount of Olives" and no. 12, "Garden of Gethsemane" in the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Bible. Explain that Gethsemane was a garden of olive trees located on the Mount of Olives just outside Jerusalem's walls and that the name *Gethsemane* means "oil press."

- What phrases in verses 36–38 describe how Jesus felt as He entered Gethsemane?

Invite a student to read Matthew 26:39 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Jesus did after going "a little further" into the garden.

- What words or phrases in verses 37–39 describe the difficult burden Jesus was experiencing?
- What did Jesus ask the Father to remove from Him?

Hold up a cup. Explain that the cup the Savior referred to was a symbol for the bitter suffering He experienced as part of the Atonement. In Gethsemane, Jesus began taking upon Himself the sins and suffering of all people as part of His great atoning sacrifice.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who explained what Jesus was asking the Father for when He asked for the cup to pass from Him:

"The Lord said, in effect, 'If there is another path, I would rather walk it. If there is any other way—any other way—I will gladly embrace it.' . . . But in the end, the cup did not pass" ("Teaching, Preaching, Healing," *Ensign*, Jan. 2003, 41).

You may want to suggest that students mark the phrase “nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (verse 39).

- Even though Jesus asked for a different way to accomplish the Father’s purposes, what did He do to accomplish the Atonement? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **Jesus Christ submitted His will to the Father’s will to accomplish the Atonement.**)
- What can we learn about Jesus from His willingness to submit to Heavenly Father’s will even though it meant He would endure intense suffering and eventual death?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *We follow Jesus Christ’s example when we . . .*

- How would you complete this statement based on what we have learned from Matthew 26:39? (Using students’ words, complete the statement so it conveys the following truth: **We follow Jesus Christ’s example when we choose to submit our will to Heavenly Father’s will.**)

Remind students of the scenario about the young man who hesitated to serve a mission, as well as the other situations listed on the board.

- How can the Savior’s example strengthen us in these situations?

Invite students to think of times when although their desires differed from Heavenly Father’s will, they ultimately chose to follow His will. Ask a few students to share their experiences and to explain why they made that choice and how they felt about it.

Encourage students to identify a specific way they will follow Jesus Christ’s example by submitting their will to Heavenly Father’s will.

Invite students to review Matthew 26:37–38, looking for the Savior’s instructions to Peter, James, and John in Gethsemane.

- What instructions did Jesus give to Peter, James, and John?
- What do you think was meant by the instruction to “watch with me”? (verse 38).

To help students understand why the disciples may have needed the Savior’s instruction to watch with Him, explain that when the disciples came to the garden, they “began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy, and to complain in their hearts, wondering if this be the Messiah” (Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 14:36 [in the Bible appendix]). By instructing His disciples to watch with Him, Jesus was warning them to be vigilant because their faith in Him would be tested.

- Why would the disciples wonder if Jesus really was the Messiah? (Many Jews did not understand that the Messiah would suffer and die but rather expected that the Messiah would liberate the Jews by overthrowing the Romans.)

Invite a student to read Matthew 26:40 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Jesus discovered that these three Apostles had been doing while He was praying. Invite students to report what they found. Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation of Luke 22:45 indicates that the disciples were sleeping, “for they were filled with sorrow.”

- Why might the Apostles have been filled with sorrow?
- How might you have felt if you had been in their position and realized you had fallen asleep rather than watched with the Savior?

Invite a student to read Matthew 26:41 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Jesus told His disciples to do. Invite students to report what they find.

- What principle can we learn from the Savior’s instructions to these Apostles? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we watch and pray continually, we will have strength to resist temptation.**)
- What do you think the phrase “the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (verse 41) means? How does this relate to resisting temptation?
- Recall that to “watch” means to be awake, alert, or vigilant. How can spiritually watching and praying help us overcome our weaknesses and resist temptation?

Invite students to ponder whether they, like the Apostles in Gethsemane, have ever given in to temptation because they failed to pray and be watchful. Ask them to consider how

that choice affected them. Invite students to ponder times when they resisted temptation by praying and being watchful.

- What has helped you be consistent in spiritually watching and praying?

Testify that we can resist temptation as we watch and pray continually. Invite students to write on a piece of paper one thing they will do to better watch and pray continually. Encourage them to carry the paper with them to remind them of their goal.

Summarize Matthew 26:42–46 by explaining that Jesus prayed three times in the Garden of Gethsemane. Each time, He expressed His willingness to obey His Father’s will.

Matthew 26:47–75


Jesus Christ is arrested and tried before Caiaphas

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Gerald N. Lund, who later became a member of the Seventy:



“Imagine [Jesus Christ,] the Being whose power, whose light, whose glory holds the universe in order, the Being who speaks and solar systems, galaxies, and stars come into existence—standing before wicked men and being judged by them as being of no worth or value!” (“Knowest Thou the Condescension of God?” in *Doctrines of the Book of Mormon: The 1991 Sperry Symposium*, ed. Bruce A. Van Orden and Brent L. Top [1992], 86).

Write *Matthew 26:47–68* on the board. Ask students to search these verses, looking for how Jesus Christ continued to submit to His Father’s will even when He was mistreated and judged by wicked men. Depending on your students’ needs, you could read these verses aloud as a class, divide students into pairs to read the verses aloud, or instruct students to read them silently.

 Instead of instructing students to read Matthew 26:47–68, you could show portions of the following videos from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos*: (1) “The Savior Suffers in Gethsemane” (time code 5:53–8:30), which depicts Jesus Christ being betrayed by Judas and arrested, and (2) “Jesus Is Tried by Caiaphas, Peter Denies Knowing Him” (time code 0:00–1:40), which depicts Jesus being tried by Caiaphas, smitten, and spat upon. These videos are available on LDS.org.

After sufficient time, ask the following question:

- How did Jesus Christ submit to Heavenly Father’s will even when He was mistreated and judged by wicked men?

Invite a student to read Matthew 26:53 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus said He could have done during these events.

- What could the Savior have done?
- Instead of asking for legions of angels or any other divine power to deliver Him, what did Jesus do?
- What does this teach you about the Savior’s willingness to do Heavenly Father’s will regardless of the circumstances?

Even though Jesus Christ had the power to destroy the men smiting Him and spitting on Him, He suffered and endured willingly (see 1 Nephi 19:9). The leaders and soldiers did not realize the infinite power Jesus could have called upon had it been the will of the Father that He do so.

Point out that as recorded in verse 56, the Savior’s prophecy that the Apostles would turn away from Him was fulfilled. However, this turning away was only temporary.

Summarize Matthew 26:69–75 by explaining that while Jesus was being tried after His arrest, Peter three times denied knowing Him. (*Note*: Peter’s denial will be covered more thoroughly in the lesson on Luke 22.)

Testify of the truths identified in this lesson.

LESSON 32

Matthew 27:1–50

Introduction

As part of the conspiracy to kill Jesus Christ, the Jewish leaders brought Jesus to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor. Pilate delivered Jesus to be scourged and crucified.

Jesus submitted to suffering and death to fulfill the will of His Father.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 27:1–25

Jesus is delivered to Pilate to be condemned to crucifixion

Ask students to consider the following question:

- If you could be an eyewitness to one scriptural event, which one would you choose?

Invite a few students to share their answers. Explain that during the lesson, students will study one of the most significant events in the history of the world. Invite students to imagine being eyewitnesses to what took place.

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *Today I saw and felt . . .*

Refer to the unfinished statement on the board, and explain that students will have an opportunity to complete the statement at the end of the lesson based on what they experience during their study of Matthew 27:1–50.

Remind students that when Jesus was arrested, “all the disciples forsook him, and fled” (Matthew 26:56). The high priest Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin charged Jesus with blasphemy—a crime that was punishable by death under Jewish law; however, under Roman rule, the Jews had no power to put someone to death for blasphemy. Therefore, the Jewish leaders sought to find an offense under Roman law by which Jesus would be punished by death.

Summarize Matthew 27:1–10 by explaining that Jewish leaders delivered Jesus to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea. When Judas saw this, he regretted his choice to betray Jesus, sought to return the money he had received from the Jewish leaders, and then ended his own life. Because the silver pieces were “the price of blood” (Matthew 27:6) and therefore not lawful to add to the treasury, the Jewish leaders used the money to purchase the potter’s field, where strangers (or foreigners) were to be buried. Matthew cited this event as a fulfillment of a prophecy found in Zechariah 11:12–13.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 27:11–14. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the accusation Jewish leaders made about Jesus before Pilate.

- According to verse 11, what question did Pilate ask Jesus?

Explain that Jewish leaders accused Jesus of treason, or trying to overthrow the Roman government, and claimed that Jesus declared Himself a king and sought to establish His own kingdom.

- According to verse 14, why did Pilate marvel greatly?

Ask students to ponder what they might have said to Pilate in defense of the Savior if they had had an opportunity to speak. Invite a few students to share their thoughts with the class.

Summarize Matthew 27:15–16 by explaining that each year during the Feast of the Passover, it was the custom of the Roman governor to pardon a convicted criminal. The people were permitted to select one prisoner to be released. One notable prisoner at the time of Jesus’s sentencing was a man named Barabbas, who had been convicted as a thief, a rebel against Roman authority, and a murderer.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 27:17–25. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Pilate asked the multitude of people who had gathered at the palace of the governor.

- According to verses 17 and 21, what did Pilate ask the multitude?

Read the scriptures together in class

Reading the scriptures together in class can help students become familiar with and better understand the verses they are studying and help them more confidently read the scriptures on their own. Encourage class scripture reading by asking students to take turns reading aloud from assigned passages. Do not embarrass students who do not read well or who may be shy. Those who prefer not to read aloud should not be forced to do so.

- What reasons might Pilate have had for offering to release Jesus instead of Barabbas?
- Why did Pilate finally release Barabbas and deliver Jesus to be crucified?

Matthew 27:26–50

Jesus is scourged, mocked, and crucified

Ask a student to read Matthew 27:26 aloud, and invite the class to look for what was done to Jesus before He was sent to be crucified.

- What does it mean to be scourged? (To be whipped repeatedly.)

You may want to display a small rock with a sharp or jagged edge and explain that a whip used for scourging often had sharp objects (such as pieces of rock, metal, or bone) woven into several of the strands. This kind of punishment was typically reserved for those who were servants, while persons of noble blood or freemen of Rome were beaten with rods. Many people did not survive being scourged because of the severe physical trauma it caused.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 27:27–32. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Roman soldiers did to Jesus.

- What did the Roman soldiers do to mock Jesus?
- Why do you think the soldiers found someone to carry Jesus’s cross for him? (Jesus would have been physically exhausted after experiencing unimaginable pain and losing great amounts of blood while suffering in Gethsemane and while being scourged.)
- Knowing that Jesus is the Son of God and Savior of the world, how would you have felt if you were compelled to carry Jesus’s cross?

Invite a student to read Matthew 27:33–34 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Jesus refused to do prior to being crucified.

- What did Jesus refuse to do? (Drink the substance offered to Him.)

Offering this drink was fulfillment of the prophecy found in Psalm 69:21. You may want to explain that vinegar “mingled with gall” (Matthew 27:34), or as Mark recorded, “wine mingled with myrrh” (Mark 15:23), was customarily offered as an anesthetic to ease the suffering of a person who was dying. By refusing to drink, Jesus deliberately chose not to dull His senses and showed determination to remain conscious through the remainder of His atoning sufferings.

Ask several students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 27:35–45, and ask the class to look for additional things people did to mock or tempt Jesus.

- How did the people mock or tempt Jesus?
- Knowing that Jesus had power to deliver Himself, why do you think He did not come down from the cross?

Invite students to read Matthew 27:46 silently, looking for what Jesus said while on the cross.

- What did Jesus say? (“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”)

To help students understand what happened in this moment, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“With all the conviction of my soul I testify that . . . a perfect Father did *not* forsake His Son in that hour. Indeed, it is my personal belief that in all of Christ’s mortal ministry the Father may never have been closer to His Son than in these agonizing final moments of suffering. Nevertheless, . . . the Father briefly withdrew from Jesus the comfort of His Spirit, the support of His personal presence” (“None Were with Him,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2009, 87–88).

- Why do you think Heavenly Father withdrew His Spirit from Jesus at this moment?

To help students identify a truth from verse 46, read the remainder of Elder Holland’s statement:

“It was required, indeed it was central to the significance of the Atonement, that this perfect Son who had never spoken ill nor done wrong nor touched an unclean thing had to know how the rest of humankind—us, all of us—would feel when we did commit such sins. For His Atonement to be infinite and eternal, He had to feel what it was like to die not

only physically but spiritually, to sense what it was like to have the divine Spirit withdraw, leaving one feeling totally, abjectly, hopelessly alone” (“None Were with Him,” 88).

- Based on Matthew 27:46 and Elder Holland’s statement, how would you summarize what the Savior experienced as part of the Atonement? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **As part of the Atonement, Jesus Christ felt the withdrawal of Heavenly Father’s Spirit.**)
- According to Elder Holland, why did Jesus Christ experience a withdrawal of the Spirit? (To feel what it is like to die spiritually.)


Explain that we experience spiritual death, or the withdrawal of Heavenly Father’s Spirit, when we sin. Testify that because Jesus Christ experienced spiritual death in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross, He can help us when we are separated from Heavenly Father’s Spirit because of our poor choices. He can also help us when we feel alone.

Invite students to read silently Matthew 27:50 and the excerpt from Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 27:54, found in Matthew 27:50, footnote *a*, looking for what else the Savior said while on the cross.

- According to the Joseph Smith Translation of this verse, why did Jesus suffer all that He did? (Students should identify the following truth: **Jesus Christ suffered to fulfill the will of Heavenly Father.**)

Remind students of the previous lesson, in which they studied Matthew 26 and learned about the Savior’s suffering in Gethsemane and His willingness to submit His will to that of the Father. You may want to suggest that students write Matthew 26:39 as a cross-reference in their scriptures next to Matthew 27:50 to help them remember that Jesus did what He promised to do.

- Why was the Father’s will for Jesus to experience the sufferings He did, beginning in Gethsemane and culminating on the cross?

 To review and help students feel the truth and importance of the events, doctrines, and principles they learned from Matthew 27, you may want to show the *Mormon Messages* video “None Were with Him” (4:25). This video includes a dramatization of the Savior’s Crucifixion and Resurrection and an excerpt from “None Were with Him” (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2009, 86–88), an April 2009 general conference talk given by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The video can be found on LDS.org.

Explain that one of the best ways to show the Lord our gratitude for what He suffered for us is by living righteously. Refer back to the incomplete statement you wrote on the board at the beginning of class: “Today I saw and felt . . .” Invite students to complete the phrase in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. After sufficient time, you may want to invite a few students to share what they wrote.

Commentary and Background Information

Matthew 27:26. What did it mean to be scourged?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained what it meant to be scourged:

“This brutal practice, a preliminary to crucifixion, consisted of stripping the victim of clothes, strapping him to a pillar or frame, and beating him with a scourge made of leather straps weighted with sharp pieces of lead and

bone. It left the tortured sufferer bleeding, weak, and sometimes dead” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:807).

On another occasion, Elder McConkie repeated that “many died from scourging alone, but [Jesus Christ] rose from the sufferings of the scourge that he might die an ignominious death upon the cruel cross of Calvary” (“The Purifying Power of Gethsemane,” *Ensign*, May 1985, 9–10).

LESSON 33

Matthew 27:51–28:20

Introduction

At the death of Jesus Christ, the veil of the temple was torn in two. Jewish leaders petitioned Pilate to guard the tomb where Jesus's body was laid. Jesus Christ was

resurrected and appeared to many individuals, including His Apostles. He commanded His Apostles to take the gospel to all the earth.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 27:51–56

After the death of Jesus Christ, the veil of the temple is rent and the earth shakes

Ask students to think about whether they or someone they know have had someone close to them pass away. Then ask the class:

- Why can losing a loved one be difficult?

Ask students to look for truths as they study Matthew 27:51–28:20 that will help them find comfort when a loved one passes away. To provide context for today's lesson, you might ask students to briefly summarize what Jesus Christ experienced between the time He was arrested and when He was crucified.

Invite a student to read Matthew 27:51 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened in the temple when Jesus died.

- What happened when Jesus died? (Invite students to look at Matthew 27:51, footnote *b*, to understand that “rent in twain” means “torn into two pieces.”)

Consider copying on the board the accompanying diagram of the interior of the temple.

Explain that during the time of Jesus, the temple had two rooms: the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. The Holy of Holies represented the presence of God. These two rooms were separated by a veil, or curtain. Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest passed from the Holy Place through the veil of the temple and entered into the Holy of Holies, where he sprinkled the blood of a sin offering to atone for the sins of all the congregation of Israel (see Leviticus 16). When the veil of the temple was torn in two at the death of Jesus Christ, it was a dramatic symbol that Jesus Christ, the Great High Priest, had passed through the veil of death and would shortly enter into the presence of God the Father.

To help students better understand the significance of the tearing of the veil, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“The Holy of Holies is now open to all, and all, through the atoning blood of the Lamb, can now enter into the highest and holiest of all places, that kingdom where eternal life is found. . . . The ordinances performed through the veil of the ancient temple were in similitude of what Christ was to do, which he now having done, all men become eligible to pass through the veil into the presence of the Lord to inherit full exaltation” (*Doctrinal New*

Testament Commentary, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:830).

- What important truth can we learn about the Atonement of Jesus Christ from the tearing of the veil? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can all enter the presence of God if we repent and keep our covenants.**)
- How does the Atonement of Jesus Christ make it possible for us to return to the presence of God?

Point out that although the Atonement of Jesus Christ makes it possible for us to return to God's presence, we must do our part to be worthy to dwell with our Heavenly Father eternally.



- What must *we* do to be worthy to dwell with Heavenly Father eternally?

Summarize Matthew 27:52–56 by explaining that after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, many righteous people who had died were also resurrected and appeared to many people in Jerusalem. These verses also relate that among those who witnessed Jesus’s death were a Roman centurion and many women.

Invite a student to read Matthew 27:54 aloud. Ask the class to look for how the Roman centurion and those who were with him responded when they witnessed the events following the Savior’s crucifixion.

- What was the response of the centurion and those who were with him?
- What did they see that may have caused them to declare that “truly [Jesus] was the Son of God”?

Matthew 27:57–66

Jewish leaders conspire with Pilate to guard Jesus’s sepulchre

Summarize Matthew 27:57–61 by explaining that after the death of Jesus, a rich disciple named Joseph of Arimathea “begged [asked for] the body of Jesus” (verse 58). He wrapped Jesus’s body in a clean cloth, placed it in a tomb (or sepulchre) he owned, and then covered the entrance of the tomb with a large stone.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 27:62–66. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the chief priests and Pharisees requested of Pilate.

- What did the chief priests and Pharisees request of Pilate?
- Why did they desire this?

Matthew 28:1–20

Jesus Christ is resurrected and appears to many

Explain that early on the first day of the week, or Sunday, Mary Magdalene and another woman named Mary came to the tomb to anoint Jesus’s body as an expression of their love and adoration. Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 28:1–6.

- What did the women find as they approached the sepulchre? (Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation clarifies that the women saw two angels, not one [see Matthew 28:2, footnote *a*].)
- How would you have reacted if you had seen two angels? How did the guards react?
- According to verses 5–6, what did the angels tell the women?
- What truth do we learn from these words? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead.**)

To help students understand the doctrine of the Resurrection, divide them into groups of two or three and invite them to complete the following handout in their groups:

“He is risen” (Matthew 28:6)

Study the entry titled “Resurrection” in the Bible Dictionary. Then discuss the questions below and record your answers in the spaces provided.

What is the difference between being brought back from the dead and being resurrected?	
What will happen to all humankind as a result of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ?	
How can understanding the doctrine of the Resurrection provide comfort for those who have lost loved ones?	

Ask a few students to share with the class what they learned by completing the handout. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley:



“The miracle of that resurrection morning, that first Easter Sunday, is a miracle for all mankind. It is the miracle of the power of God, whose Beloved Son gave His life to atone for the sins of all, a sacrifice of love for every son and daughter of God. In so doing He broke the seals of death. . . .

“And just as He took up His body and came forth from the tomb, even so shall all of us enjoy a reunion of body and spirit to become living souls in the day of our own resurrection.

“We rejoice, therefore, as do many, and as should all mankind, when we remember the most glorious, the most comforting, the most reassuring of all events of human history—the victory over death” (“The Victory over Death,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1997, 4).

Invite a student to read Matthew 28:7–10 aloud.

- According to verse 7, what did the angels command the women to do?
- Why do you think the women departed with “fear and great joy”?
- What happened to the women as they went to tell the disciples about their experience?

Summarize Matthew 28:11–15 by explaining that while the women were hurrying to bring the disciples news of Jesus’s Resurrection, the chief priests heard what had happened from the soldiers who guarded the tomb. The Jewish leaders were afraid that people might learn the truth, so they paid the guards to spread lies that the Savior’s disciples had taken His body from the tomb while the guards slept.

Ask a student to read Matthew 28:16–18 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for the blessing that came to the eleven Apostles when they obeyed the words of the women to go to Galilee.

- What blessing came to the eleven Apostles because they obeyed the words of the women?

Invite a student to read Matthew 28:19–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior commanded His Apostles to do after they saw Him.

- What were the Apostles commanded to do after they had seen the Savior?
- What can we learn from their experience about the responsibility we have as we gain a testimony of Jesus Christ? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **As we gain a testimony of Jesus Christ, we have a responsibility to testify of Him to others.**)


Invite students to come to the board and list ways we can testify of Jesus Christ to others. You may want to invite students to explain or give examples of the ideas they write. Then ask the following questions:

- According to verse 20, what promise did the Savior give His Apostles?
- In what ways has the Lord been “with you,” or helped you, in your efforts to share the gospel?

Encourage students to share their testimonies of Jesus Christ with others. To help them do so, ask students to use one of the ideas listed on the board to create a personal goal to testify of Jesus Christ and His gospel to family members, friends, and others. Invite students to write their goal in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

Scripture Mastery—Matthew 28:19–20

To help students memorize this scripture mastery passage, divide students into pairs and invite one member of each pair to write the passage on a piece of paper. Ask students to cut the paper into strips, leaving phrases from the scripture passage intact. Ask students to mix up the paper strips and then rearrange them in the proper order (referring to their scriptures as necessary). Challenge students to keep practicing until they no longer need to use their scriptures. Encourage students to remove one strip and recite the missing phrase from memory. After students have memorized one phrase, encourage them to remove another phrase and repeat both phrases from memory. Allow them to continue this process until they can recite the entire passage from memory.

 **Matthew 28:19–20** is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage. For an explanation of scripture mastery and a list of additional activities to help students master these selected passages, see the appendix of this manual.

INTRODUCTION TO

The Gospel According to St. Mark

Why study this book?

The book of Mark relates the ministry, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ in a fast-moving account that often focuses on the powerful deeds of the Savior. Foremost among these is the Atonement, which Mark emphasized as central to Jesus's mission as the long-promised Messiah. By studying Mark's account and testimony of how the Savior fulfilled His atoning mission, students can become more converted to the gospel and find courage to follow the Savior.

Who wrote this book?

Mark (also called John Mark) is the author of this book. Although Mark was not among the original disciples of Jesus Christ, he later converted and became an assistant to the Apostle Peter, and he may have written his Gospel based on what he learned from Peter (see Bible Dictionary, "Mark").

Mark and his mother, Mary, lived in Jerusalem; their home was a gathering place for some of the earliest Christians (see Acts 12:12). Mark left Jerusalem to help Barnabas and Saul (Paul) on their first missionary journey (see Acts 12:25; 13:4–6, 42–48). Paul later wrote that Mark was with him in Rome (see Colossians 4:10; Philemon 1:24) and praised Mark as a companion who was "profitable to [him] for the ministry" (2 Timothy 4:11). Peter referred to him as "Marcus my son" (1 Peter 5:13), suggesting the closeness of their relationship.

When and where was it written?

We do not know exactly when the Gospel of Mark was written. Mark likely wrote his Gospel in Rome between A.D. 64 and A.D. 70, perhaps shortly after the Apostle Peter suffered martyrdom in about A.D. 64.

To whom was it written and why?

The Gospel of Mark contains details—such as translated Aramaic quotations, Latin expressions, and explanations of Jewish customs—that seem intended for an audience made up primarily of Romans and people from other gentile nations, as well as those who had converted to Christianity, most likely in Rome and throughout the Roman Empire. Many believe

Mark may have been with Peter in Rome during a period marked by severe trials of faith for many members of the Church in locations throughout the Roman Empire.

One-third of Mark's Gospel recounts the Savior's teachings and experiences during the last week of His life. Mark bore witness that the suffering Son of God ultimately triumphed over evil, sin, and death. This testimony meant that the Savior's followers did not need to fear; when they faced persecution, trials, or even death, they were following their Master. They could endure with confidence, knowing that the Lord would help them and that all His promises would ultimately be fulfilled.

What are some distinctive features of this book?

Mark's Gospel begins suddenly and dramatically and maintains a fast pace, recounting events in quick succession. Mark frequently used the words *straightway* and *immediately*, giving the effect of rapid pace and action.

Even though over 90 percent of the material in Mark is also found in Matthew and Luke, Mark's account often includes additional details that help us more fully appreciate the Savior's compassion and the responses of people around Him (compare Mark 9:14–27 with Matthew 17:14–18). For example, Mark related the widespread enthusiastic reception the Savior received from those in Galilee and elsewhere early in His ministry (see Mark 1:32–33, 45; 2:2; 3:7–9; 4:1). Mark also carefully narrated the negative response of the scribes and Pharisees, whose opposition quickly increased from having skeptical thoughts (see Mark 2:6–7) to plotting to destroy Jesus (see Mark 3:6).

Among the important themes in Mark are the questions of who Jesus was and who understood His identity, as well as the disciple's role as one who must "take up his cross, and follow [Jesus]" (Mark 8:34). In addition, Mark is the only Gospel that relates the parable of the seed growing by itself (see Mark 4:26–27), the healing of a deaf person in the Decapolis region (see Mark 7:31–37), and the gradual healing of a blind man at Bethsaida (see Mark 8:22–26).

Outline

Mark 1–4 Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist and begins preaching, calling disciples, and working miracles. As opposition against Him increases, He teaches in parables.

Mark 5–7 The Savior continues to work many miracles, demonstrating His compassion for others. After John the Baptist is killed, Jesus feeds more than five thousand people and walks on water. Jesus teaches against false traditions.

Mark 8–10 Jesus Christ continues to work miracles. Peter testifies that Jesus is the Christ. The Savior prophesies three times of His suffering, death, and Resurrection, but His disciples do not yet fully understand His meaning. He teaches them about the humility and service required of His disciples.

Mark 11–16 During the last week of His life, the Savior enters Jerusalem, teaches His disciples, suffers in Gethsemane, and is crucified. Jesus Christ is resurrected.

Mark 1

Introduction

John the Baptist preached “the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins” (Mark 1:4). After John baptized Jesus, the Savior began to preach the gospel and

work miracles by divine power and authority. He cast out unclean spirits and healed a leper. His fame spread throughout Galilee.

Suggestions for Teaching

Mark 1:1–20

Jesus begins His ministry

A few days prior to class, ask two students if they will briefly share their testimonies of Jesus Christ in class. After the devotional, invite the two students to share their testimonies of the Savior. Afterward, ask the class:

- What is valuable about hearing testimonies from several individuals rather than from just one person?
- What do you think might be valuable about studying the testimony of Mark now that you have studied the testimony of Matthew?

Invite students to scan Mark 1:1–4, 9–11 silently, looking for the event with which Mark began his account of the Savior’s life.

- With what event did Mark begin his account?

Explain that Mark’s account of the Savior’s life is different from Matthew’s. It begins suddenly and is fast-paced, emphasizing the Savior’s divinity by focusing on His works and miracles. Mark likely wrote his account based on what he learned from the Apostle Peter.

Summarize Mark 1:12–20 by explaining that after Jesus fasted for 40 days, He was tempted by the devil. He also preached repentance in Galilee and called disciples to follow Him. (*Note:* These accounts were taught in depth in the lesson on Matthew 4.)

Mark 1:21–39

Jesus casts out devils and heals the sick

Write the phrase *Enemy Territory* on the board and ask students what dangers a soldier in enemy territory might face.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“You young people are being raised in enemy territory.

“We know from the scriptures that there was a war in heaven and that Lucifer rebelled and, with his followers, ‘was cast out into the earth’ [Revelation 12:9]. He is determined to disrupt our Heavenly Father’s plan and seeks to control the minds and actions of all” (“Counsel to Youth,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 16).

- In what ways is our life here on earth like being in enemy territory?


Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever felt overwhelmed because of the evil influences and temptations that surround them. As students study Mark 1:21–39, invite them to look for a truth that will help them when they face evil influences and temptations.

Invite a student to read Mark 1:21–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus did in Capernaum and how the Jews responded.

- Why were the Jews astonished at the Savior’s teachings?

- What do you think it means that Jesus taught “as one that had authority”? (Mark 1:22).

Explain that the scribes were considered experts in the law of Moses. When they preached they often quoted former authorities in the law (see *New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 103). In contrast, Jesus spoke with the power and authority of His Father and as the great Jehovah who gave the law of Moses (see Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 7:37 [in Matthew 7:29, footnote a]).

 Invite students to read Mark 1:23–26 silently, or show the class the video “Jesus Heals a Possessed Man” (1:48) from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos*, available on LDS.org. Ask the class to look for what happened as Jesus taught in the synagogue. Ask students to report what they find. Explain that “unclean spirit” refers to an evil spirit.

- What did the unclean spirit know about Jesus?
- How did the unclean spirit know who Jesus was? (The evil spirits that seek to possess physical bodies are Lucifer’s followers. They dwelt in the presence of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ before being cast out of heaven.)
- If you had been at the synagogue then, what would you have thought about Jesus?

Ask a student to read Mark 1:27–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the people responded after seeing Jesus cast the unclean spirit out of the man.

- How did the people respond?
- What does this account teach us about the Savior’s power? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **The Savior has power over the devil and his followers.**)
- How can knowing this truth help us when we feel overwhelmed because of the evil influences and temptations that surround us?

Invite a student to read the following statement by President James E. Faust of the First Presidency:



“[Joseph Smith] stated, ‘Wicked spirits have their bounds, limits, and laws by which they are governed’ [in *History of the Church*, 4:576]. So Satan and his angels are not all-powerful. . . .

“ . . . Satan’s efforts can be thwarted by all who come unto Christ by obedience to the covenants and ordinances of the gospel” (“Serving the Lord and Resisting the Devil,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1995, 6, 7).

- According to President Faust, what can we do to receive greater power to resist the devil?
- According to verse 28, what happened after the Savior cast out the evil spirit?

Summarize Mark 1:29–39 by explaining that the Savior healed Simon Peter’s mother-in-law of a fever, healed many others who were sick, and cast out many devils. Jesus continued to preach in Galilee.

Mark 1:40–45

Jesus heals a leper

Invite students to scan Mark 1:40 silently, looking for who came to the Savior as He continued to preach in Galilee. Ask students to report what they find. Invite a student to the front of the room. Ask students to imagine that the student at the front of the room has leprosy.

Explain that leprosy is a chronic disease that attacks skin, nerves, eyes, bones, and limbs. Left untreated, it leads to a painful death. In ancient times, it was believed that anyone who came in contact with lepers would contract the disease. Point to the student at the front of the room and ask:

- If (student’s name) were a leper living in ancient times, how might (he or she) be treated?

Explain that to protect a community’s health and well-being, lepers were forced to live outside the town. The law required them to call out “Unclean!” to warn anyone approaching them (see Bible Dictionary, “Leper”; Leviticus 13:44–46). Ask a few students to act out this scene by walking past the student who represents the leper. As they walk by, ask the student representing the leper to yell out “Unclean! Unclean!” Ask the students walking by how they would react in this situation. Then invite the students to be seated.

- How would having leprosy impact your life?

Invite students to imagine being lepers during the time of Jesus Christ. Ask them what they would do if they saw the Savior approaching.

- According to Mark 1:40, what did the leper do when he saw the Savior? (Explain that the word *beseeking* means begging or pleading.)
- How did the leper show his faith in Jesus Christ? How does the phrase “if thou wilt” imply the leper’s faith?

Invite students to read Mark 1:41–42 silently, looking for how the Savior responded to the man’s pleading.

- What impresses you about how the Savior responded to the man’s pleading?
- If you had been the leper, what would it have meant to you to be touched by the Savior? Why?
- How would your life have changed if Jesus Christ healed your leprosy?

Write the following statement on the board: *Leprosy can be likened to sin.*

To help students understand how leprosy can be likened to sin (see Leviticus 14), invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“Leprosy in biblical times, in addition to its desolating physical effects, was looked upon as the symbol of sin and uncleanness, signifying that as this evil disease ate away and destroyed the physical body, so sin eats away and corrupts the spiritual side of man” (*The Mortal Messiah*, 4 vols. [1979–81], 2:45).

- In what ways can leprosy be likened to sin? (In likening leprosy to sin, ensure that students understand that diseases are not necessarily caused by sin.)

Invite a student to reread Mark 1:40–42 aloud, this time substituting *sinner* for *leper* and *sin* for *leprosy*. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how we can liken this leper’s healing to being cleansed from sin.

- As you read the verses this way, what words suggest the idea of being forgiven?
- How can we liken what the leper did to be cleansed from leprosy to what we need to do to be cleansed from sin?
- What principle can we learn by likening the healing of the leper to being cleansed from sin? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **As we exercise faith and come unto the Savior, He will have compassion on us and cleanse us from sin.** Using students’ words, write this principle on the board.)
- In what ways must we exercise faith and come unto the Savior so He can forgive us of our sins?

Invite students to consider again what the leper’s life was like before and after he was healed.

- How can coming unto Jesus Christ to be cleansed from sin change someone’s life?
- When have you seen someone’s life change after he or she was cleansed from sin through Christ’s Atonement? (Caution students against mentioning individuals by name or identifying their past sins.)

Ask students to ponder what sins they need to be cleansed of. Invite students to come to the Savior by exercising faith in Him through prayer, repentance, and obedience so He can make them clean. Consider sharing your testimony of the cleansing power of the Savior’s Atonement.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Mark 1:43–45. Ask the class to look for the instructions the Savior gave the healed leper. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that the law of Moses required those healed of leprosy to show themselves to a temple priest and offer a sacrifice.

- What did the man do after the Savior warned him against telling others?
- What happened because the man spread the news of his healing?

Consider concluding the lesson by asking students what impressed them most about the actions of Jesus Christ recorded in Mark 1.

Likening the scriptures to ourselves

Likening the scriptures to ourselves means comparing them to our own lives. As students see the similarities between their own experiences and those recounted in the scriptures, they will be better able to identify doctrines and principles of the gospel. Students will also better see how they can apply these doctrines and principles in their lives.

LESSON 35

Mark 2–3

Introduction

Jesus forgave and healed a paralytic man and then called Matthew to follow Him. He taught the scribes and Pharisees about the Sabbath day. The Savior continued

to heal many people, sent forth His Apostles to preach, and warned against speaking blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

Suggestions for Teaching

Mark 2:1–12

Jesus forgives and heals a paralytic man

Invite students to imagine that someone they love is suffering from a life-threatening physical challenge that requires specialized treatment.

- Whom would you seek to help your loved one? Why?
- What would you be willing to do if there was only one doctor who could help but it was difficult to schedule an appointment with this doctor?

Summarize Mark 2:1–4 by explaining that in the village of Capernaum in Galilee, there was a man “sick of the palsy” (verse 3), which means he was paralyzed. Four other men carried this man to the house where Jesus was. When they found that the house was so crowded that they could not enter it, they disassembled part of the roof of the house and lowered the paralytic man into the Savior’s presence.

Ask a student to read Mark 2:5 aloud, and invite the class to look for what Jesus said to the man with palsy. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Mark 2:6–12. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened next.

- According to verses 6–7, how did “certain of the scribes” respond to the Savior’s words? (They were angered by His claim to grant forgiveness for sins.)
- What did Jesus ask the scribes?
- What did the Savior demonstrate and teach by healing this man? (After students respond, help them identify the following truth: **Jesus Christ has the power to heal us spiritually and physically.**)

Point out that when the scribes saw the man with palsy rise from his bed and walk, they were given undeniable evidence that Jesus Christ had power to heal the sick and they heard Him testify that He could forgive sins. However, there is no indication that these men approached Jesus thereafter and sought forgiveness for their own sins.

(Note: The events recorded in Mark 2:1–12 will be discussed in greater depth in the lesson for Luke 5.)

Mark 2:13–22

Jesus calls Matthew to follow Him and eats with publicans and sinners

Divide students into pairs and give each pair a piece of paper. Invite students to discuss the following question with their partners and to list their answers on their papers.

- What are some reasons why individuals might not seek the Lord’s forgiveness for their sins?

Ask a few students to report their answers, which might include the following: some individuals might not want to stop sinning; some might not want to acknowledge or confess their sins because of pride or embarrassment; others might hope the Lord will forgive them even if they do not repent; and some might believe the Lord has power to forgive, but they lack faith that He would forgive their particular sins.

Invite students to look for truths in Mark 2:13–22 that can encourage us to seek the Lord’s forgiveness.

Invite a student to read Mark 2:13–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior did after healing the paralyzed man.

- What did the Savior do after healing this man?
- How did Levi respond to the Savior’s invitation?

Explain that Levi also went by the name of Matthew and was the same Matthew who wrote the Gospel of Matthew. The phrase “sitting at the receipt of custom” (verse 14) means that Matthew was a publican and “a tax gatherer at Capernaum, probably in the service of Herod Antipas” (Bible Dictionary, “Matthew”). Many Jews hated publicans because they viewed publicans as traitors who collected money from their own people for the Romans.

- According to verse 15, what did Matthew do for the Savior and His disciples?
- Who else attended this feast?

Explain that during the Savior’s mortal ministry, sharing a meal meant much more than simply eating and drinking together. It indicated that a bond of friendship and peace existed among all the people who attended.

Invite a student to read Mark 2:16 aloud, and ask the class to look for how the scribes and Pharisees reacted when they saw the Savior eating with publicans.

- What did the scribes and Pharisees say?
- Why do you think they criticized Jesus for eating with publicans and sinners?

Ask a student to read Mark 2:17 aloud, and ask the class to look for the Savior’s response to the criticism of the scribes and Pharisees.

- What word did the Savior use to describe Himself? (Point out that by using the word *physician*, the Savior reaffirmed His power to heal both spiritually and physically.)
- How might the Savior’s response have helped the scribes and Pharisees understand why He associated with publicans and sinners?
- What truth can we learn from verse 17 about how the Savior responds to our sins? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **The Savior desires to help us repent of our sins and be healed.**)
- Why is it important to believe that Jesus desires to help us repent and be healed?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Craig A. Cardon of the Seventy:



“The Lord loves us and wants us to understand His willingness to forgive. . . . All of us, including those struggling to overcome addictive behaviors such as substance abuse or pornography and those close to them, can know that the Lord will recognize our righteous efforts and will lovingly forgive when repentance is complete” (“The Savior Wants to Forgive,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 16).

- How can we know that the Lord desires to help us repent and receive His forgiveness?

Invite students to ponder whether they are like the publicans and sinners (who acknowledged their need for the Savior and came unto Him) or like the scribes and Pharisees (who did not come unto the Savior to seek His forgiveness and healing power).

Testify of the Savior’s power and desire to heal us, and encourage students to seek His forgiveness through repentance when necessary.

Summarize Mark 2:18–22 by explaining that Jesus taught why His disciples did not fast while He was with them. He also taught why it was difficult for some people to accept His gospel. (*Note:* These teachings will be covered in greater depth in the lesson for Luke 5.)

Mark 2:23–3:6

Jesus teaches about the Sabbath

Ask students if they have ever chosen not to participate in an activity in order to keep the Sabbath day holy. Invite a few to share their experiences.

Write the following question on the board and invite students to ponder it as they continue to study Mark 2–3: *How do you know whether an activity is appropriate to do on the Sabbath?*

Divide the class in half. Invite one half to read Mark 2:23–28 silently. (Encourage these students to also read Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 2:26–27 [in the Bible appendix].) Ask the other half to read Mark 3:1–6 silently. Instruct students to look for what the Savior and His disciples did that the Sadducees believed was a violation of the commandment to keep the Sabbath day holy.

After sufficient time, ask the following questions:

- What did the Pharisees believe was unlawful for the Savior and His disciples to do on the Sabbath? (Plucking corn and healing someone.)
- Why would the Pharisees consider it a violation of God’s laws to pluck corn or heal someone on the Sabbath?

If necessary, remind students that Jewish teachers added their own rules and interpretations, called the oral law or tradition, to the law of Moses. These added rules were intended to prevent violation of God’s law, but they also prevented some people from understanding the true purpose of certain commandments, including the command to keep the Sabbath day holy.

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *We can keep the Sabbath day holy by . . .*

- How would you complete this statement based on the Savior’s teachings in Mark 2–3? (After students respond, complete the statement on the board so it conveys the following truth: **We can keep the Sabbath day holy by glorifying God and doing good works.**)
- In what ways can we glorify God on His holy day?
- What are some examples of doing good works on the Sabbath?

To help students understand how they can determine activities that are appropriate for the Sabbath, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President James E. Faust of the First Presidency:



“Where is the line as to what is acceptable and unacceptable on the Sabbath? Within the guidelines, each of us must answer this question for ourselves. While these guidelines are contained in the scriptures and in the words of the modern prophets, they must also be written in our hearts and governed by our conscience. . . . It is quite unlikely that there will be any serious violation of Sabbath worship if we come humbly before the Lord and offer him all our heart, our soul, and our mind. (See Matt. 22:37.)

“What is worthy or unworthy on the Sabbath day will have to be judged by each of us by trying to be honest with the Lord. On the Sabbath day we should do what we have to do and what we ought to do in an attitude of worshipfulness and then limit our other activities” (“The Lord’s Day,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 35).

- How have you felt blessed as you have tried to worship God and do good works on the Sabbath?

Encourage students to ponder one way they can better keep the Sabbath day holy and to write a goal to do so in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

Mark 3:7–35

Jesus heals many people, sends forth His Apostles to preach, and warns others about blasphemy

Summarize Mark 3:7–35 by explaining that Jesus went to the Sea of Galilee and healed many people who followed Him there, including some who had unclean spirits. After selecting twelve Apostles, Jesus ordained them and sent them forth to preach, heal, and cast out devils. He then warned the scribes about speaking blasphemy against the Holy Ghost and taught that His family are the people who do Heavenly Father’s will.

(Note: Some of the events recorded in Mark 3:7–35 were covered in greater depth in the lesson for Matthew 12:22–35.)

To conclude, you may want to testify of the truths identified in the lesson.

Ask questions that help students understand doctrines and principles

After students identify doctrines and principles, they must understand them before they can meaningfully apply them. Ask questions that will lead students to a clearer understanding of a particular doctrine or principle or that will encourage them to consider a principle in a modern context. Also invite students to explain their understanding of the doctrine or principle.

Home-Study Lesson

Matthew 26:31–Mark 3:35 (Unit 7)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Matthew 26:31–Mark 3 (unit 7) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Matthew 26:31–75)

As students studied Jesus’s suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane, they learned that Jesus Christ submitted His will to the Father’s will to accomplish the Atonement and that we follow Jesus Christ’s example when we choose to submit our will to Heavenly Father’s will. From the Savior’s instructions to the Apostles in Gethsemane, students learned that if we watch and pray continually, we will have strength to resist temptation.

Day 2 (Matthew 27–28)

From the account of the Savior’s Crucifixion, students learned that as part of the Atonement, Jesus Christ felt the withdrawal of Heavenly Father’s Spirit. They also learned that Jesus Christ suffered to fulfill the will of Heavenly Father, as He promised in Matthew 26. And as students studied the account of the veil of the temple tearing into two pieces at the death of the Savior, they learned that it symbolized the truth that because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can all enter the presence of God if we repent and keep our covenants.

Day 3 (Mark 1)

From the account of Jesus casting out an unclean spirit, students learned that the Savior has power over the devil and his followers. Students also learned that just as Jesus had compassion on and cleansed the leper, as we exercise faith and come unto the Savior, He will have compassion on us and cleanse us from sin.

Day 4 (Mark 2–3)

As students studied the forgiving and healing of the paralytic man, they learned that Jesus Christ has the power to heal us spiritually and physically. As they studied about Jesus dining with publicans and sinners, they learned that the Savior desires to help us repent of our sins and be healed. As they read about when the Pharisees condemned Jesus and His disciples for breaking the Sabbath, students learned that we can keep the Sabbath day holy by glorifying God and doing good works.

Introduction

Jesus Christ was resurrected and appeared to many individuals, including His Apostles. He commanded His Apostles to take the gospel to all nations.

Suggestions for Teaching

Matthew 28

Jesus Christ is resurrected and appears unto many

Ask students to think about whether they or someone they know have had someone close to them die. Then ask the class:

- Why can the death of a loved one be difficult for us?

Ask students to look for truths as they study Matthew 28 that will help them find comfort when a loved one dies.

Explain that early on the first day of the week—Sunday—Mary Magdalene and another woman named Mary went to the tomb where Jesus’s body was laid.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Matthew 28:1–6. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the women found as they approached the sepulchre.

- What did the women find as they approached the sepulchre? (Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation for these verses clarifies that the women saw *two* angels, not one [see Matthew 28:2, footnote a; see also John 20:12].)
- How do you think you would have reacted if you saw two angels?
- According to verse 4, how did the guards react?
- According to verses 5–6, what did the angels tell the women?
- What truth do we learn from these words? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead.**)

To help students understand the doctrine of the Resurrection, divide them into groups of two or three students and invite them to complete the accompanying handout in their groups.

“He is risen” (Matthew 28:6)

Study the entry titled “Resurrection” in the Bible Dictionary. Then discuss the questions below and record your answers in the spaces provided.

What is the difference between being brought back from the dead and being resurrected?	
What will happen to all human-kind as a result of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ?	
How can understanding the doctrine of the Resurrection provide comfort for those who have lost loved ones?	

Ask a few students to report to the class what they learned by completing the handout.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley:



“The miracle of that resurrection morning, that first Easter Sunday, is a miracle for all mankind. It is the miracle of the power of God, whose Beloved Son gave His life to atone for the sins of all, a sacrifice of love for every son and daughter of God. In so doing He broke the seals of death. . . .

“And just as He took up His body and came forth from the tomb, even so shall all of us enjoy a reunion of body and spirit to become living souls in the day of our own resurrection.

“We rejoice, therefore, as do many, and as should all mankind, when we remember the most glorious, the most comforting, the most reassuring of all events of human history—the victory over death” (“The Victory over Death,” *Ensign*, April 1997, 4).

Invite a student to read Matthew 28:7–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the women at Jesus’s tomb were told to do.

- According to verse 7, what did the angels command the women to do?
- Why do you think the women departed “with fear and great joy”? (Matthew 28:8).
- What happened to the women as they went to tell the disciples about their experience?

Summarize Matthew 28:11–15 by explaining that while the women were hurrying to bring the disciples news of Jesus’s Resurrection, the chief priests heard what had happened from the soldiers who guarded the tomb. The Jewish leaders were

afraid that people might learn the truth, so they paid the guards to spread lies that the Savior’s disciples had taken His body from the tomb while the guards slept.

Ask a student to read Matthew 28:16–18 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for the blessing that came to the eleven Apostles as they obeyed the message the women gave them and went to Galilee.

- What blessing came to the eleven Apostles because they obeyed the message to go to Galilee? (They saw the resurrected Lord.)

Invite students to stand and read Matthew 28:19–20 out loud together. Remind them that this is a scripture mastery passage.

Ask the class to review verses 19–20, looking for what the Savior commanded His Apostles to do after they saw Him.

- What were the Apostles commanded to do after they had seen the Savior?
- What can we learn from their experience about the responsibility we have as we gain a testimony of Jesus Christ? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **As we gain a testimony of Jesus Christ, we have a responsibility to testify of Him to others.**)

Remind students that as part of their home-study lesson on Matthew 27–28, they listed ways they could testify of Jesus Christ to others (assignment 3 in the Unit 7: Day 2 lesson). Invite students to share what they wrote and to explain and give examples of their ideas. You may want to list their ideas on the board.

- According to Matthew 28:20, what promise did the Savior give His disciples?
- In what ways has the Lord been “with you,” or helped you, in your efforts to share the gospel?

Consider inviting students to share their testimonies of Jesus Christ with the class, in small groups, or in pairs. You may also want to share your testimony of Jesus Christ with the class. Remind students that they also wrote a goal in their scripture study journal assignment regarding how they will testify to others of Jesus Christ. Invite a few students to share their goals with the class.

Next Unit (Mark 4–9)

Explain to students that in the next unit they will learn more about the miracles Jesus Christ performed, such as walking on water, casting out devils from a man, and raising a young girl from the dead. Ask students if they have ever been in a severe storm and how they felt during it. Invite them to consider whether they have ever felt like they have had severe storms or challenges in their personal lives. Invite them, as they study Mark 4–9 during the coming week, to look for ways to find peace amidst challenging times.

Mark 4–5

Introduction

On the shores of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus taught His disciples using parables. While on the sea, the Savior calmed a storm. Jesus demonstrated His superiority over devils by

casting them out of a man. While ministering in Capernaum, He healed a woman with an issue of blood and raised Jairus's daughter from the dead.

Suggestions for Teaching

Mark 4

Jesus uses parables to teach about the kingdom of God and then calms a storm

Invite students to consider the worst storm they have been in. Ask a few students to briefly describe their experiences.

- How are life's challenges like a storm?

Write the following words on the board (leaving space under each word): *Physical, Spiritual, Mental, Social*. Ask the following question as it applies to each word on the board:

- What are some examples of physical (or spiritual, mental, or social) storms youth experience? (List students' responses under the corresponding words on the board.)

Invite students as they study Mark 4–5 to look for principles that can help them when they experience life's storms.

Summarize Mark 4:1–34 by explaining that while on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, the Savior taught several parables to a multitude.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Mark 4:35–38. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the challenge the disciples experienced as they crossed the Sea of Galilee.

- What problem arose while the Savior and His disciples crossed the Sea of Galilee?

Explain that the Sea of Galilee is 700 feet below sea level and is surrounded on three sides by mountains. At times, cool, dry winds rush down the mountains and collide with warm, moist air over the Sea of Galilee, creating sudden, intense storms—sometimes in a matter of minutes—with large waves on this relatively small body of water.

- What effect did the storm have on the ship?
- If you were in a ship in these conditions, what thoughts and feelings might you have?
- Whom did the disciples seek help from at this fearful time? What did they ask the Savior?
- In what ways might we be tempted to respond as Jesus's disciples did during our own storms of life?

Invite a student to read Mark 4:39 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior responded to the disciples' plea for help. Ask them to report what they find. You may want to suggest that students mark the phrases "Peace, be still" and "great calm" (verse 39).

- If we seek the Lord's help in times of trouble or fear, what can He do for us? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we seek the Lord's help in times of trouble or fear, He can bring us peace.**)
- In what ways can we seek the Lord's help in times of trouble or fear? (We can pray to Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ. Our prayers may not be answered in the ways we expect. However, we will be blessed with peace as we seek the Lord's help.)

Invite a student to read Mark 4:40–41 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the disciples asked about Jesus.

- If you had been with the disciples, how might you have answered their question in verse 41?



The Sea of Galilee and Mount Arbel

- How can understanding “what manner of man” (verse 41) Jesus is strengthen our faith and move us to seek His help in times of trouble or fear?

If possible, invite students to read the words of the hymn “Master, the Tempest Is Raging” (*Hymns*, no. 105). Emphasize that Jesus Christ has the power to calm not only physical storms but also personal storms within our hearts.

Invite a few students to share about a time when they sought the Lord’s peace during a storm of life and He alleviated their fears and comforted them.

Consider inviting students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they can do to seek the Lord’s help during their challenges.

Mark 5:1–20

Jesus heals a man by casting devils out of him

Summarize Mark 5:1–18 by explaining that Jesus healed a man full of “unclean,” or evil, spirits. After these unclean spirits had been cast out of the man, they entered a herd of swine, which then violently ran off a cliff into the sea. The man then sought to enter the ship where Jesus was.

Invite a student to read Mark 5:19–20 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior instructed this man to do.

- What did the Savior instruct this man to do?
- How did the man respond?
- What principle can we learn from this story about what we can do when we experience the Savior’s power in our lives? (Help students identify the following principle: **When we experience the Savior’s power in our lives, we can testify to others of His blessings and compassion.**)

Invite students to consider ways in which they could help others by testifying of the Savior’s blessings and compassion.

Mark 5:21–43

Jesus heals a woman with an issue of blood and raises Jairus’s daughter from the dead

Ask a student to read aloud the following account told by Elder Shayne M. Bowen of the Seventy:



“On February 4 of 1990, our third son and sixth child was born. We named him Tyson. . . .

“When Tyson was eight months old, he aspirated a piece of chalk that he had found on the carpet. The chalk lodged in Tyson’s throat, and he quit breathing. His older brother brought Tyson upstairs, frantically calling, ‘The baby won’t breathe. The baby won’t breathe.’ We began to administer CPR and called 911.

“The paramedics arrived and rushed Tyson to the hospital. In the waiting room we continued in fervent prayer as we pled to God for a miracle. After what seemed a lifetime, the doctor came into the room and said, ‘I am so sorry. There is nothing more we can do. Take all the time you need.’ She then left” (“Because I Live, Ye Shall Live Also,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 16).

- If Tyson had been your brother, what would you think or do at that moment?
- How might an experience like this test someone’s faith?

Invite a student to read Mark 5:21–24 aloud. Invite students to follow along, looking for how a ruler named Jairus faced a similar challenge that may have tested his faith.

- Why did Jairus seek the Savior’s help?

Invite a student to read Mark 5:25–26 aloud, and ask the class to look for who else needed the Savior’s help.

Explain that although the New Testament accounts do not define the nature of the woman’s “issue of blood” (verse 25), we know it was personally troubling to her. Furthermore, under the law of Moses, someone with an issue of blood was considered ritually unclean (see Leviticus 15:19–33). This likely meant that this woman was ostracized and excluded during the 12 years of her ailment. The desperation she felt about her situation is evident in the fact that she “had spent all that she had” (Mark 5:26) seeking a cure from physicians.

Determine pacing

Avoid the mistake of taking too much time on the first part of the lesson and having to rush through the rest of it. As you prepare, estimate how long each section of the lesson will take using the teaching methods you have chosen. Because you will almost always have more material to teach than there is time to teach it, determine which portions of the scripture block to emphasize and which to summarize.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Mark 5:27–34. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what this woman did to receive the Savior’s help.

- What did this woman do that demonstrated her faith in Jesus Christ? (You might explain that the phrase “came in the press behind” [verse 27] refers to her struggle to break through the crowd of people who surrounded the Savior.)
- What can we learn from this account about what we must do if we desire to be made whole? (Help students identify the following principle: **If we demonstrate our faith in Jesus Christ through our efforts to come to Him, He can make us whole.**)

Point out that becoming whole from any infirmity through faith in Jesus Christ depends not only on our efforts to come to Him but also on God’s timing and will.

Invite students to read Mark 5:35 silently, looking for the message that was brought to Jairus as the Savior stopped to help this woman.

- What news did Jairus receive?
- If you had been in Jairus’s position, what thoughts or feelings might you have had at that moment?

Ask a student to read Mark 5:36 aloud, and invite the class to look for what the Savior said to Jairus.

- What did the Savior say that may have sustained Jairus’s faith?

To emphasize what we learn about faith from this story, write the following truth on the board: **Exercising faith in Jesus Christ requires us to continue believing in Him even in times of uncertainty.**

- In what ways can we apply this principle in our lives?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Mark 5:37–43. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Jairus’s daughter.

- What miracle did the Savior perform?

You may want to testify of the Savior’s power to bless and heal us. Point out that sometimes the Savior calms the storms in our lives by removing the difficulty or fear we experience. At other times, He might not remove our trial, as illustrated in Elder Bowen’s account of the death of his son. However, as we exercise faith in Jesus Christ, He will give us peace during our challenges.

To help students understand how we can maintain faith regardless of the outcomes of our personal storms, read the following testimony of Elder Bowen. Invite students to listen for how he was able to maintain his faith even after his son died.



“As I felt the guilt, anger, and self-pity trying to consume me, I prayed that my heart could change. Through very personal sacred experiences, the Lord gave me a new heart, and even though it was still lonely and painful, my whole outlook changed. I was given to know that I had not been robbed but rather that there was a great blessing awaiting me if I would prove faithful. . . .

“I testify that . . . ‘as we rely on the Atonement of Jesus Christ, He can help us endure our trials, sicknesses, and pain. We can be filled with joy, peace, and consolation. All that is unfair about life can be made right through the Atonement of Jesus Christ’ [*Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004), 52]” (“Because I Live,” 17).

- Like Jairus, when have you or someone you know maintained faith in Jesus Christ during a time of uncertainty? What blessings came as a result?

Consider inviting students to testify of the truths taught in this lesson.

Commentary and Background Information

Mark 5:30. “Virtue had gone out of him”

Some translations of Mark 5:30 state that “virtue” went out of Jesus Christ when the woman was healed. In the

original Greek text of the New Testament, the word corresponding to *virtue* is *dynamis*, which means “power” or “strength.”

LESSON 37

Mark 6

Introduction

Jesus was rejected in His hometown of Nazareth. He sent forth the Twelve Apostles to preach the gospel. John the Baptist was killed by order of Herod Antipas.

Jesus miraculously fed a multitude of more than five thousand people, walked on water, calmed a storm, and healed the sick.

Suggestions for Teaching

Mark 6:1–29

Jesus is rejected in Nazareth and sends forth the Twelve; John the Baptist's death is recounted

Begin class by inviting students to think about the last time they felt pressure to do something that they knew was not right.

Write the following statement on the board (this statement is found in “Making the Right Choices,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 37):

“Individuals who do wrong want you to join them because they feel more comfortable in what they are doing when others do it also” (Richard G. Scott).

- What are some examples of how others may try to pressure you to do something that you know is wrong?

Invite students to look for a truth as they study Mark 6 that can help them avoid giving in to negative peer pressure.

Summarize Mark 6:1–16 by explaining that Jesus preached in His hometown of Nazareth. However, because of the people’s unbelief He did not perform many miracles among them. While there, Jesus sent the Twelve Apostles out two by two to preach the gospel. While preaching the gospel, they also cast out devils and healed the sick. When Herod heard about the many miracles that Jesus performed, he feared that John the Baptist had risen from the dead and was performing these miracles.

Explain that Mark 6:17–29 provides an account of what had happened to John the Baptist. Invite a student to read Mark 6:17–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Herod had done to John the Baptist.

- According to these verses, what had Herod done to John and why?

Explain that the Herod mentioned in these verses is Herod Antipas, who governed the regions of Galilee and Perea following the death of his father, Herod the Great. Herod Antipas had divorced his wife and married Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. This act was a blatant violation of Jewish law (see Leviticus 18:16), and John the Baptist had vocally condemned it. John’s opposition to this marriage angered Herodias, so Herod imprisoned John to appease her.

Invite a student to read Mark 6:19–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Herodias wanted to do with John the Baptist.

- What did Herodias want to do with John the Baptist?
- Why couldn’t she have him killed? (Because Herod feared John and knew him to be a man of God; see also Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 6:21 [in Mark 6:20, footnote b] for more about how Herod felt about John the Baptist.)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Mark 6:21–29. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Herod did to John the Baptist.

- According to verse 26, how did Herod feel about killing John the Baptist?
- Why did Herod have John beheaded if he knew it was wrong and did not want to do it? (You may want to suggest that students mark the phrase “for their sakes which sat with him,” which indicates Herod was concerned about the opinion of those who sat with him.)

- What principle can we learn from Herod’s choices about what happens when we try to please others instead of doing what is right? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **Seeking to please others instead of doing what we know is right can lead to wrong choices, sorrow, and regret.**)

To help students further understand this truth, put them in groups of two to four and ask them to come up with several examples of situations in which youth must choose between seeking to please others and doing what they know is right. After sufficient time, invite each group to report. As they do, write some of their examples on the board.

- In what ways have you seen that giving in to pressures like these examples brings sorrow and regret?
- When have you seen someone choose to do what was right instead of seeking to please others?
- What can help us choose to do what we know is right instead of seeking to please others?

Invite students to ponder their upcoming week and identify possible situations in which they may need to choose between pleasing others and doing what is right. Encourage them to plan how they will respond to this pressure should they experience it.

Mark 6:30–44

Jesus miraculously feeds more than five thousand people

Invite students to consider the following situation: A newly called missionary is very nervous to depart on his or her mission. This person is not a good speaker and struggles in social settings.

- What would you tell this young missionary?


Invite students to look for a principle as they study Mark 6:30–44 that could help this young missionary and all of us when we feel inadequate to do what the Lord has asked of us.

Summarize Mark 6:30–33 by explaining that the Twelve Apostles returned from preaching the gospel and reported to Jesus what they had done and taught. Jesus and the Twelve Apostles boarded a ship to travel to a place where they could be alone and rest. However, people from several nearby towns went to where Jesus would land and were awaiting Him when He arrived.

Invite a student to read Mark 6:34 aloud, and ask the class to look for how the Savior responded to the multitude.

- What do you think the phrase “they were as sheep not having a shepherd” means?

Explain that after teaching the multitude all day, the Savior performed a great miracle. To help students understand this miracle, group them in pairs and give each pair a copy of the following handout. Invite each pair to read together Mark 6:35–44 and Matthew 14:18 and then number the events on the handout in chronological order.

 Instead of having students read this account in the scriptures, you could show the video “The Feeding of the 5,000” (2:52) from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos* and ask students to number the events on the handout in chronological order based on what they see in the video. This video is available on LDS.org.

The Feeding of the 5,000

- ___ The Savior multiplied what the disciples brought, meeting and surpassing what was needed.
- ___ The disciples said they had five loaves and two fishes.
- ___ The disciples proposed sending the people away to buy food.
- ___ The Savior asked what the disciples could provide.
- ___ The Savior told the disciples to give the people food.
- ___ The multitude had nothing to eat.
- ___ The Savior asked the disciples to give Him what they had.

After students have had sufficient time to complete this activity, review the answers as a class. (The correct sequence of answers is 7, 5, 2, 4, 3, 1, 6.)

- How many people were fed? (Explain that the Greek text of Mark 6:44 makes clear that the phrase “five thousand men” meant five thousand adult males. Thus, the number fed was likely greater, considering that women and children were also present [see also Matthew 14:21].)

Point out that before performing this miracle, the Savior first asked His disciples to offer the five loaves and two fishes—which was all that they had—to Him.

- What principle can we learn from this miracle about what the Savior can do when we offer Him all that we have? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **When we offer the Savior all that we have, He can magnify our offering to accomplish His purposes.** Write this principle on the board.)

To help students understand this principle, remind them of the situation of the nervous, newly called missionary mentioned earlier.

- Despite the weaknesses of this young man or woman, what might the Savior ask this missionary to bring to Him? (The Savior invites all who seek to accomplish His purposes to give Him all of their desires, abilities, talents, skills, strengths, gifts, and efforts [see Omni 1:26; 2 Nephi 25:29].)
- What would be the result if this missionary gave all he or she had to the Savior?
- What are some other situations a young member of the Church might face where knowing this principle would be helpful?

Invite students to ponder and write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how the Lord has magnified their efforts to enable them to do what He has asked of them. Consider inviting a few students to share with the class what they wrote, if they feel comfortable doing so.

Share your testimony that when we offer the Savior all that we have, He can magnify our offering to accomplish His purposes. Encourage students to apply this principle in their lives.

Writing on the board

By using the board effectively during the lesson, you can prepare students to learn and invite meaningful participation, especially from those who tend to learn visually. On the board, you can outline the major points or principles of the lesson, diagram a doctrine, draw maps, develop flow charts, display or draw pictures of things found in the scriptures, or do many other activities that will enhance learning.

Mark 6:45–56

Jesus walks on water and heals the sick

Summarize Mark 6:45–56 by explaining that after Jesus fed the five thousand, He instructed His disciples to enter a ship and sail to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. He then sent the multitudes away. During the night a storm arose, and the Savior watched from a mountain as His disciples struggled but made no progress in their journey. He then walked on the water to them, the storm calmed, and they arrived safely on the other side of the Sea of Galilee.

- In this case, how did the Lord’s power enable the disciples to accomplish what He had instructed them to do?

Consider concluding the lesson by inviting willing students to share their feelings or testimonies of the truths discussed today.

Commentary and Background Information

Mark 6:35–44. The feeding of the five thousand

President James E. Faust of the First Presidency taught that the Savior’s power to multiply the loaves and fishes shows that He will magnify our faithful efforts to serve in His Church, even if we feel that our efforts are equal to only a few loaves and fishes:

“Many nameless people with gifts equal only to five loaves and two small fishes magnify their callings [in the Church] and serve without attention or recognition, feeding literally thousands. . . . These are the hundreds of thousands of leaders and teachers in all

of the auxiliaries and priesthood quorums, the home teachers, the Relief Society visiting teachers. These are the many humble bishops in the Church, some without formal training, but greatly magnified, always learning, with a humble desire to serve the Lord and the people of their wards. . . .

“A major reason this church has grown from its humble beginnings to its current strength is the faithfulness and devotion of millions of humble and devoted people who have only five loaves and two small fishes to offer in the service of the Master” (“Five Loaves and Two Fishes,” *Ensign*, May 1994, 5, 6).

Mark 7–8

Introduction

Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for their false traditions. He then compassionately healed a child possessed by a devil, as well as a man who was deaf and had a speech

impediment. He fed four thousand people near the Sea of Galilee and traveled to Bethsaida, where He healed a blind man in stages.

Suggestions for Teaching

Mark 7

Jesus rebukes the Pharisees, heals a child possessed by a devil, and heals a deaf man

Before class, give three students the following instructions. Student 1: “When directed to do so, walk around the class without a coat and pretend to be shivering.” Student 2: “When directed to do so, go around the room and ask if anyone has seen your family’s lost pet.” Student 3: “When directed to do so, unzip your backpack so that items might fall out when you walk.” (You could adapt this activity by using other situations that show students in need, but be careful not to use too much time.)

When class begins, direct the students to complete these instructions one at a time. Ask the class to look for what these three situations have in common.

- What do these situations have in common? (Each of these situations represents someone who is in need.)
- How often do we have opportunities to help others in need? What are some opportunities you have seen lately?

Encourage students as they study Mark 7–8 to look for what the Savior teaches us to do when we notice someone in need.

Summarize Mark 7:1–30 by explaining that the Savior rebuked the Pharisees for following incorrect traditions. He also healed a Greek woman’s daughter, who was possessed by a devil. Remind students that at this time, the Savior’s mission was to the house of Israel, not the Gentiles, yet He compassionately helped this Gentile woman who importuned Him.

Invite students to locate the cities of Tyre and Sidon and the Sea of Galilee on Bible Maps, no. 11, “The Holy Land in New Testament Times.” Explain that after the Savior left Tyre and Sidon, He traveled to the east side of the Sea of Galilee, to the region of Decapolis.

Divide students into pairs. Invite them to read Mark 7:31–37 aloud together, looking for how the Savior showed compassion to a man in Decapolis. After sufficient time, ask students to discuss the following questions with their partners:

- What conditions did this man seek to be healed of?
- What did the Savior do before He healed the man?

To help students understand the Savior’s actions, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“The Lord is dealing with a believing soul who cannot hear his words or give fluent answer to them. And so what is more natural than to make use of common signs, known to and understood by the deaf and speech inhibited man, to indicate what the Master could and would do . . . ?” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:373).

- What can the Savior’s actions in this situation teach us about His character?

Explain that despite the Savior’s warning to those He healed to not publish His miracles, people in the Decapolis region still heard about the wonderful things the Savior had done, and great multitudes gathered to Him (see Mark 7:36–37).

Mark 8:1–21

Jesus feeds more than four thousand people

Invite students to respond to the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- When has someone noticed that you needed help and done something to help you?

Explain that later in the lesson students who would like to share their experiences will have an opportunity to do so.

Invite a student to read Mark 8:1–3 aloud. Ask students to follow along and look for the problem that arose because of the multitude that followed Jesus.

- What problem arose for the multitude? Who perceived the multitude’s need?
- What did the Savior worry might happen if the people tried to return to their homes without eating first?
- According to verse 2, how did the Savior feel toward the multitude? (You may want to suggest that students mark the phrase “I have compassion on the multitude,” which indicates the Savior felt sympathy and concern for the people.)

Invite two students to take turns reading aloud from Mark 8:4–9. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what resulted from the Savior’s compassion.

- What did the Savior do for the multitude?
- How many people were fed?
- What can we learn from the Savior’s example in this account? (Help students identify the following principle: **We can follow the Savior’s example by perceiving the needs of others and then helping to fulfill those needs.** Write this principle on the board.)

To help students understand this principle, explain that Sister Linda K. Burton, Relief Society general president, taught that in order to follow the Savior’s example in serving God’s children, we need to “first observe, then serve” (“First Observe, Then Serve,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 78). Write this phrase on the board under the principle.

- How can we learn to be more observant of others’ needs? (Consider pointing out that some needs may not be immediately apparent. However, we can pray and ask for help in noticing the needs of others and focus our thoughts on others rather than ourselves.)
- What can get in the way of our ability to notice others’ needs and help fulfill them?

Invite a few students to share the experiences they wrote down about a time when someone noticed they were in need and provided help.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:



“How many times has your heart been touched as you have witnessed the need of another? How often have you *intended* to be the one to help? And yet how often has day-to-day living interfered and you’ve left it for others to help, feeling that ‘oh, surely someone will take care of that need.’

“We become so caught up in the busyness of our lives. Were we to step back, however, and take a good look at what we’re doing, we may find that we have immersed ourselves in the ‘thick of thin things.’ In other words, too often we spend most of our time taking care of the things which do not really matter much at all in the grand scheme of things, neglecting those more important causes” (“What Have I Done for Someone Today?” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 85).

Ask students to picture in their minds the events of a typical day for them. Invite them to think about people they encounter who may need their help, such as parents, siblings, and peers. Encourage students to commit to follow the Savior’s example by offering help when they recognize someone in need.

Summarize Mark 8:10–21 by explaining that after miraculously feeding the 4,000, Jesus and His disciples sailed to a place called Dalmanutha. There the Pharisees asked Him to show them a sign. Jesus refused and taught His disciples to beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees, which doctrine resulted in spiritual blindness.

Sharing thoughts, feelings, and experiences

Sharing insights and relevant experiences can help clarify students’ understanding of doctrines and principles. As students share their experiences, the Holy Ghost often leads them to a deeper understanding and testimony of the very thoughts they are expressing. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, the thoughts, feelings, and experiences students share can also have a significant impact on the hearts and minds of their peers.

Mark 8:22–26***Jesus gradually heals a blind man***

Explain that Jesus and His disciples left the area of Decapolis and came to a place called Bethsaida. When they arrived there, a blind man was brought to the Savior to be healed.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Mark 8:22–26. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior healed the blind man.

- What happened after the first time the Savior put His hands on the blind man? (You may need to explain that the phrase, “I see men as trees, walking” [verse 24] indicates that the blind man could see, but not clearly.)
- What happened after the Savior put His hands on the man the second time?

Provide students with copies of the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and invite a student to read it aloud. Encourage students to follow along, looking for reasons why Jesus may have healed the man gradually, or in stages.



“This miracle is unique; it is the only recorded instance in which Jesus healed a person by stages. It may be that our Lord followed this course to strengthen the weak but growing faith of the blind man. It would appear that the successive instances of physical contact with Jesus had the effect of adding hope, assurance, and faith to the sightless one. Jesus personally (1) led the blind man by the hand out of the town, (2) applied his own saliva to the eyes of the sightless one, (3) performed the ordinance of laying on of hands, and (4) put his hands a second time upon the man’s eyes.

“Certainly the manner in which this healing took place teaches that men should seek the Lord’s healing grace with all their strength and faith, though such is sufficient for a partial cure only, following the receipt of which, however, they may then gain the added assurance and faith to be made whole and well every whit. Men also are often healed of their spiritual maladies by degrees, step by step as they get their lives in harmony with the plans and purposes of Deity” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:379–80).

- How might being healed gradually increase someone’s faith in Jesus Christ?
- Why is it important to understand that some blessings, such as gaining a testimony of the gospel or receiving physical or spiritual healing, often come gradually or in stages, rather than immediately or all at once?

Mark 8:27–38***Peter testifies that Jesus is the Christ***

Invite a student to read Mark 8:27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the question the Savior asked His disciples. Invite students to report what they find. Ask the class to recall how Peter responded to this question, as recorded in Matthew 16:16 (this verse is part of a scripture mastery passage). If they cannot remember, invite a student to read Mark 8:29 aloud (this verse includes Peter’s response).

Summarize Mark 8:30–38 by explaining that the Savior told His disciples to not yet make public His identity as the Christ, or Messiah. He also began teaching them about His impending suffering and death.

Conclude the lesson by inviting students to testify of the truths they learned from the scriptures they studied during the lesson.

LESSON 39

Mark 9:1–29

Introduction

Jesus was transfigured in the presence of Peter, James, and John. He then taught them about the role of John the Baptist as an Elias who was to prepare the way for the Messiah. After Jesus returned to His other disciples,

a man pleaded with Him to cast an evil spirit out of his son. Jesus cast out the evil spirit and taught His disciples about the need for prayer and fasting.

Suggestions for Teaching

Mark 9:1–13

Jesus is transfigured in the presence of Peter, James, and John and teaches about Elias

Invite several volunteers to come to the front of the class and briefly demonstrate an activity that increases physical strength.

- Why would someone want or need to increase his or her physical strength?
- How might physical strength be likened to spiritual strength, or faith in Jesus Christ?
- What are some situations in which our faith in Jesus Christ might be tested and in special need of being strengthened? (Write students' responses on the board.)

Invite students as they study Mark 9:1–29 to look for truths that can help them strengthen their faith in Jesus Christ.

Summarize Mark 9:1–13 by explaining that it contains an account of Jesus's transfiguration in the presence of Peter, James, and John on the Mount of Transfiguration. This passage also recounts that Jesus taught these Apostles that John the Baptist had fulfilled the prophesied role of an Elias, or one who prepares the way for the Savior's coming (see Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 9:10 [in Mark 9:12, footnote *a*]).

Mark 9:14–29

Jesus casts an evil spirit out of a man's son

Invite a student to read Mark 9:14–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the scene the Savior encountered as He returned from the mountain to His other disciples. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite one student to read the words of the Savior and another student to read the words of the father in the account that follows in Mark 9:16–24 (you might assign these parts before class and invite these students to locate their respective lines). Consider performing the role of the narrator or inviting a third student to do so. Ask the assigned students to read their parts in Mark 9:16–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the father sought from the Savior's disciples.

- What was this father seeking for his son? (You may need to explain that the son was possessed by an evil spirit, which caused speech loss, deafness [see Mark 9:17, 25], and other maladies. Whenever the evil spirit seized hold of the son, the son would convulse, foam at the mouth, grind his teeth, and become rigid.)

Ask students to imagine being this father and to ponder how their faith in the Savior and His power might have been affected when the disciples could not heal their son.

Invite the assigned students to continue reading aloud their parts in Mark 9:19–22. Ask the class to follow along, imagining how this father may have felt as he conversed with the Savior.

- What do you think this father was feeling as he conversed with the Savior?

Avoid wasting class time

When class begins on time and when students perceive that there is no time to waste, they will feel a sense of purpose. An efficient and effective beginning to the class can help students make more of their learning experiences in the scriptures.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for what Elder Holland adds to our understanding of this father's feelings and pleas.



"With no other hope remaining, this father asserts what faith he has and pleads with the Savior of the world, 'If *thou* canst do *any thing*, have compassion on *us*, and help *us*' [Mark 9:22; italics added]. I can hardly read those words without weeping. The plural pronoun *us* is obviously used intentionally. This man is saying, in effect, 'Our whole family is pleading. Our struggle never ceases. We are exhausted. Our son falls into the water. He falls into the fire.

He is continually in danger, and we are continually afraid. We don't know where else to turn. Can *you* help us? We will be grateful for *anything*—a partial blessing, a glimmer of hope, some small lifting of the burden carried by this boy's mother every day of her life'" ("Lord, I Believe," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 93).

Invite the student assigned the part of the Savior to read Mark 9:23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught this father.

- Whom did this father need to believe in?
- What principle did the Savior teach this father? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **If we believe in Jesus Christ, all things will be possible to us.** You may want to suggest that students mark the words in verse 23 that teach this principle.)

Point out that "all things" pertains to all righteous blessings that are in accordance with God's will, purposes, and timing.

- How can believing this principle help someone who faces difficulties that seem impossible to overcome?

Invite the student assigned the part of the father to read Mark 9:24 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the father's response to the principle the Savior taught.

- How would you describe this father's faith at that moment?

Ask students to note the two parts of this father's response. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland. Ask the class to listen for what the father's declaration illustrates about what we can do in times of "unbelief," or times of doubt or fear.



"When facing the challenge of faith, the father asserts his strength first and only then acknowledges his limitation. His initial declaration is affirmative and without hesitation: 'Lord, I believe.' I would say to all who wish for more faith, remember this man! In moments of fear or doubt or troubling times, hold the ground you have already won, even if that ground is limited. In the growth we all have to experience in mortality, the spiritual equivalent of this boy's affliction or this parent's desperation is going to come to all of us. When those moments come and issues surface, the resolution of which is not immediately forthcoming, *hold fast to what you already know and stand strong until additional knowledge comes*" ("Lord, I Believe," 93–94).

boy's affliction or this parent's desperation is going to come to all of us. When those moments come and issues surface, the resolution of which is not immediately forthcoming, *hold fast to what you already know and stand strong until additional knowledge comes*" ("Lord, I Believe," 93–94).

- What can we learn from this father about what we can do in times of unbelief? (After students respond, write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we hold on to what we believe . . .*)
- What can we learn about dealing with unbelief from the other part of this father's statement in verse 24? (After students respond, add the following phrase to the statement on the board: *and seek the Lord's assistance, . . .*)

Invite a student to read Mark 9:25–27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior did in response to the father's pleas.

- What did the Savior do in response to the father's pleas?
- How would you complete the statement on the board, based on what you have learned from this account? (After students respond, complete the sentence on the board so it conveys the following principle: **If we hold on to what we believe and seek the Lord's assistance, He will help us strengthen our faith.**)

Refer to the situations listed on the board, which you discussed at the beginning of the lesson.

- How can this principle be used in such situations?

- When have you or someone you know received the Lord’s help in a time of unbelief by holding on to belief and seeking His help? (You might want to share an experience as well.)

Encourage students to apply this principle during times of unbelief.

Remind students that this father initially brought his son to some of Jesus’s disciples to be healed. Invite students to imagine they are these disciples.

- What might you have been thinking or feeling after failing to cast the evil spirit out of the boy?

Invite a student to read Mark 9:28 aloud, and ask the class to look for the question the disciples asked Jesus.

- What question did the disciples ask Jesus?

Ask students to review Mark 9:19, looking for how the Savior described the people, including His disciples, who were present. (They were “faithless.”) Explain that *faithless* here refers to a lack of faith in Jesus Christ. Faith in Jesus Christ is needed for priesthood blessings to be effective.

Invite a student to read Mark 9:29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior’s response to His disciples’ question.

- What did the Savior teach His disciples?
- How can prayer and fasting influence a person’s faith? (After students respond, help them understand the following truth: **We can increase our faith in Jesus Christ through prayer and fasting.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement from the booklet *True to the Faith*. Ask the class to listen for different situations in which this truth could apply:

“This account [of Jesus casting out an evil spirit from a man’s son] teaches that prayer and fasting can give added strength to those giving and receiving priesthood blessings. The account can also be applied to your personal efforts to live the gospel. If you have a weakness or sin that you have struggled to overcome, you may need to fast and pray in order to receive the help or forgiveness you desire. Like the demon that Christ cast out, your difficulty may be the kind that will go out only through prayer and fasting” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 67).

- According to this statement, what are some situations in which this truth could apply?
- When have prayer and fasting helped increase your faith in Christ and allowed you to receive the righteous blessings you sought?

Ask students to reflect on blessings they seek for themselves or others that might be obtained by increasing their faith in Jesus Christ through prayer and fasting. Invite them to write down a goal to pray and fast for these blessings on the next fast Sunday.

Scripture Mastery Review

Consider looking ahead at some of the scripture mastery passages students may not yet be familiar with. Invite them to read and mark them. You might assign a new scripture mastery passage to each student or to pairs of students and ask them to draw on pieces of paper pictures that depict the truths taught in their passages. Invite them to explain their pictures to the class. You might display the pictures for future reference.

(Note: You could use this activity at the beginning or end of any lesson, as time allows.)

Mark 9:30–50

Introduction

Jesus told His disciples of His approaching death and Resurrection and taught them about who will be the greatest in God's kingdom. He warned of the conse-

quence of leading others to sin and instructed His disciples to separate themselves from influences that would lead them to sin.

Suggestions for Teaching

Mark 9:30–37

Jesus foretells His death and Resurrection and teaches about who will be the greatest in God's kingdom

Bring to class an item that has a strong aroma that students will recognize (such as a freshly cut orange or onion, or fresh bread). Before class, place the item in the classroom out of students' sight.

Begin the lesson by asking students whether they noticed a new aroma when they entered the classroom.

- What, if anything, did this aroma influence you to think about or do once you recognized it?

Point out that similar to how an aroma can influence us, we can influence others' thoughts and behaviors. Invite students to look for truths in Mark 9:30–50 that can help them consider their influence on others' efforts to follow the Savior as well as the influence others have on them.

Explain that after casting an evil spirit out of a young man (see Mark 9:17–29), the Savior traveled through Galilee with His disciples. Invite a student to read Mark 9:31–32 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the events the Savior prophesied of.

- What events did the Savior prophesy of?

Summarize Mark 9:33–37 by explaining that when Jesus came to Capernaum, He taught His disciples about who will be the greatest in the kingdom of God. He also instructed them to receive into the Church people who humble themselves like children and who receive Him (see Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 9:34–35 [in Mark 9:37, footnote a]). (Note: These teachings will be discussed in greater depth in the lesson for Mark 10.)

Mark 9:38–50

Jesus warns against influencing others to sin and not separating oneself from evil influences

Invite a student to read Mark 9:38. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the situation the Apostle John told the Savior about.

- What did John report to the Savior?

Explain that the Apostles forbade this man from casting out devils because he was not a traveling companion of the Twelve Apostles. However, the Savior told them not to forbid the man (indicating he was a righteous man who had authority) and taught that people who help His representatives will be rewarded (see Mark 9:39–41).

Invite a student to read Mark 9:42 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior's warning. Explain that in this context the word *offend* means to influence others to stumble, to lead astray, or to influence someone to sin or abandon their faith.

- What group of people did the Savior warn against influencing to sin? (You may need to explain that the "little ones that believe in [Jesus]" include those who are young in the faith, such as youth and new converts, as well as His humble, trusting disciples of any age.)

- What was Jesus’s warning against influencing His disciples to sin? (He indicated it would be better to die than to experience the intense suffering and separation from God that we will experience if we influence others to sin.)
- What principle can we learn from the Savior’s warning in verse 42? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we influence people who believe in Jesus Christ to sin, we will be held accountable before God.**)
- In what ways might someone influence people who believe in Jesus Christ to sin?

Remind students of the aroma in the classroom and of the fact that like an aroma, we have a positive or negative influence on others. Ask students to ponder their influence on people who believe in Jesus Christ.

To prepare students to identify another principle taught by the Savior, ask for a volunteer who is wearing shoes with laces to come to the front of the class. Instruct the student to untie and retie one of his or her shoes using only one hand. While the student tries to do this, ask the class:

- What challenges would you experience if you lost one of your hands?
- What, if anything, would be worth losing your hand for?

Explain that the deliberate removal of a body part is known as amputation and may be performed if a body part becomes seriously damaged, infected, or diseased. Although amputation and subsequent recovery can be painful and traumatic, this process can prevent an infection from spreading to the rest of the body and causing further damage or death.

Invite a student to read Mark 9:43 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught about when it would be better to lose one hand than to keep both.

- When would it be better to lose one hand than to keep both?
- Do you think we should take this teaching literally and cut off a hand that has “offended” us, or influenced us to sin? (You may need to explain that the Savior was not saying that people should literally cut off their hands. Rather, He was using a figure of speech to emphasize the importance of what He was teaching.)

Invite a student to draw an image of a person on the board. While the student is drawing, explain that the Joseph Smith Translation of Mark 9:43–48 can increase our understanding of the Savior’s teachings in this passage. In these verses, we learn that the Savior used the hand, foot, and eye to symbolize influences in our lives that can lead us to sin. Instruct the student who is drawing on the board to circle a hand, a foot, and an eye on the image he or she drew. Then invite the student to return to his or her seat.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 9:40–48 (in the Bible appendix). Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior likened to a hand, a foot, and an eye that have “offended” someone, or influenced someone to sin. You may need to explain that the word *life* in Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 9:40–41, 43 refers to eternal life.

- According to this translation, what do the offending hand, foot, and eye represent? (The hand represents our family members and friends, the foot represents people we look to as an example of how to think and act, and the eye represents our leaders.)

Label these parts with their interpretations on the image the student drew on the board.

- What did the Savior teach us to do with unrighteous influences, or influences that lead us to sin?
- In what ways might separating ourselves from unrighteous influences be similar to amputating a hand or foot?
- What can happen if we do not separate ourselves from unrighteous influences? Why?
- What truth can we learn from the Savior’s teachings in these verses? (Students may use different words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **It is better to separate ourselves from unrighteous influences than to end up being separated from God.** Using students’ words, write this truth on the board.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Walter F. González of the Seventy. Ask the class to listen for other influences we should separate ourselves from.

“It follows that such cutting off refers not only to friends but to every bad influence, such as inappropriate television shows, Internet sites, movies, literature, games, or music. Engraving

Capture and maintain students’ interest

Because some students have a limited attention span, look for ways to rekindle their interest and enthusiasm throughout the lesson. This should be done in a way that focuses students’ attention on the scripture passages they will study.

in our souls this principle will help us to resist the temptation to yield to any bad influence” (“Today Is the Time,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 55).

- What challenges might we experience by separating ourselves from unrighteous influences?
- How can we know the appropriate way to separate ourselves from unrighteous influences?

Explain that separating ourselves from unrighteous influences does not mean treating others rudely, condemning others, or refusing to associate with people who are not faithful Church members. Rather, we should separate from, or avoid interacting closely with, people who would lead us to sin. Although we may not be able to remove or avoid every influence that can lead us to sin, the Lord will bless us as we try to separate ourselves from any evil influence we can and as we try to develop self-discipline to avoid influences that we cannot completely remove.

To help students further understand this truth, invite two students to come to the front of the class. Instruct each student to read aloud one of the following scenarios and to ask the associated questions to the class. Invite the class to respond to the questions based on the truth identified in Mark 9:43–48.

Scenario 1. I have friends who often encourage me to participate in activities that break God’s commandments. However, I think I can be a good influence on them if I continue to spend time with them.

- Won’t I lose my ability to influence these friends for good if I separate myself from them? What type of relationship should I have with them?
- What should I say and do to appropriately separate myself from these friends?

Scenario 2. I have been a fan of a popular band for several years. In some of their recent music and interviews they have encouraged behaviors and ideas that oppose the Lord’s standards and teachings.

- It’s only music and words, right? So what is the danger of continuing to listen to their music and following them on social media?

Thank the volunteers for their help, and invite them to return to their seats. Ask the class:

- Even though separating ourselves from influences that lead us to sin can sometimes be difficult, what can we gain through this sacrifice? (Many blessings, including eternal life.) Why is this reward worth any sacrifice?
- When have you or someone you know chosen to separate from unrighteous influences? (Remind students not to share anything that is too personal or private.) What was difficult about separating from that influence? What blessings came from doing so?

Ask students to ponder whether there are any influences in their lives that might be leading them to sin. Invite them to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how they will separate themselves from these influences.

Summarize Mark 9:49–50 by explaining that the Savior instructed His disciples to have peaceful relationships with each other.

Conclude by encouraging students to act on any promptings they received during this lesson.

Commentary and Background Information

Mark 9:31. “The Son of man”

The “Son of man” is “a title that Jesus Christ used when speaking of Himself (Luke 9:22; 21:36). It meant the Son of the Man of Holiness. Man of Holiness is one of the names of God the Father. When Jesus called Himself the Son of Man, it was an open declaration of His divine

relationship with the Father. This title is found frequently in the Gospels. Latter-day revelation confirms the special meaning and sacredness of this name of the Savior (D&C 45:39; 49:6, 22; 58:65; Moses 6:57)” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Son of Man,” scriptures.lds.org).

Home-Study Lesson

Mark 4–9 (Unit 8)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of events, doctrines, and principles your students learned as they studied Mark 4–9 (unit 8) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Mark 4–5)

Students learned that if we seek the Lord's help in times of trouble or fear, He can bring us peace. They also learned that when we experience the Savior's power in our lives, we can testify to others of His blessings and compassion. From the stories of Jairus's daughter and the woman with the issue of blood, students learned that if we demonstrate our faith in Jesus Christ through our efforts to come to Him, He can make us whole and that exercising faith in Jesus Christ requires us to continue believing in Him even in times of uncertainty.

Day 2 (Mark 6–8)

From the miracle of feeding more than 5,000 people, students learned that when we offer the Savior all that we have, He can magnify our offering to accomplish His purposes. Students also learned that we can follow the Savior's example by perceiving the needs of others and then helping to fulfill those needs.

Day 3 (Mark 9:1–29)

From the account of Jesus casting an evil spirit out of a boy, students learned that if we believe in Jesus Christ, all things will be possible to us. Other principles from this lesson include the following: If we hold on to what we believe and seek the Lord's assistance, He will help us strengthen our faith. We can increase our faith in Jesus Christ through prayer and fasting.

Day 4 (Mark 9:30–50)

As students studied Mark 9:30–50, they learned that if we influence people who believe in Jesus Christ to sin, we will be held accountable before God. From the Savior's teachings in these verses, students learned that it is better to separate ourselves from unrighteous influences than to end up being separated from God.

Introduction

This lesson can help students understand that seeking to please others instead of doing what we know is right can lead to wrong choices, sorrow, and regret.

Suggestions for Teaching

Mark 6:1–29

Jesus is rejected in Nazareth and sends forth the Twelve Apostles; John the Baptist's death is recounted

Begin class by inviting students to think about the last time they felt pressure to do something that they knew was not right.

Write the following statement on the board (this statement is found in "Making the Right Choices," *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 37):

"Individuals who do wrong want you to join them because they feel more comfortable in what they are doing when others do it also" (Elder Richard G. Scott).

- What are some examples of how others may try to pressure you to do something that you know is wrong?

Invite students to look for a truth as they study Mark 6 that can help them avoid giving in to negative peer pressure.

Invite a student to read Mark 6:17–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Herod had done to John the Baptist. Have students report what they find.

- What had Herod done to John and why?

Herod had divorced his wife and married Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. This act was a blatant violation of Jewish law (see Leviticus 18:16), and John the Baptist had vocally condemned it. John's opposition to this marriage angered Herodias, so Herod imprisoned John to appease her.

Invite a student to read Mark 6:19–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Herodias wanted to do with John the Baptist.

- What did Herodias want to do with John the Baptist?
- Why couldn't she have him killed? (Because Herod feared John and knew him to be a man of God.)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Mark 6:21–29. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Herod did to John the Baptist.

- According to verse 26, how did Herod feel about killing John the Baptist?
- Why did Herod have John beheaded if he knew it was wrong and did not want to do it? (Herod was concerned about the opinion of those who sat with him.)
- What principle can we learn from Herod's choices about what happens when we try to please others instead of doing what is right? (Students may use different words, but make

sure they identify the following principle: **Seeking to please others instead of doing what we know is right can lead to wrong choices, sorrow, and regret.**)

To help students further understand this truth, put them in groups of two to four and ask them to come up with several examples of situations in which youth must choose between seeking to please others and doing what they know is right. After sufficient time, invite each group to report. As they do, write some of their examples on the board.

- In what ways have you seen that giving in to pressures like these examples brings sorrow and regret?
- When have you seen someone choose to do what was right instead of seeking to please others?
- What can help us choose to do what we know is right instead of seeking to please others?

Read aloud the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball about making right decisions:



“Right decisions are easiest to make when we make them well in advance . . . ; this saves a lot of anguish at the fork [at the point of decision], when we’re tired and sorely tempted” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* [2006], 108).

Invite students to ponder their upcoming week and identify possible situations in which they may need to choose between pleasing others and doing what is right. Encourage them to plan how they will respond to this pressure should they experience it.

Explain that when Herod heard about the many miracles that Jesus performed in Galilee, he feared that John the Baptist had risen from the dead and was performing these miracles (see Mark 6:14–16).

Mark 7–8

Jesus heals two people and teaches His disciples

Explain that Mark 7–8 contains two accounts of the Savior healing someone. Divide the students into pairs. Assign one student in each pair to read Mark 7:31–35 and the other student to read Mark 8:22–25. Then invite the students to describe to their partner the healing miracle in the verses they read.

After sufficient time, invite students to explain how the Savior went about healing these two people.

- What lessons can we learn from the fact that the blind man was not completely healed at first?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask students to listen for reasons why Jesus may have healed the man gradually, or in stages.



“This miracle is unique; it is the only recorded instance in which Jesus healed a person by stages. It may be that our Lord followed this course to strengthen the weak but growing faith of the blind man. It would appear that the successive instances of physical contact with Jesus had the

effect of adding hope, assurance, and faith to the sightless one. Jesus personally (1) led the blind man by the hand out of the town, (2) applied his own saliva to the eyes of the sightless one, (3) performed the ordinance of laying on of hands, and (4) put his hands a second time upon the man’s eyes.

“Certainly the manner in which this healing took place teaches that men should seek the Lord’s healing grace with all their strength and faith, though such is sufficient for a partial cure only, following the receipt of which, however, they may then gain the added assurance and faith to be made whole and well every whit. Men also are often healed of their spiritual maladies by degrees, step by step as they get their lives in harmony with the plans and purposes of Deity” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:379–80).

- How might being healed gradually increase someone’s faith in Jesus Christ?
- Why is it important to understand that some blessings, such as gaining a testimony of the gospel or receiving physical or spiritual healing, often come gradually or in stages, rather than immediately or all at once?

Summarize Mark 8:27–28 by explaining that Jesus asked His disciples whom others said He was. They responded by saying that some said He was John the Baptist or another prophet.

Invite a student to read Mark 8:29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter declared about Jesus.

- Whom did Peter say Jesus was? (The word *Christ* is the Greek equivalent of *Messiah*.)

Summarize Mark 8:30–31 by explaining that Jesus taught the disciples that He would be rejected by the Jews and killed. Invite a student to read Mark 8:32–33 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Peter reacted to this news.

Explain that because of the popular Jewish expectations of a conquering Messiah, it was difficult for Peter, as well as for many Jews of that time, to understand and accept the idea of a Messiah who would suffer and die.

- How was Peter like the blind man described in Mark 8:22–25? (Peter came to “see” the truth gradually. He had faith in the Savior, but his understanding of the Savior’s mission developed step by step.)
- How has the Lord helped you or someone you know to gradually see truth more clearly?

Conclude today’s lesson by inviting students to silently read Mark 8:34–38, pondering how today’s lesson can help them put the Lord first in their lives.

Next Unit (Mark 10–Luke 4)

Explain that students will conclude their study of the Gospel of Mark and begin studying the writings of Luke. Invite them to look for new details as they read again about the final events of Jesus Christ’s life and His Atonement and to notice the taunting remarks made to Jesus while He was on the cross. In the Gospel of Luke they will read one of the most famous chapters in the Bible—Luke 2—and accounts of the downtrodden, outcasts, and sinners.

LESSON 41

Mark 10

Introduction

Near the end of His mortal ministry, the Savior ministered to those in Perea. While there, He taught the doctrine of marriage and invited little children to come unto Him. The Savior also admonished a rich young ruler to sell all his possessions and follow Him. As the Savior

left Perea and made His way to Jerusalem for the last time in mortality, He foretold His death and Resurrection and counseled His Apostles to serve others. He also healed a blind man at Jericho.

Suggestions for Teaching

Mark 10:1–16

Jesus teaches the doctrine of marriage and invites little children to come to Him

Show students several pictures of young children.

- What qualities or characteristics do you admire about your younger brothers or sisters or other young children you know? (List students' responses on the board.)

Invite students to look for a truth as they study Mark 10:1–16 that teaches us why we should become like little children.

Explain that near the end of the Savior's ministry, He left Galilee and went to an area called Perea. (You may want to invite students to locate Perea on the handout "Mortal Life of Jesus Christ at a Glance" [see lesson 5] or on Bible Maps, no. 11, "The Holy Land in New Testament Times.") Summarize Mark 10:1–12 by explaining that while in Perea, the Savior taught the people about the importance of marriage.

Invite a student to read Mark 10:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened while the Savior was in Perea.

- How did the disciples react when the people brought young children to the Savior? (Explain that the word *rebuked* in verse 13 indicates that the disciples told the people they were wrong to bring their children to the Savior.)
- How did the Savior respond to the disciples?

Invite a student to read Mark 10:15–16 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the Savior taught His disciples as the little children came to Him. Explain that the phrase "receive the kingdom of God" in verse 15 refers to receiving the gospel.

- What do you think it means to receive the gospel "as a little child"? (verse 15). (Write students' responses on the board, and compare them with the items already listed on the board.)
- What principle can we learn from these verses about what will happen as we receive the gospel like little children? (Students may identify multiple truths, but make sure it is clear that **as we receive the gospel like little children, we will be prepared to enter God's kingdom.**)
- In what ways does receiving the gospel like little children prepare us to enter God's kingdom? (To help students answer this question, you may want to refer them to Mosiah 3:19.)

Mark 10:17–34

The Savior admonishes a rich young ruler to sell his possessions and follow Him

Invite a student to read Mark 10:17–20 aloud, and ask the class to look for what happened after the Savior blessed the little children.

- How would you describe the man who came to Jesus? Why?
- What did the man ask the Savior? How did Jesus respond?

Explain that Matthew 19 also contains the account of this man coming to the Savior. Invite a student to read Matthew 19:20 aloud, and ask the class to listen for how the man responded after the Savior listed some of the commandments.

- After acknowledging that he kept all the commandments, what question did the young man ask the Savior? (You may want to suggest that students mark the young man's question.)

Write the following question on the board: *What lack I yet?*

Invite students to read Mark 10:21 silently, looking for how the Savior responded to the young man.

- What did the Savior tell the young man he still lacked?

Point out the phrase "Jesus beholding him loved him" in verse 21. You may want to suggest that students mark this phrase in their scriptures.

- Why do you think it is important to know that Jesus loved this young man before He told him what he lacked?
- What principles can we learn from this account? (Students may identify several principles, including the following: **Because He loves us, the Lord will help us know what we lack in our efforts to follow Him. If we ask the Lord, He will teach us what we need to do to inherit eternal life.**)

Invite students to read Mark 10:22 silently, looking for how the young man reacted when the Savior counseled him to sell all that he had.

- How did the young man react?
- According to verse 22, why did he react that way?

Point out that while we may not be asked to give up great riches to follow the Lord, He has asked us to make other sacrifices to serve Him and obey His commandments.

- What are some sacrifices the Lord has asked of us that may be difficult to make?
- What blessings might we fail to receive if we choose not to follow the Lord in all things?

Invite a student to read Mark 10:23–27 aloud. Ask the student to replace the appropriate part of verse 27 with the Joseph Smith Translation excerpt found in Mark 10:27, footnote *a*. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus taught about leaving all for His sake.

- Why do you think it is so hard for those who trust in riches or other worldly things to enter the kingdom of God?
- What do you think it means that all things are possible for those who trust in God?

Invite a student to read Mark 10:28–31 aloud. Ask the student to replace verse 31 with the Joseph Smith Translation excerpt found in Mark 10:31, footnote *a*. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter said after the Savior taught that we should be willing to give up whatever He requires of us.

- According to verse 28, what did Peter say?
- What did the Savior promise to those who are willing to give up everything to follow Him?
- What principle can we learn from the Savior's teachings about what we must do to receive eternal life? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **To receive eternal life, we must be willing to give up whatever the Lord requires of us.** Write this principle on the board.)
- Why is eternal life worth any sacrifice we are asked to make on earth? (You may want to remind students that eternal life includes living forever in God's presence with our righteous family members.)

Summarize Mark 10:32–34 by explaining that the Lord told His disciples that after they arrived in Jerusalem He would be mocked, scourged, spit upon, and killed and that He would rise again on the third day.

- How is the Savior a perfect example of being willing to give up whatever God requires? Testify of the truths that have been taught in this lesson. Encourage students to prayerfully ponder the question "What lack I yet?" and obey any promptings they may receive concerning sacrifices the Lord would like them to make.

Share your testimony

The end of a lesson is not the only time to bear your testimony. Take opportunities during the lesson to share your testimony of doctrines and principles as they are identified and discussed. Invite your students to do the same. As testimonies are shared, the Holy Ghost can bear witness of the truthfulness of the testimonies in the hearts and minds of students.

Mark 10:35–52

The Savior foretells His death and Resurrection and counsels His Apostles to serve others

Divide students into small groups. Provide each group with a copy of the following hand-out, and invite them to complete it:

Who Is the Greatest?

Complete this handout as a group, and discuss your answers to the questions.

List some activities you enjoy: _____

- Name some individuals who are truly great at performing the activities you listed above. What makes them great?

As you continue to study the Savior's words in Mark 10, look for what He taught about what makes a person truly great.

Read Mark 10:35–37, looking for what James and John asked of the Savior as they traveled toward Jerusalem.

James and John's request to sit at the Savior's right and left hand implied that they wanted to receive more glory and honor in God's kingdom than the other Apostles would receive. Mark 10:38–40 records that the Savior explained to James and John that this blessing would be given to those who were prepared to receive it.

Read Mark 10:41, looking for how the other disciples responded to James and John's request.

- Why do you think the other disciples were displeased with James and John?

Read Mark 10:42–45, looking for what the Savior taught His disciples about greatness.

Complete the following statement based on what the Savior taught about true greatness:

To be truly great, we must _____

In verse 45, the word *minister* means to provide care, comfort, aid, and support for others.

- Why would someone who serves and ministers to others (like the Savior) be considered truly great?
- When has someone served and cared for you or your family? Why might you consider that person truly great?

After students have completed the handout, invite several to report how they completed the statement based on Mark 10:42–45. Students may use other words, but they should identify the following principle: **To be truly great, we must follow the Savior's example by serving others.**

Summarize Mark 10:46–52 by explaining that as the Savior and His Apostles were leaving Jericho to journey to Jerusalem, a blind man named Bartimaeus cried out for the Savior to heal him. The crowd told Bartimaeus to be quiet, but he cried out even louder. The Savior heard his cry, had compassion on him, and healed him. (*Note:* The account of Bartimaeus's healing will be taught in greater detail in the lesson for Luke 18.)

- How is the Savior a perfect example of the principle He taught about ministering to others?

Share your testimony that the Savior is truly great because of the way He ministers to Heavenly Father's children. Invite students to think about what they can do to serve and care for those around them. Encourage them to set a goal that will help them serve and minister to others.

LESSON 42

Mark 11–16

Introduction

Near the end of His mortal ministry, the Savior observed a poor widow casting two mites into the temple treasury. Later, while at dinner in Bethany, Mary anointed Jesus in token of His burial. The Savior suffered in Gethsemane.

He was tried and condemned to die. After He died on the cross and was resurrected, the Lord appeared to His Apostles and commissioned them to take the gospel to the world.

Teaching about the Savior's suffering in Gethsemane

There are three accounts of the events that occurred in Gethsemane. The lesson for Matthew 26 focuses on the Savior's submission to His Father's will. The lesson for Mark 14 addresses Jesus Christ's suffering in Gethsemane. The lesson for Luke 22 emphasizes the extremity of His suffering. Focusing on the unique aspects of these three accounts of the Savior's suffering can provide students with distinctive experiences as they study each account.



Suggestions for Teaching

Mark 11–13

The Savior teaches at the temple and observes a widow cast mites into the temple treasury

Read the following scenarios aloud, and ask students to listen for the differences between the offerings presented to the Lord in each scenario.

1. A woman gave her bishop a very large sum of money as a fast offering. Another woman who lives in the same ward gave a very small amount to her bishop as a fast offering.
 2. A man serves as a stake president. Another man in the same stake serves as a primary teacher.
- What differences did you notice in the offerings given in each scenario?
 - How might a person feel if his or her offering to the Lord appears small when compared to the offerings of others?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Mark 11–14 that will help them know how the Lord views their offerings to Him.

Display the picture *Triumphal Entry* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 50; see also LDS.org). Briefly summarize Mark 11:1–12:40 by explaining that as the Savior neared the end of His mortal ministry, He rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, cleansed the temple, and taught the people there. Remind students that in an attempt to discredit the Savior, the Pharisees and scribes asked Him difficult questions while He taught in the temple. After the Savior responded to their questions, He denounced the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and scribes (see Matthew 23).

Explain that while Jesus was at the temple, He witnessed individuals bringing money to the temple treasury as an offering to God. Invite a student to read Mark 12:41–44 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the Savior saw at the treasury.

- What did the Savior see at the treasury?

Show the coin with the least value in your country's currency, and explain that a *mite* was "the smallest bronze coin used by the Jews" (*Bible Dictionary*, "Money").

- How might someone feel if they could give only two mites as an offering to God?
- What did the Savior say about the widow's offering compared to the offerings of the others?
- Why do you think the Savior considered her offering to be "more" than the other offerings?
- Based on what the Lord said about the widow, what principle can we learn about giving to the Lord? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we are willing to give all that we have to the Lord, He will accept our offering even if it appears small in comparison to that of others.**)

Summarize Mark 13 by explaining that the Savior taught His Apostles about the Second Coming. Remind students that they studied these teachings in Joseph Smith—Matthew.

Mark 14:1–9***Mary anoints the Savior***

Explain that after the Savior taught His disciples about the signs of His Second Coming, He left Jerusalem and went to Bethany to the house of a man named Simon, who previously had been afflicted with leprosy.

Invite one student to read Mark 14:3 aloud and another student to read John 12:3 aloud.

Ask the class to listen for what happened to the Savior as he sat down for dinner.

- What happened to the Savior as He sat down for dinner at Simon’s house? (Explain that the woman who anointed the Savior is Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus [see John 12:1–3].)
- How did Mary show the Savior her love and devotion?

Explain that Mary’s act of anointing the Savior’s head and feet with spikenard (a costly ointment) was an act of such reverence that even kings rarely received it (see James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 512).

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Mark 14:4–9. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how some of the people at the dinner reacted to what Mary did. Explain that we learn from John 12:4–5 that Judas Iscariot was the one who complained about Mary’s act.

- How did Judas Iscariot react to Mary’s anointing the Savior with costly ointment?
- According to verse 5, how much was the ointment worth? (Explain that three hundred pence was about equal to the amount a common laborer could earn in a year.)
- How did the Savior respond to Judas’s criticism of Mary?

Point out the phrase “she hath wrought a good work on me” in verse 6, and explain that it indicates that the Savior was pleased with what Mary had done. Also point out the phrase “she hath done what she could” in verse 8, and explain that this implies that Mary had given her best to the Lord.

- What truth can we learn from these verses about how the Savior feels when we give our best to Him? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **The Savior is pleased when we give Him our best.**)

Refer to the two scenarios that were presented at the beginning of class. Ask students to use the truths they identified in Mark 12 and Mark 14 to explain how the individuals in each scenario might please the Lord.

- How might believing these truths help someone who feels that they don’t have much to give to the Lord?
- When have you seen someone give their best to the Lord?

Invite students to consider whether they are currently giving their best to the Lord. Encourage them to select one aspect of their life in which they could improve and to set a goal that will help them give their best to the Lord.

Mark 14:10–16:20***Jesus begins His Atonement as He suffers in Gethsemane for our sins; He is betrayed by Judas Iscariot and brought before Jewish leaders***

Ask students to silently ponder the following questions:

- Have you ever felt that no one understands you or what you are going through?
- Have you ever felt that you cannot be forgiven of your past sins?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Mark 14 that can help someone who might have these feelings.

Summarize Mark 14:10–31 by explaining that a few days after Mary anointed Jesus, Jesus and the Apostles observed the Passover. Afterward, the Savior went to the Garden of Gethsemane.

Invite a student to read Mark 14:32–34 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior felt in the Garden of Gethsemane.

- How did the Savior feel in the Garden of Gethsemane?

After students respond, write the following phrases on the board: *sore amazed, very heavy, exceeding sorrowful*.

Explain that these phrases refer to the suffering Jesus Christ experienced as part of His Atonement.

- What do these phrases teach us about the Atonement of Jesus Christ? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **As part of His Atonement, Jesus Christ suffered and sorrowed in the Garden of Gethsemane.**)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Mark 14:35–42. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior did because of His intense suffering.


- What did the Savior do because of His intense suffering? (Help students understand that Jesus’s suffering was so severe that He asked if it were possible for Him not to experience it.)

Write the following phrase on the board: *Jesus Christ suffered . . . so that He . . .*

Explain that other scripture passages can help us understand Jesus Christ’s suffering and why He would be willing to suffer for us.

Write the following references on the board: *Isaiah 53:3–5* and *Alma 7:11–13*. Divide students into pairs, and invite them to read the verses together, looking for what the Savior suffered and why He suffered. Ask students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how they would complete the phrase written on the board using what they learn in *Isaiah 53:3–5* and *Alma 7:11–13*. (You may need to explain that the word *succor* in *Alma 7:12* means to hurry to give relief or to go to someone’s aid.)

After sufficient time, invite several students to report how they completed the phrase. Their answers should be similar to the following: Jesus Christ suffered our pains, afflictions, temptations, sicknesses, infirmities, and sorrows so that He would know how to succor us. Jesus Christ suffered for our sins so that He could blot out our transgressions. Remind students that the Savior’s suffering for the sins of mankind began in Gethsemane and continued through and culminated in His Crucifixion on the cross.

 To help students feel the importance of the truth that as part of His Atonement Jesus Christ suffered and sorrowed in the Garden of Gethsemane, consider showing the video “Special Witness—Elder Holland” (2:38), in which Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles testifies of the Savior’s suffering in Gethsemane. This video is available on LDS.org.

- How might knowing what the Savior suffered and why He suffered help you as you face trials, pains, and afflictions?
- When have you felt the Savior succor you in a time of pain, sickness, or sorrow?
- What feelings have you experienced as you have repented and felt your sins blotted out (or erased) through the Atonement of Jesus Christ?

Summarize Mark 14:43–16:20 by explaining that Jesus was taken to an illegal trial before the Sanhedrin and condemned to die. After the Savior died on the cross and was resurrected, He appeared to His Apostles and commissioned them to take the gospel to the world.

You may want to conclude by testifying of the truths you have discussed today.

Commentary and Background Information

Mark 14:3–9. Mary anointed Jesus

Elder James E. Talmage explained that Mary’s actions showed her great love for Jesus:

“To anoint the head of a guest with ordinary oil was to do him honor; to anoint his feet also was to show

unusual and signal regard; but the anointing of head and feet with spikenard, and in such abundance, was an act of reverential homage rarely rendered even to kings. Mary’s act was an expression of adoration; it was the fragrant outwelling of a heart overflowing with worship and affection” (*Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 512).

INTRODUCTION TO

The Gospel According to St. Luke

Why study this book?

The book of Luke provides an additional witness of many truths recorded by Matthew and Mark and also contains unique content. The Gospel of Luke can deepen students' understanding of the teachings of Jesus Christ and help them more fully appreciate His love and compassion for all mankind, as manifested during His mortal ministry and through His infinite Atonement.

Who wrote this book?

Luke is the author of this Gospel. He was a physician (see Colossians 4:14) and "a messenger of Jesus Christ" (Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 1:1 [in Luke 1:1, footnote a]). Luke was one of Paul's "fellowlabourers" (Philemon 1:24) and Paul's missionary companion (see 2 Timothy 4:11). Luke also wrote the book of Acts (see Bible Dictionary, "Luke").

When and where was it written?

Although it is not known exactly when Luke wrote his Gospel, it was likely written in the second half of the first century A.D. Luke's sources were people who "from the beginning were eyewitnesses" (Luke 1:2) of the Savior's mortal ministry and Resurrection. We do not know where the Gospel of Luke was written.

To whom was it written and why?

Luke intended his Gospel to be read primarily by a Gentile audience, and he presented Jesus Christ as the Savior of both Jews and Gentiles. Luke specifically addressed His gospel to "Theophilus" (Luke 1:3), which in Greek means "friend of God" or "beloved of God" (see Bible Dictionary, "Theophilus"). It is apparent that Theophilus had received previous instruction concerning the life and teachings of Jesus Christ (see Luke 1:4). Luke hoped to provide further instruction by offering a systematic account of the Savior's mission and ministry. He wanted those who read his testimony to "know the certainty" (Luke 1:4) of the Son of God—His compassion, Atonement, and Resurrection.

What are some distinctive features of this book?

Luke is the longest of the four Gospels and the longest book in the New Testament. Some of the most well-known stories of Christendom are unique to the Gospel of Luke: the circumstances surrounding the birth of John the Baptist (see Luke 1:5–25, 57–80); the traditional Christmas narrative (see Luke 2:1–20); the story of Jesus as a 12-year-old boy in the

temple (see Luke 2:41–52); parables such as the good Samaritan (see Luke 10:30–37), the prodigal son (see Luke 15:11–32), and the rich man and Lazarus (see Luke 16:19–31); the story of the ten lepers (see Luke 17:11–19); and the account of the resurrected Lord walking beside His disciples on the road to Emmaus (see Luke 24:13–32).

Other unique features are Luke's inclusion of teachings of John the Baptist not found in the other Gospels (see Luke 3:10–14); his emphasis on the prayerfulness of Jesus Christ (see Luke 3:21; 5:16; 9:18, 28–29; 11:1); and his inclusion of the calling, training, and missionary labors of the Seventy (see Luke 10:1–22). Moreover, Luke is the only Gospel writer to record that the Savior shed His blood in Gethsemane and that an angel ministered to Him (see Luke 22:43–44).

Because Luke's Gospel begins and concludes at the temple, it also signals the temple's importance as a principal location of God's dealings with mankind (see Luke 1:9; 24:53).

Outline

Luke 1–3 The births and missions of John the Baptist and of Jesus Christ are foretold. Witnesses testify that the infant Jesus is the Messiah. At 12 years of age, Jesus Christ teaches at the temple. John the Baptist preaches repentance and baptizes Jesus Christ. Luke records a genealogy of Jesus Christ.

Luke 4–8 Jesus Christ is tempted in the wilderness. In Nazareth He proclaims Himself the Messiah and is rejected. Jesus Christ chooses Twelve Apostles and teaches His disciples. He forgives sins and performs many miracles.

Luke 9–14 The Twelve Apostles are sent to preach and to heal. Jesus Christ feeds five thousand and is transfigured on a mountain. He calls the Seventy and sends them forth to teach. Jesus Christ teaches about discipleship, hypocrisy, and judgment. He relates the parable of the good Samaritan.

Luke 15–17 Jesus Christ teaches in parables. He teaches about offenses, faith, and forgiveness. He heals ten lepers and teaches of His Second Coming.

Luke 18–22 Jesus Christ continues to teach in parables. He heals a blind man and teaches Zacchaeus. He rides triumphantly into Jerusalem, weeps for the city, and cleanses the temple.

Jesus Christ foretells the destruction of Jerusalem and speaks of the signs that will precede His Second Coming. He institutes the sacrament, teaches His Apostles, and suffers in Gethsemane. He is betrayed, arrested, mocked, smitten, and interrogated.

Luke 23–24 Jesus Christ is tried before Pilate and Herod, crucified, and buried. Angels at the tomb and two disciples on the road to Emmaus testify that Jesus Christ has been resurrected. The Savior appears to His disciples in Jerusalem, promises His Apostles they will be given power from God, and ascends into heaven.

Luke 1

Introduction

The angel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias and announced that Zacharias and his wife, Elisabeth, would have a son, whom they should name John. Six months later, the same angel appeared to Mary and announced that she

would be the mother of the Son of God. Mary visited Elisabeth, and they rejoiced in the Savior's coming. Three months later, Elisabeth gave birth to John.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 1:1–4

Luke explains the reasons for writing his Gospel

Display the following pictures, and ask students to explain what is occurring in each one: Joseph and Mary Travel to Bethlehem (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 29; see also LDS.org), The Angel Appears to the Shepherds (no. 31), Simeon Reverencing the Christ Child (no. 32), Boy Jesus in the Temple (no. 34), The Good Samaritan (no. 44), Mary and Martha (no. 45), and The Ten Lepers (no. 46). Point out that these and many other events and teachings from the Savior's mortal ministry were recorded by Luke but are not in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John.

Briefly introduce the Gospel of Luke by explaining that Luke began his Gospel by addressing someone named "Theophilus" (verse 3) and explained his reasons for writing. *Theophilus* means "friend of God" (Bible Dictionary, "Theophilus"). Invite a student to read Luke 1:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Luke's reasons for writing.

- What are some of Luke's reasons for writing this account?
- Based on Luke 1:4, what can studying the Gospel of Luke do for us?

Assure students that as they study the Gospel of Luke, they can come to "know the certainty" (verse 4) of the truths they have been taught about Jesus Christ.

Luke 1:5–25

The angel Gabriel announces the forthcoming birth of John to Zacharias, and Elisabeth conceives

Ask students to ponder a blessing or answer from God that they are waiting or hoping for. Invite students to look for truths as they study Luke 1 that can help them when they are waiting for a blessing or answer from God.

Ask a student to read Luke 1:5–7 aloud, and invite the class to look for who had been waiting for a specific blessing for much of their lives.

- What details do we learn about Zacharias and Elisabeth from these verses?

Summarize Luke 1:8–10 by explaining that Zacharias was appointed to burn incense in the Jerusalem temple, an honor that came to a priest perhaps only once in his life.

Ask students to read Luke 1:11–13 silently, looking for what happened while Zacharias was in the temple.

- According to verse 13, what prayer would be answered for Zacharias and Elisabeth? (Point out that Zacharias and Elisabeth had likely prayed for many years to have a child. You may want to suggest that students mark the phrase "thy prayer is heard" in this verse.)
- How might Zacharias have felt when he heard that he and Elisabeth would have a son even though they were "well stricken in years"? (verse 7).



The author's intent

As you teach from the scriptures, try to determine what the prophetic writer wanted to communicate. To learn more about Luke's intentions for writing his Gospel, read "Introduction to the Gospel According to St. Luke," which precedes this lesson.

Summarize Luke 1:14–17 by explaining that the angel Gabriel told Zacharias that he and Elisabeth would “have joy and gladness” (verse 14) and that their son would prepare many people for the Lord.

Invite a student to read Luke 1:18–20 aloud, and ask the class to look for how Zacharias responded to the angel. Invite students to report what they find.

- What happened to Zacharias because he doubted the angel’s words?
- According to verse 20, what did the angel say would happen to the words he spoke to Zacharias? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The Lord’s words spoken through His servants will be fulfilled in their season.** Write this truth on the board.)
- What does the phrase “in their season” mean? (According to the Lord’s timing.)

Refer to the statement on the board, and ask:

- How can knowing this truth affect how we respond to the Lord’s promises? (After students respond, revise the truth on the board to create the following statement: **We can trust the Lord’s promises because His words will be fulfilled in their season.**)
- How can this truth help someone who longs for a divine promise to be fulfilled?

Summarize Luke 1:21–24 by explaining that when Zacharias left the temple, he could not speak. Elisabeth later became pregnant, as the angel had promised.

Ask a student (preferably a young woman) to read aloud Elisabeth’s words in Luke 1:25. Invite the class to consider how Elisabeth may have felt as she prepared to have a child. You may need to explain that Elisabeth’s statement that the Lord had “take[n] away [her] reproach among men” may refer to the shame she experienced because of an incorrect view common in ancient cultures that childlessness was a punishment from God.

Luke 1:26–38

The angel Gabriel announces the forthcoming birth of Jesus to Mary

Show the picture *The Annunciation: The Angel Gabriel Appears to Mary* (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 28; see also LDS.org), and ask students to imagine what it might feel like to have an angel unexpectedly appear to them. Summarize Luke 1:26–27 by explaining that in the sixth month of Elisabeth’s pregnancy, the angel Gabriel was sent to Mary, a young woman in Nazareth.

Invite a student to read Luke 1:28–33 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for phrases that might have helped Mary understand the importance of the task God was giving her.

- What phrases might have helped Mary understand the importance of the task God was giving her?
- What does the title “Son of the Highest” (verse 32) mean? (Students may use different words but should identify the following doctrine: **Jesus Christ is the Son of God the Father.**)

Ask students to read Luke 1:34 silently, looking for Mary’s question. Invite them to report what they find. Explain that Mary’s statement “I know not a man” means that she was a virgin.

Invite a student to read Luke 1:35–37 aloud, and ask students to look for the angel’s answer to Mary’s question.

Explain that we do not know, beyond the accounts in the scriptures, how the miracle of Jesus Christ’s conception happened; we are simply told that it was miraculous and that the child who would be born would be the Son of God.

- As recorded in Luke 1:37, what truth did the angel state that helps explain this miraculous event? (Students should identify the following truth: **With God nothing shall be impossible.** You may want to suggest that students mark this truth in their scriptures.)
- What do you think Mary or Elisabeth might say to encourage us if we feel that something we hope for is impossible?
- What is an experience that has strengthened your belief that nothing is impossible with God?

Invite students to read Luke 1:38 silently, looking for how Mary responded to the angel.



The Angel Gabriel appears to Mary

Avoid speculation

Do not speculate on the sacred topic of how the Savior was conceived. Instead, focus on the teachings in the scriptures, bearing in mind the testimony in them that Christ’s birth was a miracle and that Mary “was called a virgin, both before and after she gave birth” (Ezra Taft Benson, “Joy in Christ,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1986, 4; see also 1 Nephi 11:13–20; Alma 7:10).

- What evidence do you see in this verse that Mary believed the angel's words?
- How did Mary's acceptance of the angel's words differ from Zacharias's response to the angel's announcement in the temple?

Encourage students to follow the examples of Mary and Elisabeth by believing that in their own lives nothing the Lord asks of them will be impossible with His help.

Luke 1:39–56

Mary visits Elisabeth, and both women testify of the Savior



Mary visits Elisabeth

If possible, display a picture of Mary visiting Elisabeth during Elisabeth's pregnancy. Ask students whether they can identify who is portrayed and what is happening in the picture.

- Mary and Elisabeth may seem like ordinary women, but in what ways were they filling important roles that would change the world?

Invite a student to read Luke 1:41–45 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Elisabeth's testimony to Mary.

- What did Elisabeth already understand about Mary?

Invite a student (preferably a young woman) to read Luke 1:46–49 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Mary praised the Lord.

- What phrase recorded in verse 49 did Mary use to describe what the Lord had done for her? ("Great things.")

Invite students to reread Luke 1:38, 45–46 silently, looking for what Mary had done that allowed the Lord to do "great things" for her.

- What had Mary done that allowed the Lord to do "great things" for her?

Point out that just as Zacharias, Elisabeth, and Mary had their own roles to play in the divine plan, we too have important roles designated by the Lord.

- Based on Mary's example, what will happen in our lives if we faithfully try to fulfill the roles the Lord has for us? (Help students identify the following principle: **If we faithfully try to fulfill the roles the Lord has for us, He can do great things in our lives.**)
- What are some roles that the Lord wants you to fulfill in His plan?
- What might happen in your life if you respond to the Lord as Mary did?

Luke 1:57–80

John the Baptist is born

Summarize Luke 1:57–80 by explaining that after Elisabeth gave birth, Zacharias affirmed that the child should be named John. When he did so, he immediately regained his ability to speak and he prophesied about the missions of Jesus Christ and John.

Testify that as we faithfully fulfill our divinely given roles as Zacharias, Elisabeth, and Mary did, the Lord can do great things for us and through us. Encourage students to fulfill their own roles in the Lord's plan.

Commentary and Background Information

Luke 1:38. "Be it unto me according to thy word"

Luke's Greek rendering of Mary's words reflects the strength of her decision. She did not reluctantly submit but resolutely accepted her role in the plan of salvation,

as if to say, "Absolutely yes. I will be the Lord's servant as you have said." (For additional insight into Mary's response, see the section for Luke 1:38 in the *New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 142.)

LESSON 44

Luke 2

Introduction

Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born. Shepherds obeyed an angel's instruction to seek out the newborn Jesus, and then they proclaimed Jesus's birth to others. Simeon blessed Jesus at the

temple, and Anna shared her witness that the Redeemer had been born. Jesus grew "in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 2:1–20

Jesus is born in Bethlehem

Consider having the class sing "Joy to the World" (*Hymns*, no. 201) or another Christmas hymn as part of the devotional.

Display the picture *Joseph and Mary Travel to Bethlehem* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 29; see also LDS.org). Ask students to consider how much they know about the events surrounding the Savior's birth.

To prepare students to study Luke 2:1–20, invite them to take the following true-or-false quiz. (Before class, prepare a copy of the quiz for each student.)

True–False Quiz (Luke 2:1–20)

- ___ 1. Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem to pay taxes.
- ___ 2. Mary and Joseph had to travel 27 miles (44 kilometers) from Nazareth to Bethlehem.
- ___ 3. Mary laid the infant Jesus in a manger because the inn was full.
- ___ 4. The shepherds followed the star to the manger where Jesus lay.
- ___ 5. Besides Mary and Joseph, the first people on record to have seen Jesus were the shepherds.
- ___ 6. The angel told the shepherds not to tell anyone what they had seen.

Invite students to look for the answers to the quiz as they study Luke 2.

Invite a student to read Luke 2:1–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem.

- Why did Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem? (Point out that Luke 2:1, footnote *b* clarifies that Caesar wanted to register, or count, the people. This was done for taxation purposes.)

Invite students to turn to Bible Maps, no. 11, "The Holy Land in New Testament Times," located in the Bible appendix. Ask students to find Nazareth and Bethlehem on the map and, using the key, calculate approximately how far Joseph and Mary traveled. After students respond, explain that the distance of 85–90 miles (137–145 kilometers) between Nazareth and Bethlehem would have taken at least four to five days to walk, and perhaps longer for Joseph and Mary given Mary's condition.

Ask students to ponder what they think would be the appropriate circumstances for the birth of the Creator and Savior of the world.

Invite a student to read Luke 2:6–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the circumstances of Jesus's birth.

- Despite Jesus's uniquely important status as the Only Begotten Son of God in the flesh, what were the circumstances of His birth?



Use scripture study aids

The Church has prepared a number of scripture study aids and included them in the standard works for some languages. These include reference materials such as footnotes, indexes, pictures, and maps. They are some of the most valuable resources teachers and students can use as they study the scriptures. Encourage students to use available study aids in their personal scripture study.



Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Luke 2:8–14. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior’s birth was announced. Invite students to report what they find. Display the picture *The Angel Appears to the Shepherds* (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 31; see also LDS.org).

- According to verse 10, what can we experience because the Savior was born? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Because the Savior was born on the earth, we can experience great joy.**)

As students continue to study Luke 2, invite them to look for examples of how knowledge of the Savior’s birth brought joy to others.

Invite a student to read Luke 2:15–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the shepherds responded to the angel’s message.

- What phrases indicate how the shepherds responded to the angel’s message? (You may want to suggest that students mark the phrases “let us now go” in verse 15 and “they came with haste” in verse 16.)
- What did the shepherds receive a witness, or testimony, of because they heeded this message?
- What did the shepherds do after they received their witness of Jesus Christ?
- Why do you think the shepherds shared with others what they had experienced?
- What principle can we learn from this account about what happens when we receive our own testimony of Jesus Christ? (Using their own words, students should identify a principle similar to the following: **When we receive our own testimony of Jesus Christ, we desire to share our testimony with others.**)

Invite students to think about a time when they felt a desire to share their testimonies of Jesus Christ and His gospel with others. Encourage them to ponder what motivated that desire. Invite a few students to share with the class their experiences.

Luke 2:21–39

Simeon and Anna declare Jesus to be the Savior of the world

Summarize Luke 2:21–24 by explaining that after Jesus’s birth, Mary and Joseph presented Him at the temple in accordance with Jewish law (see Exodus 13:2). Two individuals at the temple that day recognized the infant Jesus as the Messiah. Invite the young men in the class to silently read the account of Simeon in Luke 2:25–32. (You may need to explain that the phrase “waiting for the consolation of Israel” in verse 25 refers to waiting for the Messiah to come.) Invite the young women to silently read the account of Anna in Luke 2:36–38 (and if necessary, explain that “fourscore” in verse 37 means 80). As students read their assigned verses, invite them to look for answers to the following questions:

- How did knowledge of the Savior’s birth bring joy to this person?
- In what way did he or she testify of Jesus Christ?

After sufficient time, invite a young man to stand, summarize the account he read, and report his answers to the preceding questions. Display the picture *Simeon Reverencing the Christ Child* (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 32; see also LDS.org).

Summarize Luke 2:33–35 by explaining that Simeon also blessed Mary and Joseph.

Invite a young woman to stand, summarize the account she read, and report her answers to the preceding questions.

Invite students to explain how knowing that the Savior was born can bring us joy. Invite those who feel comfortable doing so to share their testimonies of Jesus Christ with the class.

Summarize Luke 2:39 by explaining that following these events, Mary, Joseph, and Jesus returned to Nazareth.

Luke 2:40–52

Young Jesus teaches in the temple

Invite students to write down in their class notebooks or scripture study journals one area they would like to improve in. Invite a few students who feel comfortable doing so to share with the class what they wrote. (Remind students not to share anything too personal or private.)

- How could knowing what Jesus was like when He was young help you as a youth?




Explain that we have few details about Jesus's youth, but those that are recorded can be a great blessing and guide to us as we seek to improve ourselves. As students study the remainder of Luke 2, invite them to look for truths that can help us know what areas we should focus on as we try to improve ourselves.

Display the picture *Jesus Praying with His Mother* (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 33; see also LDS.org). Invite a student to read Luke 2:40 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Luke described Jesus's childhood. Explain that *waxed* means grew or increased. Invite students to report what they find.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Luke 2:41–47. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus did when He was 12 years old.

- Why had Jesus stayed behind at the temple? (Invite students to read the excerpt of Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 2:46 that is found in Luke 2:46, footnote *c*, looking for how the Joseph Smith Translation clarifies what Jesus was doing at the temple and how this clarification better fits the description of the event in Luke 2:47.)

Invite a student to read Luke 2:48–50 aloud. Ask students to follow along and look for what Jesus said to Mary and Joseph when they found Him.

 Instead of asking a student to read Luke 2:48–50, you may want to show “Young Jesus Teaches in the Temple” (2:30) from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos*, which is available on LDS.org.

- What did Jesus say to Mary and Joseph when they found Him?
- What does this account reveal about Jesus's knowledge of His true identity and about His character in His youth?

Invite a student to read Luke 2:51–52 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for ways in which Jesus grew.

- What does it mean to “[increase] in wisdom”? (Develop wisdom.) To increase in “stature”? (Develop physically.) To increase in “favour with God”? (Develop spiritually.) To increase in “favour with . . . man”? (Develop socially.)
- Based on verse 52, how would you state a principle that can guide us in following Jesus's example? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **We can follow Jesus's example by gaining wisdom and by growing physically, spiritually, and socially.**)
- Why is it important for us to develop in *each* of these four areas? (So that we become well-balanced people.)
- How have you been blessed as you have tried to follow Jesus's example by developing yourself in these areas?

Write the following headings on the board and invite students to copy them in their class notebooks or scripture study journals: *Intellectually*, *Physically*, *Spiritually*, and *Socially*. Ask students to write under each of these categories a goal for their personal development. Encourage students to act on these goals. Conclude by sharing your testimony of the principles identified in today's lesson.

(The answers to the quiz are as follows: 1. True; 2. False; 3. True; 4. False; 5. True; 6. False.)

Scripture Mastery Review

Repetition helps students remember the location of scripture mastery passages. Use the scripture mastery cards, or have students create their own cards by writing key words or meanings on one side of blank notecards or pieces of paper and the references on the other side. Divide students into pairs. Ask them to quiz each other using the cards. Invite students to use these cards often to quiz themselves and each other. You might use the clues on the cards to do the scripture chase activity with the class (see “scripture chase” in the appendix of this manual).



LESSON 45

Luke 3–4

Introduction

John the Baptist preached repentance and testified of the coming Messiah. Jesus Christ was baptized by John and then fasted in the wilderness for 40 days. After traveling to Galilee, Jesus declared in Nazareth that He

was the Messiah. The people of Nazareth rejected Him, and He went to Capernaum, where He healed the sick and cast out devils.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 3:1–22

John the Baptist prophesies of Jesus Christ

Before class, ask a student to study the account of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath in 1 Kings 17:1–16 and another student to study the account of Naaman and Elisha in 2 Kings 5:1–15. Explain that they will give a brief summary of these accounts later in the lesson. Ask them to emphasize what Naaman and the widow of Zarephath did to demonstrate their faith and to point out that both were Gentiles (not of the house of Israel).

To begin the lesson, ask students to write on a piece of paper about a time when they felt separated or isolated from those around them as a result of living the restored gospel of Jesus Christ (make sure that students do not write their names on their papers). After sufficient time, ask students to give you their papers. Read a few of the experiences aloud to the class.

Invite students to look for a truth as they study Luke 3:1–22 that can explain why those who live the gospel may feel separated from others at times.

Explain that under the law of Moses, the high priest functioned as the presiding officer of the Aaronic Priesthood and political head of the nation of Israel. However, by the time of the Savior's ministry, the office of high priest had become corrupted. Rather than being selected by God, high priests were chosen by men such as Herod and other Roman officials (see Bible Dictionary, "High priest").

Invite a student to read Luke 3:2–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom God spoke to instead of the high priests.

- Whom did the word of the Lord come to instead of the high priests? ("John the son of Zacharias," also known as John the Baptist.)
- What was John the Baptist teaching?

Explain that in John's day some people believed that because they were descendants of Abraham, they were better or more loved by God than non-Israelites. Invite a student to read Luke 3:7–9 aloud, and ask the class to look for what John the Baptist taught the Jews they needed to do to please God.

- What did John teach the Jews they needed to do to please God? (Explain that the "fruit" is a symbol of the results of the choices we make.)
- According to verse 9, what will happen to those who do not bring forth "good fruit," or live righteously?

Summarize Luke 3:10–15 by explaining that John taught specific groups of Jews how they could bring forth good fruit. John's ministry was impressive, and some thought he might be the Messiah.

Invite a student to read Luke 3:16–17 aloud, and ask the class to look for what John said the Messiah would do when He came.

- What did John say the coming Messiah would do?

Explain that the phrase “baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire” (verse 16) refers to the purifying and sanctifying effect of receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost.

To help students further understand verse 17, display a handful of kernels or small pebbles and some sawdust or small pieces of newspaper. Mix the kernels and sawdust together, and place the mixture in a shallow tray.

- How might someone separate the kernels from the sawdust?

Explain that after wheat was harvested and threshed (when the grain was separated from the rest of the plant), the grain would be winnowed. Winnowing is an ancient method used to separate wheat kernels from the chaff (the outer shell) and the husk. A winnower would use a large shovel or wooden fork (translated in the scriptures as “fan”) to throw the threshed wheat into the air. The breeze would then carry away the lighter, undesirable chaff, and the heavier wheat kernels would fall in a pile on the threshing floor.

To illustrate this concept, display a handheld fan (you can use heavy paper, cardboard, or folded paper if necessary). Invite a student to come to the front of the class, and ask him or her to wave the fan over the kernels and sawdust. As the student waves the fan, gently toss the mixture so that the moving air begins to blow away the sawdust while the kernels drop back to the tray. Invite the student to be seated.

- What do the wheat and the chaff represent? (The wheat represents the righteous, and the chaff represents the wicked.)
- According to verses 16–17, who separates the righteous from the wicked? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Jesus Christ separates the righteous from the wicked.**)
- Although the final separation of the righteous from the wicked will take place at the Day of Judgment, in what ways can following Jesus Christ and living His gospel cause His disciples to be separated from others now?
- Why do we need to understand that seeking to follow Jesus Christ and live His gospel can cause us to be or feel separated from others?

Summarize Luke 3:18–22 by explaining that Jesus came to be baptized by John the Baptist. Later, John the Baptist was put in prison by Herod.

Luke 3:23–38

The lineage of Jesus is set forth

Summarize Luke 3:23–38 by explaining that Luke included a genealogy of Jesus and testified that Joseph was the “supposed” (not actual) father of Jesus, who was the Son of God.

Luke 4:1–13

Jesus is tempted by Satan in the wilderness

Explain that Luke 4:1–13 contains an account of Jesus fasting for 40 days in the wilderness and rejecting Satan’s temptations.

Luke 4:14–30

Jesus announces that He is the Messiah

List the words *broken*, *bruised*, *captive*, *poor*, and *blind* on the board. Ask students to ponder a time when one or more of these words may have described how they felt about themselves. Invite them as they study Luke 4:14–30 to look for how they might find relief from these feelings.

Summarize Luke 4:14–17 by explaining that after Jesus returned from the wilderness, He began to preach in the synagogues in Galilee. Soon, He returned to His hometown of Nazareth. While there, He stood in a synagogue and read from the book of Isaiah.

Invite a student to read Luke 4:18–21 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Isaiah taught about the divine mission of the Messiah.

- What did Jesus testify of to the people of His hometown of Nazareth? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Jesus is the Messiah**)

who was sent to heal the brokenhearted and deliver those who are spiritually captive.)

- What experiences have you had that have shown you that Jesus Christ continues to heal and deliver us in our day?

Invite a student to read Luke 4:22 aloud, and ask the class to look for how the people of Nazareth responded to Jesus's bold declaration that He was the long-awaited Messiah.

- How did the people react to Jesus's declaration?
- Based on verse 22, why do you think the people of Nazareth had a difficult time believing that Jesus was the Messiah?

Summarize Luke 4:23 by explaining that Jesus knew that the people in Nazareth would challenge Him to prove He was the Messiah by repeating the miracles He had performed in Capernaum.

Invite students to scan Luke 4:24–27 silently, looking for two Old Testament accounts the Savior referred to as He responded to the people of Nazareth. (You may need to clarify that Elias refers to Elijah and Eliseus refers to Elisha.) Invite students to report what they find.

Ask the two students you previously invited to study these accounts to now present their summaries. Afterward, explain that Jesus taught those in Nazareth that although there were Israelite widows and lepers, it was two non-Israelites (Gentiles) who experienced miracles.

- In what ways did Naaman and the widow of Zarephath demonstrate faith?
- How was the faith of the widow and Naaman different from the faith of the people in Nazareth?

Point out that Jesus performed very few miracles in Nazareth because the people there generally lacked faith in Him (see Matthew 13:54–58; Mark 6:1–6).

- What principle can we learn about faith when we contrast the people in Nazareth with the widow and Naaman? (Help students to identify a principle similar to the following: **When we demonstrate our faith in Jesus Christ, we can see miracles occur.**)

Ask students to come to the board and make a list of ways we can demonstrate our faith that Jesus Christ is our Savior. After students have completed the list, ask:

- What are examples of blessings or miracles that come only as we first act in faith?

Invite a student to read Luke 4:28–30 aloud, and ask the class to look for how those in the synagogue responded to Jesus. Invite students to report what they find.

- In what ways does this account illustrate how Jesus Christ will separate the wicked from the righteous? (See Luke 3:17.)

Luke 4:31–44

Jesus casts out devils and heals the sick

Divide students into pairs. Invite them to read Luke 4:31–44 aloud with their partners and look for the blessings the people of Capernaum received in comparison with the blessings the people of Nazareth received. After they read, invite them to discuss their answers to the following questions with their partners (you may want to write these questions on the board):

- How did the people in Capernaum respond differently to Jesus, in comparison with those in Nazareth?
- What blessings did the people of Capernaum receive, in comparison with the blessings received by the people of Nazareth?
- How do these accounts illustrate the principle that as we demonstrate our faith in Jesus Christ, we can see miracles occur?

Invite a few students to share their responses to the last two questions with the class.

Conclude the lesson by sharing your testimony of Jesus Christ and of the blessings you have received as you have demonstrated faith in Him. Ask students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals several ways in which they can demonstrate their faith in Jesus Christ. Invite them to make a goal to do the things they wrote down.

Compare and contrast

A passage of scripture is often clarified when it is compared or contrasted with something else. Helping students note the similarities and differences between teachings, people, or events can bring gospel truths into sharper focus for them.

Home-Study Lesson

Mark 10–Luke 4 (Unit 9)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Mark 10–Luke 4 (unit 9) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Mark 10–16)

As students studied about the Savior's invitation for little children to come to Him, they learned that as we receive the gospel like little children, we will be prepared to enter God's kingdom. As they read about Jesus Christ's admonition to the rich young ruler, they learned that because He loves us, the Lord will help us know what we lack in our efforts to follow Him, and if we ask the Lord, He will teach us what we need to do to inherit eternal life. The accounts of the widow giving her mites and of Mary anointing the Savior helped students learn that if we are willing to give all that we have to the Lord, He will accept our offering even if it appears small in comparison to that of others and that the Savior is pleased when we give Him our best.

Day 2 (Luke 1)

In this lesson students studied about the angel Gabriel's promise that Zacharias and Elisabeth would have a son. They also learned that Gabriel told Mary that she would be the mother of the Son of God. From these scriptures students learned the following truths: The Lord's words spoken through His servants will be fulfilled in their season. Jesus Christ is the Son of God the Father. With God, nothing shall be impossible. If we faithfully try to fulfill the roles the Lord has for us, He can do great things in our lives.

Day 3 (Luke 2)

As students studied about the birth of Jesus Christ, they learned that because the Savior was born on the earth, we can experience great joy. They also learned that as we heed divine instructions, we can receive our own testimony of Jesus Christ, and when we receive our own testimony of Jesus Christ, we will want to share our testimony with others. As students studied about Jesus's youth, they learned that we can follow Jesus's example by gaining wisdom and by growing physically, spiritually, and socially.

Day 4 (Luke 3–4)

In this lesson students learned about John the Baptist and about Jesus Christ's baptism. They also learned about Jesus's declaration in Nazareth that He was the Messiah. From these accounts students learned the following truths: Jesus Christ separates the righteous from the wicked. Jesus is the Messiah who was sent to heal the brokenhearted and deliver those who are spiritually captive. When we demonstrate our faith in Jesus Christ, we can see miracles occur.

Introduction

This lesson can help students understand some of what Jesus Christ suffered as part of His Atonement. Additionally, students will come to understand some of the reasons why the Savior suffered for us.

Suggestions for Teaching

Mark 14:10–16:20

Jesus begins His Atonement as He suffers in Gethsemane for our sins; He is betrayed by Judas Iscariot and brought before Jewish leaders

Ask students to silently ponder the following questions:

- Have you ever felt that no one understands you or what you are going through?
- Have you ever felt that you cannot be forgiven of your past sins?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Mark 14 that can help someone who might have these feelings.

Invite a student to read Mark 14:32–34 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior felt in the Garden of Gethsemane.

- How did the Savior feel in the Garden of Gethsemane?

After students respond, write the following phrases on the board: *sore amazed, very heavy, exceeding sorrowful.*

Explain that these phrases refer to the suffering Jesus Christ experienced as part of His Atonement.

- What do these phrases teach us about the Atonement of Jesus Christ? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **As part of His Atonement, Jesus Christ suffered and sorrowed in the Garden of Gethsemane.**)

To help students understand this doctrine, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“In Gethsemane, the suffering Jesus began to be ‘sore amazed’ (Mark 14:33), or, in the Greek, ‘awestruck’ and ‘astonished.’

“Imagine, Jehovah, the Creator of this and other worlds, ‘astonished’! . . . He had never personally known the exquisite and exacting process of an atonement before. Thus, when the agony came in its fulness, it was so much, much worse than even He with his unique intellect had ever imagined! No wonder an angel appeared to strengthen him! (See Luke 22:43.)

“The cumulative weight of all mortal sins—past, present, and future—pressed upon that perfect, sinless, and sensitive Soul! All our infirmities and sicknesses were somehow, too, a part of the awful arithmetic of the Atonement. (See Alma 7:11–12; Isa. 53:3–5; Matt. 8:17.) . . .

“In this extremity, did He, perchance, hope for a rescuing ram in the thicket? I do not know. His suffering—as it were, *enormity* multiplied by *infinity*—evoked His later soul-cry on the cross, and it was a cry of forsakenness. (See Matt. 27:46.) . . .

“The wondrous and glorious Atonement was the central act in all the human history. It was the hinge on which all else that finally matters turned. But it turned upon Jesus’ spiritual submissiveness!” (“Willing to Submit,” *Ensign*, May 1985, 72–73).

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Mark 14:35–42. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior did because of His intense suffering.


- What did the Savior do because of His intense suffering? (Help students understand that Jesus’s suffering was so severe that He asked if it were possible for Him not to experience it.)

Write the following phrase on the board: *Jesus Christ suffered . . . so that He . . .*

Explain that other scripture passages can help us understand Jesus Christ’s suffering and why He would be willing to suffer for us.

Write the following references on the board: *Isaiah 53:3–5* and *Alma 7:11–13*. Divide students into pairs, and invite them to read the verses together, looking for what the Savior suffered and why He suffered. Ask students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how they would complete the phrase written on the board using what they learn in *Isaiah 53:3–5* and *Alma 7:11–13*. (You may need to explain that the word *succor* in *Alma 7:12* means to hurry to give relief or to go to someone’s aid.)

After sufficient time, invite several students to report how they completed the phrase. Their answers should be similar to the following: Jesus Christ suffered our pains, afflictions, temptations, sicknesses, infirmities, and sorrows so that He would know how to succor us. Jesus Christ suffered for our sins so that He could blot out our transgressions. Remind students that the Savior’s suffering for the sins of mankind began in Gethsemane and continued through and culminated in His Crucifixion on the cross.

 To help students feel the importance of the truth that as part of His Atonement, Jesus Christ suffered and sorrowed in the Garden of Gethsemane, consider showing the video “Special Witness—Elder Holland” (2:38), in which Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles testifies of the Savior’s suffering in Gethsemane. This video is available on LDS.org.

- How might knowing what the Savior suffered and why He suffered help you as you face trials, pains, and afflictions? (See D&C 45:3–5.)
- When have you felt the Savior succor you in a time of pain, sickness, or sorrow?
- What feelings have you experienced as you have repented and felt your sins blotted out (or erased) through the Atonement of Jesus Christ?

Summarize Mark 14:43–16:20 by explaining that Jesus was taken to an illegal trial before the Sanhedrin (Jewish leaders) and condemned to die. After the Savior died on the cross and was resurrected, He appeared to His Apostles and sent them forth to preach, promising them that signs would follow those who believe. (Note: The death, burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ were previously covered in detail as the students studied Matthew 27–28.)

Ask a student to read Mark 16:15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the commission the Lord gave to His Apostles.

- How can you help to fulfill the commission to preach the gospel to “all the world” today and in the future?

You may want to conclude by testifying of the truths you have discussed today.

Next Unit (Luke 5:1–10:37)

Ask students to ponder whether they have ever wondered if they can be forgiven of their sins. Explain that as they study Luke 5:1–10:37 in the coming week, they will learn about the Savior’s willingness to forgive their sins and what they can do to be forgiven.

LESSON 46

Luke 5

Introduction

After miraculously catching a multitude of fish with the Savior's help, Peter, James, and John forsook all to follow the Savior and become fishers of men. Jesus healed a leper and a paralyzed man. He called Matthew to be

a disciple and taught that He came to call sinners to repentance. Jesus also taught the parable of new wine in old bottles.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 5:1–11

The Lord calls Peter, James, and John to become fishers of men

Write the following question on the board: *When have you been asked to do something without knowing all the reasons for doing it?* Ask students to ponder the question, and invite a few to share their experiences.

- Why can it be difficult to follow instructions without understanding the reasons for them?
- What commandments or counsel from Church leaders might some youth find difficult to obey if they don't fully understand the reasons for them? (Consider listing students' responses on the board.)

Invite students to look for a principle in Luke 5:1–11 that can help them when they don't fully understand why they are asked to follow the counsel or commandments of the Lord.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Luke 5:1–5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior asked Simon (Peter) to do after He had finished preaching. Ask students to report what they find. (If necessary, point out that verse 4, footnote *a* clarifies that *draught* refers to a catch or haul of fish.)

- What did Simon tell the Savior about their previous efforts to catch fish?
- What might Simon's own fishing experience have led him to think when the Savior told him to let down the nets again?
- What did Simon say that showed he trusted the Lord?

Invite a student to read Luke 5:6–9 aloud, and ask the class to look for what happened when Simon did what the Lord asked.

- What happened when Simon did what the Lord asked?
- What principle can we learn from Simon's willingness to do what the Lord asked even if he didn't understand why? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we do what the Lord asks even when we do not understand why, He can provide greater blessings than we could have anticipated.** Using students' words, write this principle on the board.)
- In what ways does living this principle require us to trust Jesus Christ?

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Consider providing students with a copy of the statement:



"This life is an experience in profound trust—trust in Jesus Christ, trust in His teachings, trust in our capacity as led by the Holy Spirit to obey those teachings for happiness now and for a purposeful, supremely happy eternal existence. To trust means to obey willingly without knowing the end from the beginning (see Prov. 3:5–7). To produce fruit, your trust in the Lord must be more powerful and enduring than your confidence in your own personal feelings and experience" ("Trust in the Lord," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 17).

- How can we develop this kind of trust in the Savior?

Help students identify implied principles

Many principles are not stated directly in the scriptures but are instead implied. Implied principles can often be discovered by asking, "What is the moral or point of this story?" Help students analyze the actions, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals or groups in the scriptural account and identify the blessings or consequences that came as a result. Studying scriptural accounts in this way can help make implied gospel principles more apparent.

- How have you or your family received greater blessings than you anticipated by following the Lord’s directions even when you didn’t fully understand the reasons? (Answers might include experiences that helped students eventually come to understand why the Lord gave such directions.)

On a piece of paper they can take home with them, invite students to write down counsel or commandments from the Lord that they could more faithfully follow even though they don’t fully understand the reasons for doing so. (If time permits, you could invite students to look through *For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011] for ideas.)

Summarize Luke 5:10–11 by explaining that Peter, James, and John left their fishing boats and nets behind to follow Jesus.

Luke 5:12–26

Jesus heals a leper and a man with palsy

Show students the following items (or draw pictures of them on the board): syringe, bandage, soap, and icepack.

- How can these items help heal people of an illness or wound?
- Besides illness and physical injury, what else might someone need to be healed of? (List students’ responses on the board. Answers may include sin, addiction, despair, and bitterness.)

Invite students to look for principles as they study Luke 5:12–25 that teach us what we can do to help ourselves and others receive needed healing.

Draw the following chart on the board and invite students to copy it into their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

Similarities	Differences

Write the following references on the board: *Luke 5:12–15* and *Luke 5:17–25*. Explain that these verses relate that the Savior healed two men. One of the men had leprosy, and the other man had palsy, meaning he was paralyzed. Divide students into pairs. Ask them to read each account with their partners and discuss the following questions:

- How are these two healings similar? How are they different?
- What role did faith play in each account?

Ask students to record on their charts what they find. After sufficient time, invite students to report what they learned. Consider inviting students to mark the phrase “he saw their faith” in verse 20. Ensure that students understand that the faith of those who brought the man with palsy to the Savior contributed to this man being healed.

- What principles can we learn from these accounts about how we can be healed and what we can do to help others be healed? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principles: **As we exercise faith and come to the Savior, He can heal us. We can help others come to the Savior so they can be healed.** Write these principles on the board.)
- In what ways can we receive healing from the Savior? (Help students understand that the Savior may remove our infirmities from us, or He may give us the courage, faith, comfort, and peace we need to endure or overcome our infirmities.)

Ask students to consider the infirmities listed on the board that people may need to be healed of.

- What could you do to help bring people to the Savior to receive His healing power?
- When have you or someone you know been healed through exercising faith in the Savior? (Remind students that they should not share experiences that are too personal or private.)
- When have you seen a person bring someone else to the Lord to receive the Savior’s healing power?

Ask students to ponder what they can do to exercise greater faith in Jesus Christ to be healed, forgiven, or comforted or what they can do to bring a friend or someone else to the Savior. Encourage them to act on any promptings they may receive.

Luke 5:27–35

Scribes and Pharisees question why Jesus eats with publicans and sinners

Invite a student to read Luke 5:27–28 aloud, and ask the class to look for the Savior’s invitation to Levi. Ask students to report what they find.

- What impresses you about how Levi responded to the Savior’s invitation?

Remind students that Levi was also called Matthew (see Matthew 9:9). He was a publican, meaning he collected taxes from his fellow Jews for the Roman government. The Jews generally hated publicans and viewed them as outcasts, sinners, and even traitors to the nation of Israel. Summarize Luke 5:29–35 by explaining that while Jesus was eating with Levi and others, the scribes and Pharisees condemned Him for eating with sinners. Jesus taught that He came to call sinners to repentance.

Luke 5:36–39

Jesus gives the parable of new wine in old bottles

Explain that the Savior used a parable to teach the scribes and Pharisees. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Luke 5:36–39. Ask the class to follow along and look for the objects the Savior used in His parable.

- What objects did the Savior use to teach His parable?

Show students a new piece of cloth and an old piece of cloth with a hole in it. Explain that the “new garment” in verse 36 refers to cloth that had not yet shrunk. One cannot patch an old garment with new cloth because when the new piece shrinks, it would make the hole worse than before. In a similar way, the gospel of Jesus Christ was not just a patching up of old beliefs and practices but a complete restoration of truth.

Invite students to read verse 37, footnote *a* in the LDS edition of the King James Bible to discover that *bottles* referred to “leather bags or wineskins,” and if possible, show students pieces of new and old leather.

- What is the difference between new and old leather? (New leather is soft and pliable; old leather is hard and brittle.)

Explain that as new wine fermented in leather bags, gases would build up inside and stretch the leather. Once a wineskin had already been stretched in this way, attempting to ferment new wine in it again would risk bursting it.

In the parable, the new wine represents the Savior’s teachings and the fulness of the everlasting gospel, and the old wine represents the practices, traditions, and beliefs of the Pharisees under the law of Moses.

- In what way could the “old bottles” represent the scribes and Pharisees? (Just as old bottles are too inflexible to hold new wine, the scribes and Pharisees were hard-hearted and unwilling to change to accept the Savior and His teachings.)
- Who could the “new bottles” represent? (Those people who were humble and willing to change to accept the Savior and His teachings.)
- What can we learn from this parable about what we need to do to receive the Savior and His gospel? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **To accept the Savior and His gospel, we must be humble and willing to change.** Invite students to consider writing this principle in the margins of their scriptures next to Luke 5:36–39.)

To help students to understand this principle, invite them to review Luke 5 and look for examples of how individuals were hardened and unyielding in their attitude toward the Savior and His teachings as well as examples of how individuals were humble and willing to change and grow by following the Savior. Invite a few students to report what they find.

Conclude the lesson by sharing your testimony of the principles taught in Luke 5.

Luke 6:1–7:18

Introduction

Jesus taught about the importance of doing good to others, including on the Sabbath. After spending a night in prayer, He called the Twelve Apostles and then taught

them and a multitude of people. He also healed a centurion's servant and raised a widow's son from death.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 6

Jesus heals on the Sabbath, chooses the Twelve Apostles, and teaches the multitude

(Note: Much of the content in Luke 6 was covered in the lessons for Matthew 5–7; 10:1–4; and Mark 3:1–6. This portion of the lesson will focus on Luke 6:31–38.)

Ask students to imagine that in their Church meetings on Sunday they hear an announcement about a service project for a family that lives nearby. After the announcement is made, they overhear four different responses. Invite four students to read aloud the following hypothetical responses:

1. "That family has been through a lot lately. I am happy to help in any way that I can."
2. "There had better be refreshments afterward, because if there aren't, I'm not going."
3. "I don't really want to go, but I could use some help next week with a project that I'm organizing, so I should probably help out now."
4. "If my friend is going, I will go."

- What do these examples suggest about the reasons why people sometimes serve?

Ask students to consider opportunities they have had to serve and how they felt about serving. Invite them to look for principles as they study Luke 6–7 that can help them give service in more meaningful ways.

Summarize Luke 6 by explaining that while Jesus was in Galilee early in His ministry, He healed a man's withered hand on the Sabbath, spent a night in prayer, and called the Twelve Apostles. Jesus then began to teach them and "a great multitude of people" (verse 17) how to receive heavenly rewards.

Invite students to read Luke 6:19 silently, looking for what Jesus did for the people before He began to teach them. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Luke 6:31–35. Ask the class to follow along, looking for counsel Jesus gave His disciples.

- What counsel did Jesus give His disciples?
- According to verse 35, what should we expect in return for doing good to others? (You may want to invite students to mark the phrase "hoping for nothing.")
- What temporal rewards might people hope for when they give service?
- If we do good to others without expecting anything in return, what does the Lord promise will happen? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we do good to others without expecting anything in return, our reward will be great and we will be the children of the Highest.**)

Explain that although we are all children of God, those who do good to others fulfill their divine potential by becoming like Heavenly Father.

- Why is this promise the best reward for loving and doing good to others?

Invite a student to read Luke 6:36–38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for examples that Jesus gave of ways in which we can do good to others.

- According to verses 36–37, what examples did Jesus give of ways in which we can do good to others? (You may want to explain that those who do good in these ways will receive God’s mercy and forgiveness.)

To help students understand verse 38, bring to class a bucket, basket, or box and several other items, such as clothing, food, and bottles of water. Be sure to bring more items than can fit in the container you brought. Invite a student to come to the front of the class, and ask him or her to try to fit as many of the items into the container as possible. When the student has finished, ask him or her:

- How do the phrases “good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over” (verse 38) describe your efforts to fill this container? (Thank the student, and invite him or her to sit down.)
- How do these phrases describe the way in which Heavenly Father rewards us as we give to others? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **As we generously give to others, Heavenly Father blesses us more generously.**)
- In what ways can we be generous in giving to others?

Invite students to ponder a time when they or someone they know has given generously to others. Display the following questions (or provide students with copies of them), and invite students to respond to them in their class notebooks or scripture study journals (or on the handout you provided):

- How were you or someone you know blessed by the Lord for giving generously?
- What will you do to be more generous to others?

After sufficient time, consider inviting any students who are willing to share what they wrote. Encourage students to pray for the Lord’s help as they strive to be more generous to others.

Luke 7:1–10

Jesus heals the centurion’s servant

Explain that after teaching the multitude, Jesus entered a town called Capernaum.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Luke 7:2–5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who sought Jesus’s help after hearing that He had entered the town.

- Who sought Jesus’s help?

Explain that a centurion was a Roman army officer in command of a company of 50 to 100 men.

- What was troubling the centurion?

Point out that Jews generally disliked centurions because they represented the Romans’ political and military power over the Jews and their land (see *New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 153).

- What kind of man was this centurion?

Invite a student to read Luke 7:6–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the centurion demonstrated great faith in Jesus Christ.

- How did the centurion demonstrate great faith in Jesus Christ?

Ask a student to read Luke 7:9–10 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for how this centurion’s faith was rewarded. Ask students to report what they find.

- What principles can we learn from this account? (Students may identify several principles, including the following: **By exercising faith in Jesus Christ, we can help bring blessings into others’ lives.**)

Luke 7:11–18


Jesus raises a widow’s son from death

Explain that the day after the Savior healed the centurion’s servant, He performed another miracle.

Invite a student to read Luke 7:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus and His disciples encountered as they approached a city called Nain.

Audiovisual presentations

Audiovisual presentations best assist students in learning and applying gospel principles when they help students to better understand events or principles recorded in the scriptures. It may be helpful to write on the board specific things students could look for or questions they could consider as they watch or listen to the presentation. You may also want to pause a presentation to ask questions or to point out information that will help students.

 Instead of having a student read Luke 7:11–12 aloud, you could show a portion of the video “The Widow of Nain” (0:00–0:45) from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos*, which is available on LDS.org.

- What did Jesus and His disciples see as they approached the entrance to the city?
- According to verse 12, why was the death of this young man particularly tragic for this woman?

Point out that not only had this woman lost her only son to death, but she had also previously lost her husband. In addition to the great sorrow she must have felt, she may have had no one to support her financially.

Ask a student to read Luke 7:13–15 aloud, or show the remainder of the video (0:45–2:23). Invite the class to look for what the Savior did when He saw this woman grieving. (You might want to explain that a bier is a coffin or the stand on which a coffin is placed.)

- What did the Savior do for this woman?
- According to verse 13, why did Jesus heal this woman’s son? (You may want to point out that the widow did not ask Him to heal her son but He observed her need and then helped fulfill it.)
- What feelings might you have had if you had been in this widow’s situation and had seen the Savior raise your only son from the dead?
- What truth can we learn from this account about how we can follow Jesus Christ’s example? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **We can follow Jesus Christ’s example by demonstrating compassion for others and ministering to their unspoken needs.**)
- How can we discern others’ needs when they have not shared them with us?

Explain that as students seek the companionship of the Holy Ghost, they can receive promptings about how to respond to the hidden needs of others. Additionally, students might ponder the counsel President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency once received: “When you meet someone, treat them as if they were in serious trouble, and you will be right more than half the time” (“In the Strength of the Lord,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2004, 16).

To help students feel the truth and importance of the principle they identified, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:



“Few accounts of the Master’s ministry touch me more than His example of compassion shown to the grieving widow at Nain. . . .

“What power, what tenderness, what compassion did our Master thus demonstrate! We, too, can bless if we will but follow His noble example. Opportunities are everywhere. Needed are eyes to see the pitiable plight and ears to hear the silent pleadings of a broken heart. Yes, and a soul filled with compassion, that we might communicate not only eye to eye or voice to ear but, in the majestic style of the Savior, even heart to heart” (“Meeting Life’s Challenges,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 71).

- When have you or your family received compassion or service from others, even when you had not asked for it?
- How can following Christ’s example help us to develop the ability to discern others’ unspoken needs?

If you did not show the video, invite a student to read Luke 7:16–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the people reacted to the miracle of raising the widow’s son.

- How did the people react after Jesus raised the widow’s son?

Explain that the people may have declared that “a great prophet is risen up among us” (verse 16) because of the similarities between the healing of the son of the widow of Nain and occasions when the Old Testament prophets Elijah and Elisha had raised sons from the dead (see 1 Kings 17:17–24; 2 Kings 4:17–22, 32–37; *New Testament Student Manual*, 154).

Conclude by inviting students to look for opportunities to meet the unspoken needs of others. Encourage them to serve generously and without expecting anything in return.

LESSON 48

Luke 7:18–50

Introduction

Jesus praised John the Baptist and testified that John prepared the way for His ministry. While Jesus was

eating with Simon the Pharisee, a repentant woman showed her faith in and love for the Savior.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 7:18–35

Jesus praises John the Baptist and testifies of John's mission

Invite students to work in pairs, and give each pair a piece of paper. Ask the pairs to write down as many facts about John the Baptist from memory as they can in one minute. After one minute, ask students to count the number of facts on their papers.

- How many facts about John the Baptist were you able to list?

Invite students to tell the class about some of the facts they listed.

If possible, display a tall reed of grass and a soft piece of clothing. Explain that Jesus used these items to teach the people about John the Baptist's character. Invite a student to read Luke 7:24–26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus taught about John the Baptist while referring to a reed and soft clothing.

- How was John the Baptist different from a reed or blade of grass? (Unlike a reed, which is shaken or blown about by the wind, John the Baptist was firm and unshakable in his testimony and in performing his mission.)

Display the accompanying picture of John the Baptist and ask:

- How was John the Baptist different from those who are “clothed in soft raiment” and live in luxury “in kings’ courts” (verse 25)? (John the Baptist lived in the desert and wore clothing made of camel's hair, which was very coarse. Rather than seeking temporal comforts, John the Baptist only sought to do God's will.)
- What did Jesus say about John the Baptist in verse 26?

To help students understand John the Baptist's unique role, explain that Jesus quoted a prophecy written hundreds of years before that spoke of a “messenger” who would “prepare the way before [the Messiah]” (Malachi 3:1). Invite a student to read Luke 7:27–28 aloud, and ask the class to follow along, looking for why John the Baptist was unique among prophets.

- What unique and important role was John the Baptist foreordained to perform? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following truth: **John the Baptist was the prophet foreordained to prepare the way for and baptize the Son of God.**)
- How did John the Baptist prepare the way for the coming of Jesus Christ?

Explain that the Prophet Joseph Smith said the following regarding Luke 7:28:

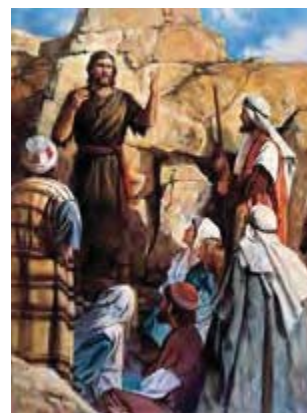
“Jesus was looked upon as having the least claim in God's kingdom, and [seemingly] was least entitled to their credulity as a prophet; as though He had said—‘He that is considered the least among you is greater than John—that is I myself’” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 82).

Summarize Luke 7:29–35 by explaining that many believed Jesus's teachings, but the Pharisees and lawyers who were present rejected His teachings. Jesus explained that they rejected the truth regardless of whether He or John the Baptist taught it.

Luke 7:36–50

While Jesus dines with Simon the Pharisee, a woman washes Jesus's feet with her tears


Write the following question on the board: *Can I be forgiven?*



John the Baptist preaching

Invite students to consider times when they may have wondered if they could be forgiven. Invite them to look for truths that answer this question as they continue their study of Luke 7. To help students understand the context and content of Luke 7:36–50, invite a student to read aloud the following summary and explanation:

A Pharisee named Simon invited Jesus to a feast in his home. At feasts of this kind, guests would recline on cushions around a low table and extend their feet away from the table. Social customs of the day allowed people in need to collect leftover food from the banquets. Thus, it was not unusual for uninvited people to enter the home during a feast (see James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 261).

 To help students further understand the content of Luke 7:36–50, consider showing the video “Come unto Me” (11:34), available on LDS.org. You could play the segment of the video that portrays Jesus dining with Simon the Pharisee (beginning at time code 4:17). Ask the class to follow along in their scriptures, looking for what happened when an uninvited person entered Simon’s home during the feast. Pause the video after Jesus says, “Thou has rightly judged” (Luke 7:43) (time code 7:24).

- How did Luke describe the woman portrayed in Luke 7:37?
- How did the woman show her love for the Savior? (You may want to explain that an “alabaster box of ointment” was a bottle filled with costly perfumed oil.)
- What did Simon think when he saw what the woman was doing?

To review the parable Jesus taught, ask a student to read Luke 7:40–43 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus taught Simon.

Copy the following chart on the board.

Creditor = _____	
Debtor who owes 50 pence = _____	Debtor who owes 500 pence = _____

Explain that a creditor is someone who lends money; a person who borrows money is a debtor. The debtor agrees to pay back the creditor or go to jail. Ask a student to summarize the parable in his or her own words.

- Whom does the creditor represent? (Write *Jesus Christ* on the board next to “Creditor.”)
- Which of the debtors could represent the woman, and which could represent Simon the Pharisee? Why? (Write *Simon the Pharisee* next to “Debtor who owes 50 pence” and *Woman* next to “Debtor who owes 500 pence.”)

Explain that during Jesus’s time it was customary for the host to honor his distinguished guests by offering acts of kindness such as kissing them in greeting, providing water for them to wash their feet, and anointing their heads with oil (see James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 261).

Resume the video at time code 7:25 and stop it after Jesus says, “Go in peace” (Luke 7:50) (time code 8:52). Or, invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Luke 7:44–47. Ask the class to look for how Simon treated Jesus in comparison to how the woman treated Him and how they each might have felt about Jesus.

- According to verses 44–47, what were some differences between how Simon treated Jesus and how the woman treated Him and how they each might have felt about Jesus? (Write students’ responses in the chart on the board.)

When students have finished reporting what they found, the chart should look similar to the following:

Creditor = Jesus Christ

Debtor who owes 50 pence = Simon the Pharisee	Debtor who owes 500 pence = Woman
Did not give Jesus water to wash His feet	Washed His feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair
Did not give Him a kiss	Kissed His feet
Did not anoint Him with oil	Anointed His feet with ointment
Loved Him little	Loved Him much

- What blessing did the woman receive from the Savior?

Point out that by implicitly comparing Simon to the debtor who owes 50 pence, the Savior was suggesting that Simon also needed forgiveness for his sins.

Invite students to read Luke 7:47–50 silently, and ask them to look for what made it possible for this woman to receive forgiveness.

- What principles can we learn from this account? (Using students' words, write the following principles on the board: **As we exercise our faith by showing our love for and devotion to the Lord, we can experience His forgiveness. As we receive the Lord's forgiveness, we are filled with the desire to love and serve Him even more.**)
- Why might we desire to love and serve the Savior even more as we experience His forgiveness?

Invite three students to each read aloud a paragraph from the following statement by Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"There are many degrees of personal worthiness and righteousness. Yet repentance is a blessing to all of us. We each need to feel the Savior's arms of mercy through the forgiveness of our sins.

"Years ago, I was asked to meet with a man who, long before our visit, had had a period of riotous living. As a result of his bad choices, he lost his membership in the Church. He had long since returned to the Church and was faithfully keeping the commandments, but his previous actions haunted him. Meeting with him, I felt his shame and his deep remorse at having set his covenants aside. Following our interview, I placed my hands upon his head to give him a priesthood blessing. Before speaking a word, I felt an overpowering sense of the Savior's love and forgiveness for him. Following the blessing, we embraced and the man wept openly.

"I am amazed at the Savior's encircling arms of mercy and love for the repentant, no matter how selfish the forsaken sin. I testify that the Savior is able and eager to forgive our sins. Except for the sins of those few who choose perdition after having known a fulness, there is no sin that cannot be forgiven. What a marvelous privilege for each of us to turn away from our sins and to come unto Christ. Divine forgiveness is one of the sweetest fruits of the gospel, removing guilt and pain from our hearts and replacing them with joy and peace of conscience" ("Repent . . . That I May Heal You," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 40–41).

Invite students to think of a time when they experienced the Lord's forgiveness. Ask them to ponder what they thought and how they felt about the Savior.

Refer to the question on the board. Ask students to explain how they would answer if someone asked them, "Can I be forgiven?"

Conclude the lesson by testifying that Jesus Christ has power to forgive us if we exercise faith in Him and repent of our sins.

Scripture Mastery Review

To help students review the five scripture mastery passages they have studied so far during this course, you may want to give them a brief quiz. Provide the key words from the seminary bookmark, and ask students to write down the corresponding scripture references. See the appendix of this manual for more ideas.

Help students identify principles

Sometimes you will point out doctrines and principles to students. Other times you will guide, encourage, and allow students to discover doctrines and principles for themselves. In identifying doctrines and principles, it is important to state them clearly and simply. Writing an identified doctrine or principle on the board or inviting students to write or mark it in their scriptures can help clarify these truths in students' minds.

Luke 8–9

Introduction

The Savior continued to minister in Galilee, where He prophesied of His death and Resurrection. Leaving Galilee, Jesus traveled toward Jerusalem to complete His mortal mission. In Samaria, James and John desired

to call down fire from heaven to consume a Samaritan village that had rejected Jesus, but He taught His disciples that He had come to save people, not destroy them. Jesus also taught about true discipleship.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 8:1–9:56

The Savior performs miracles, teaches using parables, and journeys to Jerusalem

Write the following scenarios on the board, or write each of them on a separate piece of paper. Invite three students to read them aloud.

1. When you politely ask your brother to help you clean up a mess, he rudely tells you to do it yourself.
2. While planning a school activity, a few classmates criticize and laugh at an idea you share.
3. As you share the gospel with a friend, she tells you your beliefs are strange.
 - How would you feel in each of these situations? How would you react?

Invite students to look for truths as they study the Savior's teachings in Luke 8–9 that can guide them when they feel offended by others' actions or words.

Invite a student to read aloud the chapter summaries of Luke 8–9. Ask the class to follow along, looking for events that are recorded in these chapters. Explain that because they studied these events in detail in the lessons on Matthew and Mark, this lesson will focus on Luke 9:51–62.

Invite a student to read Luke 9:51 aloud, and ask the class to look for the place where the Savior decided to go. Explain that the phrase "be received up" refers to the Savior's approaching Ascension into heaven.

- Where did the Savior decide to go?

Explain that to do something steadfastly means to do it in a determined or unwavering way. Earlier, the Savior had prophesied to His disciples that He would be betrayed, scourged, and crucified in Jerusalem (see Matthew 20:17–19; Luke 9:44).

- What does the Savior's determination to go to Jerusalem in spite of these challenges reveal about His character?

Point out that while traveling to Jerusalem, Jesus and His disciples approached a Samaritan village. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Luke 9:52–54, and ask the class to look for the Samaritans' reaction when they learned that Jesus and His disciples wanted to enter their village.

- How did the Samaritans react when they learned that Jesus and His disciples wanted to enter their village?
- How did James and John react to the Samaritans' inhospitality toward and rejection of the Savior?
- In what ways might people today overreact to insults and other offenses from others? (Refer to the scenarios from the beginning of the lesson, and ask students to ponder ways in which someone might overreact in these situations.)

Invite a student to read Luke 9:55–56 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior's response to James and John. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that when the Savior said, “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of” (verse 55), He was suggesting that James and John’s request was not in harmony with the Spirit of God but was more in harmony with the spirit of Satan, who stirs up anger in people’s hearts (see 3 Nephi 11:29–30).

- How did the Savior’s reaction to the Samaritans’ rejection differ from James and John’s reaction?
- What truth can we learn from the Savior’s example that can guide us when we face offenses? (Using students’ words, write on the board a truth similar to the following: **We follow the Savior’s example when we choose to respond to offenses with patience and long-suffering.**)

Invite students to recall the scenarios from the beginning of the lesson.

- What is the potential danger of choosing to be offended in each of these scenarios?
- In each scenario, how could we follow the Savior’s example?
- How might we be blessed as we choose to respond to offenses with patience and long-suffering?

Ask students to reflect on an occasion when they have chosen to be offended by someone’s words or actions. Encourage them to follow the Savior’s example by choosing to respond to offenses with patience and long-suffering.

Luke 9:57–62

Jesus teaches about true discipleship

Invite a student to come to the front of class, and present him or her with 20 to 30 small objects (such as beads). Instruct the student to silently count the objects. While he or she is doing so, ask the class to see whether they can throw off the count by distracting the student. Make sure students do not become unruly in their attempts to distract the student. Instruct them to remain seated, and caution them not to throw anything or touch the student who is counting.

- In what ways is counting objects while being distracted similar to trying to follow Jesus Christ?

Thank the student who counted the objects, and invite him or her to sit down. As students continue to study Luke 9, invite them to consider how we can overcome influences that might distract or prevent us from following the Savior.

Invite a student to read Luke 9:57 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what a man said to Jesus as He and His disciples traveled to Jerusalem.

- What did this man tell the Savior he was willing to do?

Write the following phrase on the board: *To be a true disciple of Jesus Christ, . . .*

Invite a student to read Luke 9:58 aloud, and ask the class to look for the Savior’s response to the man who desired to follow Him. Invite students to report what they find.

- What does the phrase “the Son of man hath not where to lay his head” indicate about the Savior’s lifestyle? (Jesus and His disciples were constantly on the move. Their ministry was neither comfortable nor easy.)

Invite students to read Luke 9:59–60 silently, looking for a second man’s response to the Savior’s invitation to follow Him.

- What did this man want to do before following the Savior?
- What might the word *first* (verse 59) indicate about this man?

Explain that Jesus Christ did not indicate that it is wrong to mourn a loved one’s death or to pay our respects at a funeral (see D&C 42:45). Instead, He was teaching this man an important lesson about discipleship.

- What can we learn from the Savior’s response recorded in verse 60 about the priorities of a true disciple?

Invite a student to read Luke 9:61–62 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what a third man desired to do before following the Savior.

- What did this man want to do before following the Savior?

Abuse is not to be tolerated

When you ask students to consider wrongs committed against them and to respond with patience and long-suffering, make clear that students should not allow any type of abuse to continue against them. If a student is a victim of abuse, he or she should immediately seek help from parents, priesthood leaders, and other authorities as appropriate.

- How did the Savior respond to this man?

To help students understand the analogy of putting our hands to the plow and not looking back, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Howard W. Hunter:



“To dig a straight furrow [or trench], the plowman needs to keep his eyes on a fixed point ahead of him. That keeps him on a true course. If, however, he happens to look back to see where he has been, his chances of straying are increased. The results are crooked and irregular furrows. . . . If our energies are focused not behind us but ahead of us—on eternal life and the joy of salvation—we assuredly will obtain it” (“Am I a ‘Living’ Member?” *Ensign*, May 1987, 17).

May 1987, 17).

- How is being a disciple of Jesus Christ like putting our hands to a plow and not looking back?
- How is the Savior an example of what He taught as recorded in verse 62? (“He steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem” [Luke 9:51] to complete the mission Heavenly Father had given Him, and He did not look back.)

Refer to the incomplete statement on the board.

- Based on what we have learned from Luke 9:57–62, how would you summarize a truth the Savior taught about what He requires of His disciples? (Students may identify a variety of principles. After they respond, complete the statement on the board so that it conveys the following truth: **To be a true disciple of Jesus Christ, we must not let anything take priority over following Him.**)
- Why do we sometimes place other priorities above our responsibilities as disciples of Jesus Christ?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“Satan has a powerful tool to use against good people. It is distraction. He would have good people fill life with ‘good things’ so there is no room for the essential ones” (“First Things First,” *Ensign*, May 2001, 7).

To help students consider what could hinder them from fully following Jesus Christ, draw the following chart on the board and ask students to copy it into their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

Responsibilities of a disciple of Jesus Christ	Other priorities

Divide students into pairs. Ask them to work with their partners to list in the chart responsibilities of a true disciple of Jesus Christ (which might include being honest, serving others, sharing the gospel, doing family history and temple work, and raising a family). For each responsibility listed in their charts, ask students to list examples of other priorities that someone might put above that responsibility.

Invite several students to report what they listed.

Encourage students to share positive examples of disciples of Jesus Christ by asking:

- When have you seen someone choose to set aside other goals or priorities in order to follow the Savior?

Ask students to ponder what they might be allowing to take priority over following Jesus Christ and His teachings. Invite them to write a goal in their scripture study journals for what they will do to make the Savior and His gospel a higher priority.

You may want to conclude the lesson by inviting students to sing the hymn “Lord, I Would Follow Thee” (*Hymns*, no. 220) or another hymn about following Jesus Christ and His teachings.

Using hymns

Music, especially Church hymns, can play a significant role in helping students feel the Holy Ghost’s influence in their gospel learning experience. To help provide additional insights during the lesson, you could ask students to sing one or more verses of a hymn that relates directly to the lesson.

LESSON 50

Luke 10:1–37

Introduction

Jesus called, taught, and sent forth the Seventy. They preached the gospel, healed the sick, cast out devils,

and returned to give an account of their labors. Jesus taught a lawyer the parable of the good Samaritan.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 10:1–24

The Lord calls, empowers, and instructs the Seventy

Bring to class a container full of objects (such as balls of various sizes). Invite a student to the front of the classroom. Ask the student to hold the objects you give him or her without dropping or setting down any of them. Give the student objects until he or she can't hold them all and some begin to fall. Then ask the student:

- What could you do to prevent the objects from falling?

If necessary, suggest that the student ask for help from others in the class. Continue to give the objects to the student, and allow him or her to pass some of them to other students. Then invite the students to be seated.

- How would you compare this activity to the way Church leaders handle their responsibilities?

Remind students that the Savior had called twelve Apostles and sent them forth to assist in His work. However, the Apostles would need others to help them teach and minister so that the blessings of the gospel could be taken to all people.

Invite a student to read Luke 10:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom the Lord appointed to help the Apostles to perform His work.

- Whom did the Lord appoint to assist Him in His work? What was their role?

Explain that the word *seventy* in Luke 10:1 refers to an office in the Melchizedek Priesthood. This same office exists in the restored Church today. (If possible, show the pages titled “General Authorities and General Officers of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” in the most recent conference issue of the *Ensign* or *Liahona*.) There are now multiple quorums of the Seventy, though only members of the first two quorums are called as General Authorities. Each quorum may have up to 70 members. Their work to preach the gospel and help administer the Church is directed by the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and the Presidency of the Seventy (see D&C 107:25–26, 34; Guide to the Scriptures, “Seventy,” scriptures.lds.org).

- According to verse 2, what did the Lord say were too few for the harvest of souls?
- What truth can we learn about the Lord’s work from these verses? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **The Lord calls laborers in addition to the Apostles to represent Him and to assist Him in His work.**)
- In addition to Apostles and Seventies, who else has a responsibility to assist the Lord in His work today? (All Church members.)

Explain that just as the Savior declared the need for more laborers to bring about the harvest of salvation, latter-day prophets have consistently called for more missionaries. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:



“I repeat what prophets have long taught—that every worthy, able young man should prepare to serve a mission. Missionary service is a priesthood duty—an obligation the Lord expects of us who have been given so very much. Young men, I admonish you to prepare for service as a missionary. . . .

“A word to you young sisters: while you do not have the same priesthood responsibility as do the young men to serve as full-time missionaries, you

also make a valuable contribution as missionaries, and we welcome your service" ("As We Meet Together Again," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 5–6).

- Besides serving a full-time mission, how else might we assist the Lord in His work?
- What experiences have you or someone you know enjoyed through assisting the Lord in His work?

Summarize Luke 10:3–24 by explaining that the Lord gave the Seventy instructions on how to fulfill their responsibilities. He also chastised the people in various cities who had rejected His works. The Seventy later reported their labors to Jesus, and He gave them additional instruction and rejoiced with them.

Luke 10:25–37

Jesus teaches the parable of the good Samaritan

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:

"The people around us are not perfect. People do things that annoy, disappoint, and anger. In this mortal life it will always be that way" ("The Merciful Obtain Mercy," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 77).

Invite the class to ponder whether they know someone who does things that annoy, disappoint, or anger them.

- Why might it be difficult to love someone who does these things?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Luke 10:25–37 that can guide them as they interact with individuals who may be difficult to love.

Invite a student to read Luke 10:25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a question a lawyer asked the Savior.

- What did the lawyer ask the Savior?

Invite a student to read Luke 10:26–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior's answer. Then ask students to report what they found.

- What principle do we learn from these verses concerning what we must do to obtain eternal life? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **To obtain eternal life we must love God and love our neighbor as ourselves.** Write this principle on the board.)
- According to verse 27, how must we love God?
- What does it mean to love God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind?

Point out the phrase "love our neighbor as ourselves" on the board. To help students understand what it might mean to love our neighbor as ourselves, invite them to list on the board the things they do during a typical day. (Items might include preparing for the day, eating, sleeping, doing homework, and so forth.)

After compiling a list on the board, invite students to ponder how many of their activities are focused on themselves.

- What can we learn from this exercise?
- What are some ways we might be able to focus more often on the well-being of others and seek to love them as much as we love ourselves?
- What are some ways we can do this even during activities we do for ourselves? (Examples might include eating lunch with those who seem lonely or complimenting others during our school activities.)
- How do you think loving God and our neighbor as much as we love ourselves can help us progress toward eternal life?

Invite a student to read Luke 10:29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a second question the lawyer asked Jesus.

- What was the lawyer's second question?

Prepare several students to act out the parable of the good Samaritan in Luke 10:30–35. Invite one student to be the narrator and others to play the roles of the wounded Jewish man, two thieves, the priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan. (If you have a class with only

a few students, they could play multiple roles.) You may want to provide some props, which could include name tags, extra clothing to take from the Jewish man, two containers representing the oil and wine, a rolling chair to represent the beast, and two coins to represent the two pence. (*Note:* You may want to select the participants and give them specific instructions before class to ensure the role play is effective, appropriate, and safe.)

Invite the narrator to read Luke 10:30–35 aloud, and ask those participating to act out the parable. Ask the rest of the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught about who our neighbor is. After the role play, invite the students to return to their seats.

- Which of the Samaritan’s actions impresses you the most?

To help the class better understand what might be expected of a priest, Levite, and Samaritan, invite a student to read the following explanation aloud:

Priests and Levites held the Aaronic priesthood and were assigned to serve God and their fellowmen, both in the temple and as teachers and exemplars of God’s law. These priesthood bearers were fully aware of the commandment to “love thy neighbour as thyself” (Leviticus 19:18) and to care for foreigners and travelers (see Leviticus 19:34; 25:35). In contrast, “Samaritans were partly Israelite and partly Gentile. Their religion was a mixture of Jewish and pagan beliefs and practices. . . . Jews had developed [hatred] for the Samaritans because the Samaritans had apostatized from the Israelite religion” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Samaritans,” scriptures.lds.org). Both Jews and Samaritans typically went out of their way to avoid each other.

- In the parable, why might the actions of the priest, Levite, and Samaritan be surprising?
- What reasons might the Samaritan have had to not assist the wounded Jew?
- According to verse 33, what moved the Samaritan to act when he saw the wounded man?

Point out that to have compassion means to notice another person’s needs or challenges and to feel a desire to do whatever we can to help that person.

Invite a student to read Luke 10:36–37 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught the lawyer next.

- How does this parable answer the question in verse 29, “Who is my neighbour?”

Help students understand that the Savior’s use of the Samaritan in this parable suggests that our neighbor is not just someone who lives near us but is any of Heavenly Father’s children—including those who are most difficult for us to love.

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Howard W. Hunter:

“We need to remember that though we make our friends, God has made our neighbors—everywhere. Love should have no boundary. . . . Christ said, ‘For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?’ (Matthew 5:46)” (“The Lord’s Touchstone,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 35).

- According to verse 37, what did the Savior teach the lawyer to do?

Invite students to consider once again the individuals they previously thought of who may be difficult for them to love.

- What can we do to love and have compassion on those who are difficult for us to love?
- Ponder a time when you or someone you know followed the Savior’s counsel to “love . . . thy neighbour as thyself” (Luke 10:27). What was the result?

Testify of the truths taught in today’s lesson. Write the following incomplete statement on the board and invite students to complete it in their class notebooks or scripture study journals: *I will follow the example of the good Samaritan by . . .*

Ask questions and make invitations that encourage application

The aim of gospel teaching is to help students apply the principles and doctrines found in the scriptures, become converted, and receive the blessings promised to those who are faithful and obedient. Asking questions and making invitations that encourage application can help students see how they can apply these principles in their current situations and consider how they can apply them in the future.

Home-Study Lesson

Luke 5:1–10:37 (Unit 10)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Luke 5:1–10:37 (unit 10) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Luke 5)

From the account of the Savior inviting Peter, James, and John to be fishers of men, students learned that if we do what the Lord asks even when we do not understand why, He can provide greater blessings than we could have anticipated. And from the healing of the leper and the paralytic man, students learned that as we exercise faith and come to the Savior, He can heal us and that we can help others come to the Savior so they can be healed. Students also learned that to accept the Savior and His gospel, we must be humble and willing to change.

Day 2 (Luke 6:1–7:17)

Students discovered that if we do good to others without expecting anything in return, our reward will be great and we will be the children of the Highest and that Heavenly Father blesses us generously as we generously give to others. They also learned the following truths: By exercising faith in Jesus Christ, we can help bring blessings into others' lives. We can follow Jesus Christ's example by demonstrating compassion for others and ministering to their unspoken needs.

Day 3 (Luke 7:18–50)

In this lesson students learned that John the Baptist was the prophet foreordained to prepare the way for and baptize the Son of God. From the story of the woman who washed the Savior's feet with her tears, students learned the following: As we exercise our faith by showing our love for and devotion to the Lord, we can experience His forgiveness. As we receive the Lord's forgiveness, we are filled with the desire to love and serve Him even more.

Day 4 (Luke 8:1–10:37)

In this lesson students were encouraged to follow the Savior's example by choosing to respond to insulting or offensive situations with patience and long-suffering. Additionally, they learned that to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ, we must not let anything take priority over following Him and that to obtain eternal life we must love God and love our neighbor as ourselves.

Introduction

A certain lawyer asked the Savior, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (Luke 10:25). The following teaching ideas can help students learn what it means to love God and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 10:25–37

Jesus teaches the parable of the good Samaritan

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:

"The people around us are not perfect. People do things that annoy, disappoint, and anger. In this mortal life it will always be that way" ("The Merciful Obtain Mercy," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 77).

Invite the class to ponder whether they know someone who does things that annoy, disappoint, or anger them.

- Why might it be difficult to love someone who does these things?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Luke 10:25–37 that can guide them as they interact with individuals who may be difficult to love.

Remind students that in their personal study of Luke 10, they learned of a lawyer who asked the Savior how to inherit eternal life.

Invite a student to read Luke 10:26–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior's answer. Then ask students to report what they found.

- What principle do we learn from these verses concerning what we must do to obtain eternal life? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **To obtain eternal life we must love God and love our neighbor as ourselves.** Write this principle on the board.)
- What does it mean to love God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind?

Point to the phrase "love our neighbor as ourselves" on the board. To help students understand what it might mean to love our neighbor as ourselves, invite them to list on the board the things they do during a typical day. (Items might include preparing for the day, eating, sleeping, doing homework, and so forth.)

After compiling a list on the board, invite students to ponder how many of their activities are focused on themselves. (You might ask them to identify whether each item on the list is for themselves, for others, or for God.)

- What can we learn from this exercise?

- What are some ways we might be able to focus more often on the well-being of others and seek to love them as much as we love ourselves?
- What are some ways we can do this even during activities we do for ourselves? (Examples might include eating lunch with those who seem lonely or complimenting others during our school activities.)
- How do you think loving God and our neighbor as much as we love ourselves can help us progress toward eternal life?

Invite a student to read Luke 10:29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a second question the lawyer asked Jesus.

- What was the lawyer's second question?

Prepare several students to act out the parable of the good Samaritan in Luke 10:30–35. Invite one student to be the narrator and others to play the roles of the wounded Jewish man, the two thieves, the priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan. (If you have a class with only a few students, they could play multiple roles.) You may want to provide some props, which could include name tags, extra clothing to take from the Jewish man, two containers representing the oil and wine, a rolling chair to represent the beast, and two coins to represent the two pence. (*Note:* You may want to select the participants and give them specific instructions before class to ensure the role play is effective, appropriate, and safe.)

Invite the narrator to read Luke 10:30–35 aloud, and ask those participating to act out the parable. Ask the rest of the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught about who our neighbor is. After the role play, invite the students to return to their seats.

- Which of the Samaritan's actions impresses you the most?

To help the class better understand what might be expected of a priest, Levite, and Samaritan, invite a student to read the following explanation aloud:

In the written law of Moses, priests and Levites were assigned (and obligated) to serve God and their fellowmen, both in the temple and as teachers and exemplars of God's law. These priesthood bearers were fully aware of the commandment to "love thy neighbour as thyself" (Leviticus 19:18). In fact, Levites were specifically charged with helping travelers economically and in other ways (see Leviticus 25:35–36). In contrast, "Samaritans were partly Israelite and partly Gentile. Their religion was a mixture of Jewish and pagan beliefs and practices. . . . Jews had developed [hatred] for the Samaritans because the Samaritans had apostatized from the Israelite religion" (Guide to the Scriptures, "Samaritans," scriptures.lds.org). Both Jews and Samaritans typically went out of their way to avoid each other.

- In the parable, why might the actions of the priest, Levite, and Samaritan be surprising?

- What reasons might the Samaritan have had to not assist the wounded Jew?
- According to Luke 10:33, what moved the Samaritan to act when he saw the wounded man?

Point out that to have compassion means to notice another person's needs or challenges and to feel a desire to do whatever we can to help that person.

Invite a student to read Luke 10:36–37 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught the lawyer next.

- How does this parable answer the question in verse 29, "Who is my neighbour?"

Help students understand that the Savior's use of the Samaritan in this parable suggests that our neighbor is not just someone who lives near us but is any of Heavenly Father's children—including those who are most difficult for us to love.

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Howard W. Hunter:



"We need to remember that though we make our friends, God has made our neighbors—everywhere. Love should have no boundary. . . . Christ said, 'For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?' (Matthew 5:46)" ("The Lord's Touchstone,"

Ensign, Nov. 1986, 35).

- According to Luke 10:37, what did the Savior teach the lawyer to do?

Invite students to consider once again the individuals they previously thought of who may be difficult for them to love.

- What can we do to love and have compassion on those who are difficult for us to love?
- Ponder a time when you or someone you know followed the Savior's counsel to "love . . . thy neighbour as thyself" (Luke 10:27). What was the result?

Testify of the truths taught in today's lesson. Write the following incomplete statement on the board and invite students to complete it in their class notebooks or scripture study journals: *I will follow the example of the good Samaritan by . . .*

Next Unit (Luke 10:38–17:37)

Explain to students that in the coming unit they will study how Jesus repeatedly rebuked the Pharisees for seeking to look righteous but inwardly being selfish. Ask them to consider how they might be less like the Pharisees and more like the humble followers of Christ. They will also study several other parables that Jesus gave, including the parable of the prodigal son. Ask them to notice what happened to the rich man who dedicated his life to obtaining wealth and neglected the poor.

LESSON 51

Luke 10:38–12:59

Introduction

The Savior taught Mary and Martha in Martha's home. Later, He taught many truths to His disciples about prayer and warned against hypocrisy and covetousness.

Encourage students to apply the truths they learn

If a gospel principle is learned but not applied, learning is not complete. Application takes place when a person accepts a truth in his or her heart and mind and then acts according to that truth. Encourage students to act upon spiritual promptings they receive to apply the gospel truths they learn.



Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 10:38–42

Jesus teaches Mary and Martha

Ask students to think about the choices they made yesterday. Invite them to take one minute to list as many of those choices as they can in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Ask several students to report some of their good choices to the class.

- What are some situations in which we might have to decide between two good choices?

As students study Luke 10:38–42, invite them to look for a principle the Savior taught that can guide us in our decisions—particularly when more than one good choice is available to us.

Explain that after teaching the parable of the good Samaritan, the Savior traveled to Bethany and visited the home of a woman named Martha.

Invite a student to read Luke 10:38–40 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Martha and her sister, Mary, each chose to do while the Savior was in the home.

- What did Mary do while the Savior was in the home?
- What did Martha do? (Point out that the word *cumbered* in verse 40 refers to being burdened.)

Display the picture Mary and Martha (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 45; see also LDS.org). Explain that hospitality was very important in Jesus's day. Martha was trying to do what would normally have been expected of her as the hostess. She was focused on temporal concerns such as preparing and serving the meal.

- According to verse 40, what did Martha ask the Savior that indicates she was worried about temporal matters?

Invite a student to read Luke 10:41–42 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior's response to Martha.

- What might the Savior have meant when He said, "One thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part"?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"It was praiseworthy for Martha to be 'careful and troubled about many things' (v. 41), but learning the gospel from the Master Teacher was more 'needful'" ("Good, Better, Best," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 104).

- What might the Savior have meant when He said the "good part" that Mary had chosen would "not be taken away from her"? (Luke 10:42). (By choosing to listen to the Savior rather than focus on temporal concerns, Mary would receive spiritual blessings, which are everlasting.)
- What principle can we learn from the Savior's words to Martha? (Students may state it differently, but they should identify the following principle: **If we choose to devote ourselves to spiritual matters over temporal concerns, then we will receive lasting blessings.**)
- How can we devote ourselves to spiritual matters and still take care of other things that are "needful" (Luke 10:42) but less important?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Oaks:



“As we consider various choices, we should remember that it is not enough that something is good. Other choices are better, and still others are best. . . .

“Consider how we use our time in the choices we make in viewing television, playing video games, surfing the Internet, or reading books or magazines. Of course it is good to view wholesome entertainment or to obtain interesting information. But not everything of that sort is worth the portion of our life we give to obtain it. Some things are better, and others are best” (“Good, Better, Best,” 104–5).

Ask students to review the list of the choices they made yesterday and to label each positive choice as “good,” “better,” or “best.” Invite one or two students to testify of how they have been blessed for putting spiritual matters ahead of temporal concerns.

Luke 11

Jesus teaches His disciples about prayer

Invite students to imagine they are full-time missionaries teaching an investigator who has tried praying several times and feels that God has not responded. The investigator is thinking of giving up on prayer.

- Based on your own experiences, how might you respond to this concern?

As students study Luke 11, invite them to look for truths that could help someone who feels God has not answered his or her prayers.

Summarize Luke 11:1–4 by explaining that after listening to the Savior pray, one of His disciples asked if He would teach them how to pray, and the Savior did so.

Explain that after the Lord taught His disciples how to pray, He used analogies to teach additional truths about prayer, including God’s willingness to answer prayers.

Invite students to study Luke 11:5–13 in pairs, looking for what the Lord taught about prayer. Point out the Joseph Smith Translation additions to verses 5 and 13. These additions are found in Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 11:5–6 (in Luke 11:5, footnote *a*) and Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 11:14 (in Luke 11:13, footnote *a*). After sufficient time, ask the class:

- In the parable you read in verses 5–8, what did one friend ask of another? Why?
- Why do you think the second friend honored the request of the first? (You may want to explain that the word *importunity* in verse 8 refers to the man’s persistence in asking even when his friend initially refused his request.)
- If the man in need represents us, and his friend with the bread represents our Father in Heaven, what did the Savior suggest we must do in times of need?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we persistently pray and seek Heavenly Father’s blessings in times of need . . .*

- According to verse 13, what does Heavenly Father give to those who persistently pray and seek His blessings?
- Based on the Savior’s teachings in Luke 11:5–13, how would you complete the statement on the board? (After students respond, complete the statement on the board so that it conveys the following truth: **If we persistently pray and seek Heavenly Father’s blessings in times of need, then He will answer our prayers in ways that bless us most.**)

Consider inviting students to share examples of when they have received answers to their prayers as they have persistently sought Heavenly Father’s blessings.

Summarize Luke 11:14–54 by explaining that Jesus cast a devil out of a man, counseled the people to hear the word of God, and chastised the Pharisees and scribes for their spiritual ignorance and wickedness.

Luke 12

The Savior warns against hypocrisy and covetousness

Read the following questions to the class, and invite students to silently ponder their responses:

- Have you ever wanted something so badly that you thought about it all the time?
- What negative effects can this type of thinking have on us?

Summarize Luke 12:1–13 by explaining that as the Savior stood in front of a great multitude, He taught His disciples to beware of hypocrisy. He also reminded them that all hidden things would one day be revealed and that God knows and watches over His children. A man then asked the Savior if He would speak to the man’s brother and persuade the brother to divide an inheritance with him.

Invite a student to read Luke 12:14–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior’s response to the man’s request.

- What warning did the Savior give to the people who were with Him?

Explain that *covetousness* means to excessively desire something. Write on the board the following truth: **The Lord commands us not to covet worldly possessions.**

- Why should a person avoid covetousness? How can this truth help us to live happier lives?

Explain that after the Savior told His disciples to avoid covetousness, He gave a parable to illustrate the importance of this commandment. Invite students to read Luke 12:16–19 silently, looking for the number of times the man in the parable uses the words *I* and *my*. Ask students to report what they find.

- What does the man’s frequent use of *I* and *my* teach us about his concerns?
- In what ways might we be tempted to be like this man?

Invite a student to read Luke 12:20–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what God said about the man’s greed and covetousness. Ask students to report what they find.

Write on the board the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. (This statement is found in “What Matters Most Is What Lasts Longest,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2005, 44):

“What matters most is what lasts longest” (Elder M. Russell Ballard).

- In what ways did the rich man in the parable fail to focus on “what matters most”?
- Why might this man’s actions be considered foolish?

Summarize Luke 12:22–30 by explaining that the Lord emphasized that His disciples did not need to be overly concerned about their temporal needs.

Invite a student to read Luke 12:31–34 aloud. Invite him or her to also read Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 12:34 (in Luke 12:31, footnote *a*). Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior counseled His disciples to seek rather than focusing on their own selfish desires.

- What did Jesus counsel His disciples to seek?
- What were they promised if they sought to bring forth the kingdom of God?
- How would you summarize the Savior’s teachings in Luke 12:31–34 as a principle? (Students may use their own words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we seek to bring forth God’s kingdom and His righteousness, He will help provide for our needs and prepare a place for us in His kingdom.**)
- In what ways can we seek to bring forth God’s kingdom? (As students respond, you may want to refer to the principle they identified earlier about devoting ourselves to spiritual matters over temporal concerns.)

Testify of how you have been blessed as you have sought to prioritize spiritual matters over temporal concerns and to bring forth God’s kingdom. Encourage students to ponder whether they are focused more on spiritual matters or on temporal concerns. Invite them to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they will do to prioritize spiritual matters over temporal concerns and to bring forth God’s kingdom.

Summarize Luke 12:35–59 by explaining that the Savior taught His followers to prepare for His Second Coming. He helped them understand that where “much is given, . . . much [is] required” (verse 48), and He explained that His gospel would cause great divisions among people.

LESSON 52

Luke 13–14

Introduction

Jesus taught about repentance and the kingdom of God, and He healed on the Sabbath. He also used parables to teach about humility and the cost of discipleship.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 13:1–14:14

Jesus heals on the Sabbath and teaches about humility and caring for the less fortunate

Read the following scenario aloud: You are sitting at lunch with several friends, and they notice a poorly dressed student sitting alone. One person in your group makes a rude comment about the student's appearance, and your friends laugh.

Invite students to ponder how they would feel in this situation.

- What are several different ways in which you could react in this situation?

Invite students to look in Luke 13–14 for what the Savior taught about interacting with people who are less fortunate than us.

Summarize Luke 13:1–14:6 by explaining that the Savior related a parable about a fig tree that would be cut down if it failed to produce fruit, which teaches that we will perish if we do not repent. He healed a woman on the Sabbath and taught about the kingdom of God and those who will be allowed to enter it. He also mourned over the impending destruction of Jerusalem. In Luke 14:1–6 we read that the Savior was invited to dine at the house of one of the chief Pharisees on the Sabbath. Before the meal, the Savior healed a man who suffered from dropsy, which is a disease that caused the man's body to be swollen with fluid.

Divide students into pairs. Invite one student in each pair to read Luke 13:15–16 silently and the other student to read Luke 14:5–6 silently. Ask students to look for the Savior's responses to the Pharisees who accused Him of breaking the Sabbath by healing these individuals. Invite students to report what they find to their partners.

After sufficient time, ask the class:

- What phrases describe the things the Pharisees would do for their animals on the Sabbath? (Loose them from bonds and pull them out of pits.)
- What can we learn from the Savior's example about honoring the Sabbath day and keeping it holy? (Ministering to people in need is appropriate on the Sabbath day. The Savior's righteous example contrasts with the attitudes of some Pharisees who justified helping animals but not people on the Sabbath.)

Summarize Luke 14:7–11 by explaining that after healing the man who suffered from dropsy, the Savior chastised the other dinner guests for trying to exalt themselves by sitting in the most honorable seats, which were closest to the host.

Invite a student to read Luke 14:12–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught the Pharisee who had invited Him to dine.

- What counsel did the Savior give to this Pharisee?
- What are some possible reasons why people invite their friends and rich neighbors to dinner?

Explain that in the Savior's day, those who were maimed, lame, or blind often struggled to provide for themselves and were poor as a result. Some of the Pharisees looked down on these people (see Luke 16:14–31).

- What are some reasons why people today might look down on others?
- What principle can we learn from Luke 14:14 about trying to help people who are less fortunate than we are? (The following is one principle students may identify: **If we try**

to help people who are less fortunate than we are, the Lord will reward us at the Resurrection.)

Point out that in addition to rewarding us at the Resurrection, the Lord will also bless us in this life when we try to help people who are less fortunate than we are.

- In what ways can we help people who are less fortunate than we are?
- When have you, or someone you know, been blessed by trying to help people who are less fortunate?

Invite students to ponder ways in which they can help people who are less fortunate than they are. Encourage them to write in their scripture study journals or class notebooks a goal to serve those who are less fortunate than they are.

Luke 14:15–35

Jesus gives the parable of the great feast and teaches about the cost of discipleship

Invite students to write on the board some things they might be asked to sacrifice or give up as disciples of Jesus Christ.

- What are some excuses someone might be tempted to use to avoid making these sacrifices?

Invite the class to look as they continue to study Luke 14 for principles that teach what Jesus Christ requires of His disciples.

Explain that after the Savior counseled the Pharisee to invite the less fortunate to meals, someone in the room said to Him, “Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God” (Luke 14:15). In response to this statement, the Savior related the parable of the great supper.

Invite students to read Luke 14:16–24 aloud with their partners from earlier in the lesson. Ask one student in each partnership to look for the invitation that the people in the parable received. Invite the other student in each partnership to look for the excuses made by the people who rejected the offer. After sufficient time, ask the class:

- How is the gospel of Jesus Christ like a great feast? (Answers might include the following: the gospel is a gift that has been prepared for us; it can fill us and satisfy our needs; we have been invited to partake of it; and we can accept or refuse the invitation to partake of it.)
- What excuses were given by the people who did not accept the invitation to the great supper?
- What do these excuses reveal about these people’s priorities?

According to verse 24, what is the consequence of placing other priorities above the Lord and His gospel? (Students may identify a principle such as the following: **If we place other priorities above the Lord and His gospel, we will lose blessings that we could have received.**)

Invite students to look at the list on the board of sacrifices they might be asked to make as disciples of Jesus Christ.

- What blessings could we lose if we are not willing to make these sacrifices?

Explain that after teaching this parable, the Savior spoke to the multitude about what He requires of His disciples. Invite a student to read Luke 14:25–27 aloud. Instruct him or her to also read the Joseph Smith Translation of verse 26 (in Luke 14:26, footnote *b*) and of verse 27 (in Luke 14:27, footnote *b*). Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior said His disciples must be willing to do.

- What did the Savior say His disciples must be willing to do?

Explain that one definition of the Greek word translated as *hate* is to “love less” (James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* [1890], “*misēō*,” 48). The Savior was explaining that for His disciples, devotion to family or even one’s own life must come after devotion to Him (see also Matthew 10:37). To take up one’s cross refers to crucifixion and represents a required willingness to give one’s life for Christ, who gave His life for us (see also Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 16:26 [in Matthew 16:24, footnote *e*]).

Use scripture study aids

The Church has prepared a number of scripture study aids and included them in the standard works for some languages. These study aids include footnotes, a topical index, pictures, and maps. They are valuable resources for use while studying the scriptures. Encourage students to use these study aids in their personal scripture study.

- What truths about being disciples of Jesus Christ can we learn from these verses? (Students may identify a variety of truths, but make sure they identify a truth similar to the following: **Disciples of Jesus Christ must be willing to sacrifice everything to follow Him.** You may want to invite students to write this truth in the margin next to Luke 14:25–27.)
- Why do you think disciples of Jesus Christ need to be willing to put Him before all things, including their family members and their own lives?

Write the phrase *Settle this in your hearts* (verse 27, footnote *b*) on the board.

- What do you think the phrase “settle this in your hearts” means? (Explain that in this context *to settle* means to resolve or firmly decide.)
- What does the Savior want us to settle in our hearts?
- What principle can we learn from the Joseph Smith Translation of Luke 14:27? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we settle in our hearts to do what Jesus Christ teaches and commands us, we become His disciples.**)

Provide students with copies of the following statement by Elder Larry W. Gibbons of the Seventy. Invite a student to read it aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what we can do to live this principle.



“As you begin to set your priorities in life, remember, the only true security in life is living the commandments. . . .

“ . . . What a great thing it is to decide once and for all early in life what you will do and what you will not do with regards to honesty, modesty, chastity, the Word of Wisdom, and temple marriage.

“Brothers and sisters, stay on the straight and narrow path. No, stay in the *middle* of the straight and narrow path. Don’t drift; don’t wander; don’t dabble; be careful.

“ . . . Living the commandments will bring you the happiness that too many look for in other places” (“Wherefore, Settle This in Your Hearts,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2006, 103, 104).

- What is a commandment that you have firmly resolved to obey? How have you been blessed by making the decision to obey that commandment?

Encourage students to settle in their hearts “what [they] will . . . and . . . will not do with regards to honesty, modesty, chastity, the Word of Wisdom, and temple marriage.” You may want to invite students to write their decisions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

Explain that after teaching these principles about discipleship, the Savior gave two analogies. Invite a student to read Luke 14:28–30 aloud and another student to read Luke 14:31–33 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and consider what these two analogies illustrate.

- What do you think these two analogies illustrate?

Explain that both analogies illustrate the importance of counting, or determining, the cost of a course of action before beginning it to determine whether you will be able to finish it. The Savior wanted His followers to thoughtfully consider whether they were willing to sacrifice whatever was necessary so they could continue to the end as His disciples. (See also Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 14:31 [in Luke 14:30, footnote *a*].)

Ask students to reconsider the list of sacrifices on the board. Invite a few of them to explain why they are willing to make these sacrifices as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Consider inviting students to mark verse 33, which provides a simple summary of the Savior’s teachings in this chapter. Testify of the truths you have discussed.

Luke 15

Introduction

The Pharisees and scribes complained about the Savior's association with publicans and sinners. The Savior

responded by giving the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 15:1–10

Jesus gives the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin

Begin class by asking students if they have ever lost an item that was valuable to them.

- What were you willing to do to find it? Why?
- What do you think it means for a person to be spiritually “lost”? (Help students understand that this can refer to those who have not yet received the restored gospel of Jesus Christ or are not currently living according to the teachings of the gospel.)

Invite the class to think of someone they know who may be spiritually lost. Ask them to ponder how they feel about this person.

Explain that Luke 15 contains the Savior's teachings about those who are spiritually lost. Invite students to look for truths in Luke 15 concerning how Heavenly Father feels about those who are spiritually lost and the responsibilities we have toward them.

Ask a student to read Luke 15:1–2 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for who drew near to Jesus and what the Pharisees and scribes complained about.

- Who drew near to the Savior? Why were the Pharisees and scribes complaining?
- What does this complaint reveal about the Pharisees and scribes?

Explain that the Savior responded by giving three parables: one of a lost sheep, one of a lost coin, and one of a lost son. These parables were meant to both give hope to the sinner as well as condemn the hypocrisy and self-righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees.

Encourage students to pay attention to why the subject of each parable became lost and how it was found.

Copy the following chart on the board or provide it to students as a handout. Group students into pairs, and assign one student to study Luke 15:3–7 and the other to study Luke 15:8–10. Invite students to read their assigned parables, looking for answers to the questions in the left column. (The third parable will be covered later in the lesson.)

Parables of the Lost Sheep, Coin, and Son

	Luke 15:3–7 (see also verse 4, footnote <i>a</i> if available in your edition of the scriptures)	Luke 15:8–10	Luke 15:11–32
What was lost?			
Why was it lost?			
How was it found?			
What words or phrases describe the reaction to it being found?			

After sufficient time, ask students to explain their assigned parable and report their answers to the questions in the chart to their partners. After both students in each group have finished, invite a few students to come to the board and fill in the chart with their answers or (if you did not draw the chart on the board) to share their answers with the class.

- What is the difference between how the sheep and the coin were lost? (The sheep became lost through no fault of its own, while the coin was lost because of the negligence or carelessness of its owner [see David O. McKay, in Conference Report, Apr. 1945, 120, 121–22].)
- According to verses 7 and 10, what do the coin and the sheep that are found represent? (They represent a sinner who has repented and turned to God.)
- What is our responsibility toward those who are lost, regardless of how they became lost?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *When we help others feel a desire to repent . . .*

- Based on the responses of those who found what was lost, how would you complete the statement on the board? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **When we help others feel a desire to repent, we feel joy and the heavens rejoice.** Complete the written principle on the board. You may want to invite students to consider writing this principle in their scriptures next to Luke 15:1–10.)
- How have you or someone you know helped a person who was spiritually lost feel a desire to repent or draw closer to Heavenly Father? When has someone helped you? (Remind students that they should not share experiences that are too personal or private.)

Luke 15:11–32


Jesus gives the parable of the prodigal son

Invite the class to consider the following scenario: A young woman has committed serious sins and has stopped praying and attending church. She feels a desire to begin praying and living the Lord's standards, but she worries that He would not want her back.

Ask students to reflect on whether they know someone who may have felt like the individual in the scenario. Explain that the third parable in Luke 15 is the story of a prodigal (meaning wasteful and recklessly extravagant) son, his older brother, and their father. Invite students to look for truths as they study this parable that can help individuals who may feel they are lost beyond hope.

Consider dividing students into groups of three. Provide each group with a copy of the following handout. Invite them to read Luke 15:11–32 aloud in their groups. Assign one student to consider the parable from the perspective of the prodigal son, the second student to consider it from the perspective of the father, and the third student to consider it from the perspective of the older brother.

After students have finished reading, ask them to discuss the questions on the handout in their groups.

 Instead of asking students to read and discuss the parable, you could show the video “The Prodigal Son” (5:35) from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos*. Provide each student with a copy of the following handout, and ask students to look for answers to the questions as they view the video. This video is available on LDS.org.

Small group assignments

During small group assignments, students can become distracted from the purpose of the activity, visit on personal matters, or become casual in their efforts to learn. Remain actively involved by moving from group to group and monitoring the learning activity to help students stay on task and gain the most from the assignment.

The Parable of the Prodigal Son

The Prodigal Son

- What helped you come to yourself, or recognize the awful situation you were in?
- How did you expect your father to respond to your return home?
- What might you have been thinking and feeling when your father treated you as he did?

The Father

- What might you have been thinking and feeling while your younger son was gone?
- Why would you welcome your prodigal son home in the way you did?
- When your elder son resented how you treated his younger brother, how did you help him understand your actions?

The Older Brother

- What might you have been thinking and feeling while your brother was gone?
- Why was it difficult for you to rejoice in your brother's return?
- What blessings have you received for being faithful to your father?

Ask students how they would complete the third column (Luke 15:11–32) of the chart on the board or on the first handout. Write students' answers on the board, or invite students to write their answers on their handouts.

- Why did the prodigal son become lost? (In contrast to the sheep and the coin, the prodigal son became lost due to his own rebelliousness.)
- Understanding that the father in this parable represents Heavenly Father, what can we learn about how Heavenly Father responds to those who return to Him by repenting? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we return to Heavenly Father by repenting and seeking His forgiveness, He will rejoice and welcome us back with open arms.** Write this principle on the board.)
- How might this principle help those who feel spiritually lost?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"The tender image of this boy's anxious, faithful father running to meet him and showering him with kisses is one of the most moving and compassionate scenes in all of holy writ. It tells every child of God, wayward or otherwise, how much God wants us back in the protection of His arms" ("The Other Prodigal," *Ensign*, May 2002, 62).

Remind students of the older brother in the parable.

- Why do you think the older brother was angry?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Holland, and ask the class to listen for insights regarding why the older brother was angry:



"This son is not so much angry that the other has come home as he is angry that his parents are so happy about it. Feeling unappreciated and perhaps more than a little self-pity, this dutiful son—and he is *wonderfully* dutiful— forgets for a moment that he has never had to know filth or despair, fear or self-loathing. He forgets for a moment that every calf on the ranch is already his and so are all the robes in the closet and every ring in the drawer. He forgets for a moment that his faithfulness has been and always will be rewarded. . . .

". . . He has yet to come to the compassion and mercy, the charitable breadth of vision to see that *this is not a rival returning*. It is his brother. . . .

"Certainly this younger brother had been a prisoner—a prisoner of sin, stupidity, and a pigsty. But the older brother lives in some confinement, too. He has, as yet, been unable to break out of the prison of himself. He is haunted by the green-eyed monster of jealousy" ("The Other Prodigal," 63).

- According to Elder Holland, why was the older brother angry?
- What do we need to remember when we see God being merciful and blessing those who repent and return to Him?
- What principle can we learn from this parable about becoming more like our Father in Heaven? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **We can become more like our Father in Heaven by responding with compassion and joy when others repent.**)

Review the principles students learned from the parables in Luke 15. Ask students to explain how they might have used these principles to respond to the Pharisees and scribes who complained when Jesus ate with sinners.

Remind students of the person they thought about at the beginning of class who may be spiritually lost. Encourage them to prayerfully consider how they might be able to help that person repent and draw closer to Heavenly Father. Invite students to write their response to the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What is one way you will apply what you have learned today?

LESSON 54

Luke 16

Introduction

Jesus taught the parable of the unjust steward. The Pharisees heard Jesus's teachings and ridiculed Him.

Jesus then rebuked the Pharisees and taught them the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 16:1–12

Jesus teaches the parable of the unjust steward

Consider bringing to class items that could represent earthly riches and power, such as money, an electronic device, a diploma, a toy car, or a picture of a house.

Begin the lesson by asking:

- What are some items that people often set their hearts on and try to obtain? (If you brought related items to class, display them as students mention them. Otherwise, ask a student to list class members' responses on the board.)
- What are some riches that Heavenly Father wants us to seek? (Invite a student to list on the board class members' responses, which may include eternal families, peace, joy, and celestial glory. Instruct the student to write the heading *Eternal Riches* above the list.)

Point out that we can enjoy some of these eternal riches in this life. Ask students to ponder which eternal riches are particularly important to them. Invite them to look for truths as they study Luke 16 that can help them obtain eternal riches.

Explain that after teaching the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son, the Savior taught the parable of the unjust steward. You may want to explain that a steward is someone who manages another person's business affairs, money, or property.

Invite a student to read Luke 16:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the rich man in the parable learned about his steward.

- What had the steward been doing with the rich man's goods?
- What was the consequence of the steward's wastefulness? (He would lose his job.)

Summarize Luke 16:3–7 by explaining that the steward worried about what he would do when he lost his job because he did not feel he could do manual labor and was too ashamed to beg. He devised a plan that he thought might lead to job opportunities in other households. He visited two of the rich man's debtors and significantly discounted their debts, which he hoped would earn their favor.

Invite a student to read Luke 16:8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the rich man responded when he learned about his steward's actions. Explain that "children of this world" are worldly minded people and that "children of light" are followers of God, or spiritually minded people.

- How did the rich man respond when he learned about his steward's actions? What did the rich man commend? (The rich man commended the steward's cleverness in obtaining the favor of the rich man's debtors. He was not commending the steward's dishonesty.)

Provide students with copies of the following statement by Elder James E. Talmage of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite a student to read the statement aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior was teaching through the parable of the unjust steward.



"Our Lord's purpose was to show the contrast between the care, thoughtfulness, and devotion of men engaged in the money-making affairs of earth, and the half hearted ways of many who are professedly striving after spiritual riches. . . .

". . . Take a lesson from even the dishonest and the evil; if they are so prudent as to provide for the only future they think of, how much more should you,

who believe in an eternal future, provide therefor! . . . Emulate the unjust steward and the lovers of mammon, not in their dishonesty, cupidity [selfish greed], and miserly hoarding of the wealth that is at best but transitory [temporary], but in their zeal, forethought, and provision for the future” (*Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 463, 464).

- What did the Savior want His disciples to learn from worldly minded people like the unjust steward?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we wisely prepare for our eternal future . . .*

Invite a student to read Luke 16:10–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior said we must do to be blessed with eternal riches. Explain that *mammon* refers to earthly riches, including money, possessions, and associations.

- What do you think it means to be “faithful in that which is least”? (verse 10). (After students respond, add the following to the phrase on the board: *and righteously use earthly riches . . .*)

Direct students’ attention to the list of eternal riches on the board.

- What makes these “true riches”? (verse 11).

Ask students to complete the statement on the board so that it creates a principle about how we can obtain eternal riches. (Students should identify the following principle: **If we wisely prepare for our eternal future and righteously use earthly riches, we can be blessed with eternal riches.**)

- Why is it sometimes difficult to wisely and diligently prepare for our eternal future?
- How can we righteously use earthly riches?
- How does our righteous use of earthly riches reflect our worthiness to be trusted with eternal riches?

Positively acknowledge students’ responses

Be sure to positively acknowledge students’ responses in some way, possibly by thanking them or commenting on their answers. Doing this will help students feel listened to and validated and can help them feel more comfortable sharing answers, insights, and experiences in the future.

Luke 16:13–31

Jesus rebukes the Pharisees and teaches the parable of the rich man and Lazarus

Direct students’ attention to the list on the board (or, if you brought them, to the objects representing earthly riches), and ask them to ponder how coveting earthly riches can prevent us from obtaining eternal riches. Invite students to look for one answer to this question as they study Luke 16:13–26.

Summarize Luke 16:13–14 by explaining that the Savior taught that we “cannot serve [both] God and mammon” (verse 13). The Pharisees heard the Savior’s teachings and “derided” (verse 14), or ridiculed, Him. Ask students to search in Luke 16:14 for the word that describes the Pharisees and offers one explanation as to why they ridiculed the Savior for His teachings.

- From what you have learned about the Pharisees, what did they covet? (Earthly wealth and power [see Matthew 23:2–6, 14].)
- Why do you think the Pharisees’ covetousness led them to ridicule the Savior?

Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation of Luke 16:16–23 (in the Bible appendix) provides further insight into the exchange between the Pharisees and the Savior. Invite a student to read aloud the following summary of this translation:

The Pharisees claimed that the law of Moses and other prophetic scripture (the Old Testament) served as their law, and they therefore rejected Jesus as their judge. Jesus explained that the law of Moses and the prophets had testified of Him. He questioned the Pharisees for denying what had been written and rebuked them for “pervert[ing] the right way” (Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 16:21). To help the Pharisees, whose hearts were set on worldly riches and power, to understand their behavior and the consequences of it, the Savior likened them to the rich man in the parable recorded in Luke 16:19–31.

Ask three volunteers to participate in a reader’s theater. Assign one volunteer to read the Savior’s words (Luke 16:19–23), the second volunteer to read the rich man’s words (Luke 16:24, 27, 28, 30), and the third volunteer to read Abraham’s words (Luke 16:25, 26, 29, 31). Instruct these students to read aloud their parts in Luke 16:19–26. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what a poor man named Lazarus and a rich man experienced.

- How did the mortal lives of the rich man and Lazarus differ?

- How did their postmortal lives differ? (You may need to explain that “Abraham’s bosom” [verse 22] represents paradise in the spirit world and that “hell” [verse 23] refers to the spirit prison [see Bible Dictionary, “Abraham’s Bosom,” “Hell”].)
- In what way did the rich man fail to use his earthly riches righteously?

Remind students that the rich man in this parable represents the covetous Pharisees.

- What can we learn from this parable about what will happen if we are covetous and do not righteously use our earthly riches? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we are covetous and do not use our earthly riches righteously, we will eventually experience suffering and regret** [see also D&C 104:18].)

To prepare students to identify an additional truth from this parable, invite them to think of someone they care about who is choosing to live in disobedience to the Savior’s teachings.

- What do you think could convince that person to repent and change his or her lifestyle?

Invite the assigned students to read aloud their parts in Luke 16:27–31. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the rich man’s request.

- What did the rich man want done for his five brothers? Why?
- What did the rich man believe would happen if Lazarus appeared to the rich man’s brothers?

Explain that the rich man believed his brothers would repent and be converted to the truth if Lazarus appeared to them. Conversion is “changing one’s beliefs, heart, and life to accept and conform to the will of God” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Conversion, Convert,” scriptures.lds.org).

- According to the parable, why did Abraham not send Lazarus to the rich man’s brothers?

Point out that by mentioning “Moses and the prophets” (Luke 16:29, 31), the Savior was again referencing the scriptures that the Pharisees claimed to believe in and live by but in reality rejected. Explain that a real man named Lazarus later became “one [who] rose from the dead” (verse 31) when the Savior brought him back to life (see John 11). Later, Jesus became the One who rose from the dead when He was resurrected. However, in both instances, the Pharisees and others rejected the evidence of the Savior’s divinity and were not persuaded to repent.

- What truth about conversion can we learn from what Abraham taught the rich man in this parable? (Students may identify a variety of truths, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Conversion comes through believing and heeding the words of prophets, not by witnessing miracles or seeing angels.**)
- Why do you think conversion comes through believing and heeding the words of prophets rather than through witnessing miracles or seeing angels?
- How can we help people believe and heed the words of prophets?
- What specific teachings from prophets have influenced your conversion?

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals ways in which they can better believe or heed specific teachings or counsel from prophets, thereby strengthening their conversion. Encourage students to apply what they wrote.

LESSON 55

Luke 17

Introduction

Jesus taught His disciples about the need to forgive others. Afterward, the Apostles asked Jesus to increase their faith. In response, the Savior taught them the parable of the unprofitable servant. Later, Jesus healed ten lepers,

but only one returned to give Him thanks. The Savior was confronted by Pharisees, and He taught about the coming forth of the kingdom of God.

Focus on helping students fulfill their role

As you prepare each lesson, stay focused on your students' role in the classroom and not just on what you will do in class. Rather than merely asking, "What will I do in class today?" or "What will I teach my students?" you should also approach lesson preparation by thinking, "What will my students do in class today?" "How will I help my students discover what they need to know?"

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 17:1–10

The Apostles ask Jesus to increase their faith

Invite students to think of specific situations that may require them to exercise faith (such as seeking a priesthood blessing, paying tithing, or giving a talk or lesson at church). Invite a few students to report what they thought of, and list their responses on the board.

Ask students to silently ponder the following questions:

- Have you ever wanted to have greater faith? If so, what experiences have made you feel this way?

Invite students to look for principles as they study Luke 17 that can help them increase their faith.

Summarize Luke 17:1–2 by explaining that the Savior warned that those who lead others astray or persuade them to sin will be held accountable.

Invite students to read Luke 17:3–4 silently, looking for a commandment the Savior gave His disciples that might require faith.

- According to verse 3, what did Jesus command His disciples to do if someone wronged them?
- According to verse 4, how often were the disciples to forgive? (Consider explaining that the Savior's answer is a way of saying we should forgive no matter how many times we are wronged by someone who has repented.)
- Why might it be difficult to forgive someone who has repeatedly wronged you?

Invite a student to read Luke 17:5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Apostles desired from the Savior after He told the disciples to forgive those who offend them.

- What did the Apostles desire from the Savior? (You may want to invite students to mark the phrase "increase our faith" in their scriptures.)
- How might seeking greater faith in the Lord help the Apostles obey the commandment to forgive others?

Summarize Luke 17:6 by explaining that the Savior then taught His Apostles that faith the size of a tiny mustard seed can produce miracles. To help the Apostles know how to increase their faith, Jesus then gave a parable describing the relationship of a master and a servant.

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *Our faith will increase as we . . .*

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Luke 17:7–10. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what a master expected of his servant.

- What did the master expect of his servant?

Explain that in biblical times a master provided all the necessities of life to his servant as the servant faithfully fulfilled his expected duties. Because of this, there was no need for the master to give special thanks to his servant or to feel indebted to him for performing his duties.

- How is our Heavenly Father like the master in this parable? What does He expect of us? (To do "all those things which are commanded" us [verse 10].)

Add to the statement on the board so it reads: *Our faith will increase as we strive to do all that Heavenly Father commands.*

To help students see what else can increase their faith, ask:

- According to verse 10, what should servants say after keeping their master’s commands?
- What does it mean to be “unprofitable servants”? (It means that no matter how well people keep the commandments, they are always indebted to God.)
- Why are we always indebted to Heavenly Father, even when we are obedient and living righteously? (Because Heavenly Father always blesses us, we can never repay Him [see Mosiah 2:20–26].)

Complete the statement on the board so that it conveys the following principle: **Our faith will increase as we strive to do all that Heavenly Father commands and as we remember that we are always indebted to Him.** You may want to encourage students to write this principle in their scriptures.

- How does striving to do all that Heavenly Father commands increase our faith?

Invite students to ponder a time when they kept the commandments or obediently performed their duty and felt an increase in faith as a result. Invite them to record their thoughts in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

After sufficient time, invite students to share with another student what they wrote. Invite a few students to share their thoughts with the class.

Luke 17:11–19

Jesus cleanses ten lepers

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *During Biblical times, it would have been a great challenge to suffer from leprosy because . . .*

Help students review what they know about leprosy by asking them to tell the class how they would complete the statement. For example, students may mention that leprosy could lead to disfigurement and death; that lepers were separated from the rest of society to protect the health of others; and that they were required to call out “Unclean!” to warn anyone approaching them (see Bible Dictionary, “Leper”).

Invite a student to read Luke 17:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to look for whom Jesus encountered as He stopped at a village while traveling toward Jerusalem. Invite students to report what they find.

- If you were one of those lepers, what feelings might you have had when you saw Jesus?

Ask a student to read Luke 17:13–14 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the lepers said to the Savior and what His response to them was.

- What did the lepers ask of Jesus?
- What did Jesus instruct them to do?

Explain that the law of Moses prescribed that lepers show themselves to the priests after they had recovered in order to be admitted back into society (see Leviticus 14).

- What happened as the lepers went?
- What principle can we learn from verse 14 concerning what we must do to receive the Lord’s blessings? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **We receive the Lord’s blessings as we do what He has instructed us to do.**)

Ask students to consider what it would have been like to be one of the lepers who were cleansed.

- What do you think you would have done once you realized you had been cleansed of leprosy?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Luke 17:15–19. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how one of the lepers reacted differently from the others.

- What did the Samaritan leper do that indicated his gratitude toward the Savior?
- Why might Luke have mentioned that the grateful leper was a Samaritan—someone whom most Jews would have looked down upon? What does this detail add to our understanding of this account?

- What truth can we learn from the leper who returned to give thanks to the Lord? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **It is important to express gratitude for the blessings we receive.**)
- Why is it important to express our gratitude to God for the blessings we receive?
- How might we sometimes be like the nine lepers?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson: “My brothers and sisters, do we remember to give thanks for the blessings we receive? Sincerely giving thanks not only helps us recognize our blessings, but it also unlocks the doors of heaven and helps us feel God’s love” (“The Divine Gift of Gratitude,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 87).

- According to verse 19, what did the Savior say had happened to this leper because of his actions? (He was made whole.)
- In what ways might giving thanks to the Lord for our blessings help us to be made whole?

Invite students to record in their scripture study journals specific blessings from Heavenly Father that they are grateful for. Invite them to write how they can live in gratitude for these blessings.

Luke 17:20–37

Jesus teaches concerning the coming of the kingdom of God

Summarize Luke 17:20–37 by explaining that Jesus taught about His Second Coming. (Note: Similar teachings were treated in the lesson material for Matthew 24 and Joseph Smith—Matthew.)

You may want to conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths identified in this lesson. Invite students to apply these truths in their lives.

Scripture Mastery Review

This activity can be used to help students memorize a scripture mastery passage.

Divide the class into groups of four or five. Give each group a six-sided die and a pencil. (If dice are not available, you could place six small pieces of paper numbered 1 to 6 in an envelope or other container.) Each student will also need a blank piece of paper. Ask each group of students to sit closely around a table or in a circle. Invite them to open their scriptures to the scripture mastery passage you would like them to memorize. Explain that the object of the activity is to be the first person in the group to write out the passage in its entirety. However, students must use the one pencil given to each group. A person qualifies to use the pencil by rolling a 1 on the die (or selecting the piece of paper numbered 1). Invite the members of each group to take turns rolling the die (or taking a piece of paper and then returning it). When a student rolls a 1, that person takes the pencil and begins writing the words of the verse on his or her paper, saying each word aloud. Meanwhile, the others in the group take turns rolling the die. When another student in the group rolls a 1, that person takes the pencil from the previous writer and begins writing the verse on his or her paper while saying the words. The previous writer joins the rest of the group in rolling the die. When students qualify for the pencil and have already written a portion of the verse, they must read that portion aloud before writing more of the verse. (This provides the repetition that will help students to memorize the verse.) The activity concludes when a student from each group has written the scripture mastery passage in its entirety.

Ask the class to repeat the verse in unison after the activity.

Home-Study Lesson

Luke 10:38–17:37 (Unit 11)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Luke 10:38–17:37 (unit 11) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Luke 10:38–12:59)

From the Savior's words to Martha, students learned that if we choose to devote ourselves to spiritual matters over temporal concerns, then we will receive lasting blessings. Jesus also taught that if we persistently pray and seek Heavenly Father's blessings in times of need, then He will, in His own time and in His own way, answer our prayers. Other truths students learned are: The Lord commands us not to covet worldly possessions. If we seek to bring forth God's kingdom and His righteousness, He will help provide for our needs and prepare a place for us in His kingdom.

Day 2 (Luke 13–15)

In these chapters, students learned the following principles: If we try to help people who are less fortunate than we are, the Lord will reward us at the Resurrection. If we place other priorities above the Lord and His gospel, we will lose gospel blessings that we could have received. Disciples of Jesus Christ must be willing to sacrifice everything to follow Him. When we help others feel a desire to repent, we feel joy and the heavens rejoice.

Day 3 (Luke 16)

From the parables of the unjust steward and the rich man and Lazarus, students learned that if we wisely prepare for our eternal future and righteously use earthly riches, we can be blessed with eternal riches. They also learned the following principles: If we are covetous and do not use our earthly riches righteously, we will eventually experience suffering and regret. Conversion comes through believing and heeding the words of prophets, not by witnessing miracles or seeing angels.

Day 4 (Luke 17)

In Luke 17, the Apostles asked Jesus to increase their faith. Students learned that our faith will increase as we strive to do all that Heavenly Father commands and as we remember that we are always indebted to Him. Students also learned that we receive the Lord's blessings as we do what He has instructed us to do, and it is important to express gratitude for the blessings we receive.

Introduction

The Savior responded to the Pharisees' complaints about Him associating with publicans and sinners by giving the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 15

Jesus gives the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son

Begin class by asking students if they have ever lost an item that was valuable to them.

- What were you willing to do to find it? Why?
- What do you think it means for a person to be spiritually "lost"? (Help students understand that this can refer to those who have not yet received the restored gospel of Jesus Christ or are not currently living according to the teachings of the gospel.)

Invite the class to think of someone they know who may be spiritually lost. Ask them to ponder how they feel about this person.

Explain that Luke 15 contains the Savior's teachings about those who are spiritually lost. Invite students to look for truths in Luke 15 concerning how Heavenly Father feels about those who are spiritually lost and the responsibilities we have toward them.

Ask a student to read Luke 15:1–2 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the Pharisees and scribes complained about.

- Why did the Pharisees and scribes complain?
- What does this complaint reveal about the Pharisees and scribes?

Explain that the Savior responded by giving three parables: one of a lost sheep, one of a lost coin, and one of a lost son. Ask them to pay attention to why the subject of each parable became lost and how it was found.

Explain that in the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin, the Savior described how the shepherd and the woman who lost the coin searched with great diligence until they found that which was lost.

Invite a student to read Luke 15:4–6, 8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the shepherd and the woman felt when they found the sheep and the coin.


- What is the difference between how the sheep and the coin were lost? (The sheep became lost through following its normal course of life and through no fault of its own, while the coin was lost because of the negligence or carelessness of its owner [see David O. McKay, in Conference Report, Apr. 1945, 120–22].)
- What word was used to describe how the shepherd and the woman felt?

Invite students to read Luke 15:7, 10 silently, looking for what the Savior likened the joy of the shepherd and the woman to. (The rejoicing in heaven over a sinner who repents.)

Explain that the third parable in Luke 15 is the story of a prodigal son (meaning one who is wasteful and recklessly extravagant), his older brother, and their father.

Consider dividing students into groups of three. Provide each group with a copy of the following handout. Invite them to read Luke 15:11–32 aloud in their groups. Assign one student to consider the parable from the perspective of the prodigal son, the second student to consider it from the perspective of the father, and the third student to consider it from the perspective of the older brother.

After students have finished reading, ask them to discuss the questions on the handout in their groups.

 Instead of asking students to read and discuss the parable, you could show the video “The Prodigal Son” (5:35) from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos*. Provide each student with a copy of the following handout, and ask students to look for answers to the questions as they view the video. This video is available on LDS.org.

The Parable of the Prodigal Son

The Prodigal Son

- What helped you come to yourself, or recognize the awful situation you were in?
- How did you expect your father to respond to your return home?
- What might you have been thinking and feeling when your father treated you as he did?

The Father

- What might you have been thinking and feeling while your younger son was gone?
- Why would you welcome your prodigal son home in the way you did?
- When your elder son resented how you treated his younger brother, how did you help him understand your actions?

The Older Brother

- What might you have been thinking and feeling while your brother was gone?
- Why was it difficult for you to rejoice in your brother’s return?
- What blessings have you received for being faithful to your father?

- Why did the prodigal son become lost? (In contrast to the sheep and the coin, the prodigal son became lost due to his own rebelliousness.)
- Understanding that the father in this parable represents Heavenly Father, what can we learn about how Heavenly Father responds to those who return to Him by repenting? (Students

should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we return to Heavenly Father by repenting and seeking His forgiveness, He will rejoice and welcome us back with open arms.** Write this principle on the board.)

- How might this principle help those who feel spiritually lost?

Remind students of the older brother in the parable.

- Why do you think the older brother was angry?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and ask the class to listen for insights regarding why the older brother was angry:



“Feeling unappreciated and perhaps more than a little self-pity, this dutiful son—and he is *wonderfully* dutiful—forgets for a moment that he has never had to know filth or despair, fear or self-loathing. He forgets for a moment that every calf on the ranch is already his and so are all the robes in the closet and every ring in the drawer. He forgets for a moment that his faithfulness has been and always will be rewarded. . . .

“ . . . He who has virtually everything, and who has in his hard-working, wonderful way earned it, lacks the one thing that might make him the complete man of the Lord he nearly is. He has yet to come to the compassion and mercy, the charitable breadth of vision to see that *this is not a rival returning*. It is his brother. . . .

“Certainly this younger brother had been a prisoner—a prisoner of sin, stupidity, and a pigsty. But the older brother lives in some confinement, too. He has, as yet, been unable to break out of the prison of himself. He is haunted by the green-eyed monster of jealousy. He feels taken for granted by his father and disenfranchised by his brother, when neither is the case” (“The Other Prodigal,” *Ensign*, May 2002, 63).

- According to Elder Holland, why was the older brother angry? In what ways was the older brother also lost?
- What do we need to remember when we see God being merciful and blessing those who repent and return to Him?
- What principle can we learn from this parable about becoming more like our Father in Heaven? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **We can become more like our Father in Heaven by responding with compassion and joy when others repent.**)

Remind students of the person they thought about at the beginning of class who may be spiritually lost. Encourage them to prayerfully consider how they might be able to help that person repent and draw closer to Heavenly Father. Invite them to also consider in what ways they themselves may be lost and need to repent and return to the Savior.

Next Unit (Luke 18–John 1)

Invite students to ponder a time when someone mistreated them and how it felt. Explain that as they study the next unit, they will learn how the Savior chose to respond to those who mistreated Him. Ask them to notice additional details in Luke’s account of Jesus Christ’s suffering in Gethsemane and what Jesus ate after His Resurrection.

LESSON 56

Luke 18–21

Introduction

As Jesus Christ traveled toward Jerusalem for the last time in mortality, He taught His gospel and performed miracles among the people. He rode in triumph into

Jerusalem, cleansed the temple again, and taught the people there.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 18–21

The Savior teaches on His way to Jerusalem

Explain to students that they have already learned about many of the events recorded in Luke 18–21 from their study of Matthew and Mark. To review two of these events, display the following pictures: Christ and the Rich Young Ruler (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 48; see also LDS.org) and Triumphal Entry (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 50). Invite students to summarize these stories for the class and to explain what they remember learning from the accounts.

You may want to use the following summary of Luke 18–21 if students need help remembering these stories. (*Note:* To help students understand when the events of this lesson occurred in the Savior's life, you may want to show students the graphic *The Mortal Ministry of Jesus Christ at a Glance* in the appendix of this manual.)

As Jesus Christ traveled to Jerusalem for the last time in mortality, He taught a number of parables and healed many people. He invited the rich young ruler to give all to the poor and follow Him. He healed a blind man. Despite ridicule, He dined with one of the chief publicans in Jericho.

He arrived in Jerusalem and, amidst shouts of praise, rode a colt as He entered the city. He again expelled the moneychangers from the temple, taught the people there, and responded to questions from chief priests and scribes. He praised a widow who offered her two mites to the temple treasury. He also taught the disciples about His Second Coming.

Explain that most of the accounts students will study in this lesson are unique to the Gospel of Luke.

To prepare students to study these accounts, write the following questions on the board:

What actions might indicate that a person sincerely wants to come closer to the Lord?

What behaviors show he or she really wants to be forgiven or desires the Lord's help?

Invite students to consider these questions as they study the following accounts from Luke's writings.

Write the following scripture references on the board: *Luke 18:1–8; Luke 18:9–14; Luke 18:35–43; Luke 19:1–10*. Explain that these scripture passages include parables and events from the Savior's last journey toward Jerusalem during His mortal life.

Assign each student one of the scripture references written on the board, or consider dividing the class into four groups and assigning each group one of the scripture references on the board. Invite each student or group to read the assigned scripture passage and prepare to act out the account or parable it contains. (If you do not divide students into groups, consider acting out each of the accounts as a class. If you choose not to act out these accounts, you could invite students to study the assigned scripture references individually by using the following questions and then teaching each other what they learned.) Explain that one student in the class or in each group should be the narrator and read the scriptural account as the rest of the class or group acts it out. Out of reverence and respect for the Savior, instruct those acting out Luke 18:35–43 and Luke 19:1–10 to do so without having someone represent Jesus Christ. Instruct the narrator to read the words of Jesus, and ask the actors to respond as though He were in the scene.



Show reverence and respect for the Lord Jesus Christ

To respect the dignity of Jesus Christ, the Church is careful in its portrayal of the Savior in art and theater. We too must show reverence for Him in our classrooms. Avoid depicting the Savior in an irreverent way. Those portraying His voice should use only His words as recorded in the scriptures.

As the groups prepare, invite them to discuss the following questions together and be ready to report their answers to the class after they act out the scene. (Consider writing these questions on the board or providing them on a handout.)

- What did the main character (widow, publican, blind man, or Zacchaeus) desire in this account?
- What did the main character do that indicated his or her desire was sincere?
- What happened because of the main character's faithful actions?
- What principles or doctrines can you identify in the story?

After sufficient time, invite the class or each group to act out their account as the narrator reads the verses. As the class watches or follows along in their scriptures, ask students to consider what each account can teach us about exercising faith in the Lord. After each performance, ask the class or group to report their answers to the preceding questions. Ask them to list on the board the principles or doctrines they identified.

After the groups have reported their answers to the questions, ask the following questions:

- What similarities did you notice in the actions of each of the main characters? (They each showed persistence or sincerity as they sought to obtain their desires.)
- What can these actions teach us about exercising faith in the Lord?
- What similarities did you notice in what each of the main characters received as a result of his or her actions? (Each received help or mercy.)

Ask students to identify a principle from the similarities in the accounts. Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **if we are sincere and persistent as we exercise faith in the Lord, we can obtain His mercy**. Write this principle on the board.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for what indicates a person is exercising faith in the Lord.

"True faith is focused in and on the Lord Jesus Christ and always leads to righteous action" ("Ask in Faith," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2008, 95).

Refer students to the questions written on the board at the beginning of the lesson. Ask students to turn to a partner and discuss answers to the questions.

- What are some ways we can exercise faith in God today?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bednar, and ask the class to listen for what it means to experience the mercies of the Lord:

"The Lord's tender mercies are the very personal and individualized blessings, strength, protection, assurances, guidance, loving-kindnesses, consolation, support, and spiritual gifts which we receive from and because of and through the Lord Jesus Christ" ("The Tender Mercies of the Lord," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2005, 99).

Invite students to respond to the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. (You may want to write the questions on the board.)

- In what ways have you or someone you know exercised faith in Jesus Christ? What mercy did you or this person experience as a result?
- Consider in what ways you desire the Lord's help or mercy in your life. What will you do to exercise your faith in the Lord in order to receive His mercy?

Invite a few students who feel comfortable sharing to report what they wrote. Remind them not to share anything too personal. You might also want to share your experience with the principle and testify of its truthfulness.

LESSON 57

Luke 22

Introduction

As His mortal ministry drew to a close, Jesus instituted the sacrament, taught His disciples to serve others, and commanded Peter to strengthen his brethren. The Savior's

atonement sacrifice began in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was arrested and tried before Caiaphas. While the Savior was being tried, Peter denied knowing Him.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 22:1–38

The Savior institutes the sacrament and instructs His Apostles

Ask each student to imagine (or you could invite two students to act out this activity) that he or she and a family member are sitting on the floor. The family member wants to stand up and asks for help.

- How well can you help them if you stay seated on the floor?
- What difference would it make if you stood up first?

Explain that this analogy can help us understand what we can do to help lift others spiritually.

Invite students to look for truths as they study Luke 22 that will help them know how to help lift others spiritually.

Summarize Luke 22:1–30 by reminding students that near the end of His mortal ministry, the Savior met with His Apostles to observe the Passover. During that time, the Savior announced that one of His disciples would betray Him, instituted the ordinance of the sacrament, commanded that it continue to be administered in remembrance of Him, and taught His Apostles that those who serve others are the greatest of all. The Savior also commended His Apostles for continuing with Him and promised them that one day they would sit on thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

Invite a student to read Luke 22:31–32 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior said to Simon Peter. Invite a student to read verse 31, footnote *a* aloud.

- What did the Savior say that Satan desired? (Satan wanted to sift Peter and the Saints as wheat.)

Explain that wheat is sifted by separating kernels of grain from the rest of the wheat.

- What have you learned about Peter that shows he already had a testimony? (If necessary, remind students that Peter had declared his testimony that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God [see Matthew 16:13–17].)
- According to verse 32, what did Peter still need to experience before he could strengthen his brethren?
- What is the difference between having a testimony of the gospel and being converted to the gospel? (Having a testimony of the gospel means we have received a spiritual witness of the truth through the Holy Ghost [see Guide to the Scriptures, “Testimony,” scriptures.lds.org]. Being converted to the gospel means “changing [our] beliefs, heart, and life to accept and conform to the will of God (Acts 3:19)” [Guide to the Scriptures, “Conversion, Convert,” scriptures.lds.org].)
- Based on what the Lord told Peter, what can we do when we are converted to the gospel? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **When we are converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ, we can strengthen others.** Consider inviting students to mark the phrases that teach this truth in verse 32.)

Invite a student to read Luke 22:33–34 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Peter responded to the Savior's admonition to become converted and strengthen his brethren.

- How did Peter respond to the Savior's admonition?
- What did the Savior prophesy Peter would do?

Explain that a more detailed version of this account is recorded in Matthew 26. Invite a student to read Matthew 26:35 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter said to the Savior after hearing the prophecy.

- How did Peter respond after hearing this prophecy?
- What can Peter's response teach us about what he thought of the strength of his testimony?

Teaching about Jesus Christ's suffering in Gethsemane

There are three accounts of the events that occurred in Gethsemane. In this manual, the lesson for Matthew 26 focuses on the Savior's submission to the Father's will. The lesson for Mark 14 addresses what Jesus suffered in Gethsemane. The lesson for Luke 22 emphasizes the severity of His suffering. Teaching students these unique aspects of the Atonement can enable them to have distinctive experiences as they study each account.

Luke 22:39–53

The Savior suffers in Gethsemane, sweats great drops of blood, and is betrayed by Judas

Explain that after the Passover, the Savior and His Apostles went to the Garden of Gethsemane. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Luke 22:39–43. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior did after He came to the Garden of Gethsemane. Invite students to report what they find.

- According to verse 43, who helped the Savior have the strength to do Heavenly Father's will?
- What truth can we learn from this account about what Heavenly Father will do for us if we seek to do His will? (Students may identify a variety of truths, but make sure it is clear that **if we are willing to obey Heavenly Father, He will give us the strength to do His will.**)
- What are some of the ways in which Heavenly Father might strengthen us?

Explain that most of the time the help we receive from Heavenly Father will not come from the appearance of angels but that He will help us in the ways He knows will be best for us. Invite students to ponder a time when they felt strengthened by Heavenly Father as they sought to do His will.

Explain that Luke's account of the Savior's suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane includes an important detail that is not included in the accounts given by Matthew and Mark. Invite a student to read Luke 22:44 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Luke described the Savior's suffering in Gethsemane.

- How did Luke describe the Savior's suffering in Gethsemane? (You may want to invite students to mark the words in verse 44 that teach the following truth: **Jesus Christ sweat great drops of blood as He suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane.** You may want to point out that this aspect of the Savior's suffering was prophesied of more than a century earlier [see Mosiah 3:7].)

To help students further understand what the Savior experienced, explain that the Savior described His own suffering in a revelation given through the Prophet Joseph Smith recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 19. Consider inviting students to cross-reference Doctrine and Covenants 19:18 with Luke 22:44 in their scriptures. Invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 19:18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior described His suffering.

- What additional details do we learn about the Savior's suffering from His own description in verse 18? (Jesus Christ's suffering caused Him "to tremble because of pain, . . . to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit.")
- What thoughts do you have knowing that Jesus Christ suffered so much for you?

Summarize Luke 22:45–48 by explaining that after the Savior suffered in Gethsemane, He was betrayed by Judas Iscariot.

Invite a student to read Luke 22:49–51 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter did when the chief priests and others came to arrest Jesus (see John 18:10, which is the only account that identifies Peter as the Apostle who cut off the servant's ear).

- What did Peter do to the servant of the high priest?
- What is remarkable about what the Savior did for the servant?

Summarize Luke 22:52–53 by explaining that the Savior asked why the chief priests and others were arresting Him during the night instead of during the day when He was at the temple.

Luke 22:54–71*Jesus is tried before the Sanhedrin, and Peter denies knowing Him*

Summarize Luke 22:54 by explaining that when the Savior was taken to the high priest's house to be tried, Peter followed.

Divide students into pairs. Provide each pair with a copy of the following chart (or write it on the board). Invite students to read the scriptures referenced in the chart and complete the chart with their partners.

Luke 22:54–60

	What happened to Peter?	What did Peter say?
Luke 22:55–57		
Luke 22:58		
Luke 22:59–60		

- Why do you think Peter might have been tempted to deny knowing Jesus to each of these people?

Invite a student to read Luke 22:61–62 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened after Peter denied knowing the Savior.

- What happened after Peter denied knowing the Savior?

If possible, display the picture *Peter's Denial*, by Carl Heinrich Bloch. This picture is available on LDS.org.

- If you had been in Peter's position, what thoughts or feelings do you think you might have had as the Savior looked at you? Why?
- How does Peter's experience illustrate the difference between having a testimony of the gospel and being converted to it?

Explain that although Peter had a testimony of the gospel, he was not yet completely converted. However, he recognized his weakness, became wholly converted, and devoted his life to serving God and sharing the gospel.

- What lessons can we learn from Peter's experience?

Summarize Luke 22:63–71 by explaining that the Savior was mocked and smitten by the chief priests.

Conclude the lesson by inviting students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals several things they can do that can help them become truly converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Encourage them to do one of the things on their list this week.



Peter's Denial, by Carl Heinrich Bloch.
Courtesy of the National History Museum at
Frederiksborg Castle in Hillerød, Denmark.
Do not copy.

Commentary and Background Information

Luke 22:44. "His sweat was as it were great drops of blood"

Elder James E. Talmage of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that the Savior's agony was physical, mental, and spiritual:

"It was not physical pain, nor mental anguish alone, that caused Him to suffer such torture as to produce

an extrusion of blood from every pore; but a spiritual agony of soul such as only God was capable of experiencing. No other man, however great his powers of physical or mental endurance, could have suffered so; for his human organism would have succumbed, . . . [producing] unconsciousness and welcome oblivion. In that hour of anguish Christ met and overcame all the horrors that Satan, 'the prince of this world' could inflict" (*Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 613).

Luke 23

Introduction

The Savior was tried before both Pontius Pilate and Herod Antipas. Neither of these men found the Savior guilty of the crimes the Jews accused Him of, but Pilate nevertheless gave Him up to be crucified. Jesus forgave

the Roman soldiers who crucified Him and spoke to a thief who was also being crucified. After Jesus died, Joseph of Arimathea placed His body in a tomb.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 23:1–25

The Savior is tried before Pilate and Herod

Before class, write the following questions on the board:

When have you felt mistreated because of another person's words or actions?

How did you respond in that situation?

Begin class by inviting students to ponder the questions on the board.

Invite students to look for a truth as they study Luke 23 that will help them know how to respond when they feel mistreated by others.

Remind students that after Jesus had suffered in Gethsemane, the chief priests arrested Him and condemned Him to die. Explain that from that time through His death, Jesus interacted with the following people: Pontius Pilate, Herod Antipas, a group of faithful women, Roman soldiers, and two thieves who were being crucified on either side of Him. Pontius Pilate was a Roman ruler in the territory of Judea, which included the capital city of Jerusalem; Herod Antipas (who had put John the Baptist to death) ruled the territories of Galilee and Perea under Roman authority (see Luke 3:1).

Divide students into pairs and invite each pair to read Luke 23:1–11 together, looking for the differences between the Savior's response to Pontius Pilate and His response to Herod Antipas. To help them understand the Savior's response to Pilate, invite them to also read Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 15:4 (in Mark 15:2, footnote *b*).

Invite students to discuss with their partners the answers to the following questions:

- How was Jesus's response to Pilate different from His response to Herod?
- Why might Pilate have been surprised by the Savior's response to him?
- Why might Herod have been disappointed by the Savior's silence?

Summarize Luke 23:12–25 by explaining that neither Pilate nor Herod could find fault with Jesus, so Pilate told the multitude that he would punish Jesus and release Him. The people cried for Pilate to release Barabbas instead and demanded that Jesus be crucified. Pilate released Barabbas and gave Jesus up to be crucified. (*Note:* The account of Jesus before Pilate will be taught in greater detail in the lesson on John 18–19.)

Luke 23:26–56

Jesus is crucified between two thieves

Summarize Luke 23:26–31 by explaining that a large group of faithful women who had been with Him since His ministry in Galilee wept as they followed Jesus while He was led to the place of His Crucifixion. Jesus told them not to weep for Him but to weep for the impending destruction that would come upon Jerusalem because the Jews had rejected their King.

Invite a student to read Luke 23:32–34 aloud. Also invite him or her to read Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 23:35 (in Luke 23:34, footnote *c*). Invite students to follow along, looking for what the Savior did as He was being nailed to the cross.

- What did the Savior do as He was being nailed to the cross? (You may want to suggest that students mark the Savior's words recorded in verse 34.)
- Why is the Savior's prayer at this moment so remarkable?
- What principle can we learn from the Savior's example about how we should respond when others mistreat us? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **We can follow Jesus Christ's example by choosing to forgive those who mistreat us.**)
- What does it mean to forgive?

You may want to explain that forgiving others does not mean that those who sin against us should not be held accountable for their actions. Nor does it mean that we should put ourselves in situations in which people can continue to mistreat us. Rather, forgiveness means to treat with love those who have mistreated us and to harbor no resentment or anger toward them (see Guide to the Scriptures, "Forgive," scriptures.lds.org).

Ask students to consider silently whether there is anyone they need to forgive. Acknowledge that at times it can be difficult to forgive another. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley. Ask the class to listen for what they can do if they are struggling to forgive someone.

"I plead with you to ask the Lord for strength to forgive. . . . It may not be easy, and it may not come quickly. But if you will seek it with sincerity and cultivate it, it *will* come" ("Of You It Is Required to Forgive," *Ensign*, June 1991, 5).

- What did President Hinckley counsel us to do if we are struggling to forgive someone?
- How do you think praying for strength can help us to forgive?

Ask students to think of a time when they have forgiven someone. Invite a few students to share their experiences with the class. (Ask them not to share names with the class, and remind them not to share anything too personal.)

Encourage students to follow Jesus Christ's example and forgive those who have mistreated them. Invite them to pray for the strength and ability to do so.

Summarize Luke 23:35–38 by explaining that Jewish rulers and Roman soldiers mocked the Savior as He hung on the cross.

Display the picture *The Crucifixion* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 57; see also LDS.org). Invite a student to read Luke 23:39–43 aloud, and ask the class to follow along, looking for how the two thieves who hung on either side of the Savior treated Him.

- How did each of the two thieves treat the Savior?
- What might the thief have meant when he said, "We receive the due rewards of our deeds"? (verse 41).
- How did the Savior respond to this thief when he asked the Savior to remember him in God's kingdom?

To help students better understand what the Savior meant when He told the thief that he would be with Him in paradise, invite a student to read aloud the following statement:

"In the scriptures, the word *paradise* is used in different ways. First, it designates a place of peace and happiness in the postmortal spirit world, reserved for those who have been baptized and who have remained faithful (see Alma 40:12; Moroni 10:34). . . .

"A second use of the word *paradise* is found in Luke's account of the Savior's Crucifixion. . . . The Prophet Joseph Smith explained that . . . the Lord actually said that the thief would be with Him in the world of spirits" (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 111; see also *History of the Church*, 5:424–25).

- According to the Prophet Joseph Smith, where would the thief go after he died? (The spirit world [see Alma 40:11–14].)
- What truth can we learn from the Savior's statement that the thief would be with Him in paradise (see Luke 23:43)? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The spirits of all people enter the spirit world at the time of their death.**)



Cross-references

A cross-reference is a scripture reference that can provide additional information and insight about the passage being studied. Cross-referencing, or linking, is connecting scripture references that help students understand a scripture passage. The cross-references you share as part of your lesson should enhance students' understanding of a scripture passage and not merely restate truths they have already identified.

Explain that other scriptures can help us better understand what would happen to the thief and others like him in the world of spirits. You may want to suggest that students write Doctrine and Covenants 138:28–32, 58–59 as a cross-reference in the margin of their scriptures next to Luke 23:43.

Explain that Doctrine and Covenants 138 contains a revelation given to President Joseph F. Smith in which the Savior revealed truths about the spirit world. These truths can help us understand what the Savior meant when He said, “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43).

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Doctrine and Covenants 138:11, 16, 18, 28–32. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior did when He went to the spirit world.

- What did the Savior do when He went to the spirit world?
- According to verse 29, where did the Savior not go while He was in the spirit world?
- What did the Savior organize His righteous messengers to do?
- What truth can we learn from these verses? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following truth: **Under Jesus Christ’s direction, righteous messengers teach the gospel to those in spirit prison.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Brother Alain A. Petion, former Area Seventy. Ask the class to listen for what the Savior’s message might have done for the criminal on the cross.



“The Savior graciously answered and gave him hope. This criminal likely did not understand that the gospel would be preached to him in the spirit world or that he would be given an opportunity to live according to God in the spirit (see 1 Pet. 4:6; D&C 138:18–34). Truly the Savior cared for the thief who hung beside Him; surely He cares greatly for those who love Him and strive to keep His commandments!” (“Words of Jesus: On the Cross,” *Ensign*, June 2003, 34).

- What hope do the words in D&C 138:29–32 give us regarding all those who have died without a knowledge of the gospel?

Explain that even though the gospel would be preached to this thief, he would not automatically be saved in God’s kingdom.

Invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 138:58–59 aloud, and ask the class to follow along, looking for what the thief and others in spirit prison would have to do in order to be redeemed.

- What would the thief, or any other spirit in spirit prison, need to do in order to be redeemed?
- What will happen to those spirits who repent and accept the temple ordinances performed on their behalf? (Spirits “who repent will be redeemed, through obedience to the ordinances of the [temple],” be cleansed through the Atonement, and “receive [their] reward” [D&C 138:58–59].)
- What can we do to help those spirits who, like the thief, need to be redeemed? (We can complete family history work and participate in temple ordinances for the dead.)

Summarize Luke 23:44–56 by explaining that the Savior died on the cross after He said, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit” (verse 46). Joseph of Arimathea then wrapped the Savior’s body in linen and laid Him in a tomb.

Conclude by testifying of the truths you discussed in this lesson.

LESSON 59

Luke 24

Introduction


On the third day after Jesus Christ's death, angels at the tomb announced His Resurrection to a group of women. Upon hearing the women's report, some of the disciples doubted the possibility of the Savior's Resurrection. Two disciples traveled to Emmaus and, without recognizing

the resurrected Lord, spoke with Him along the way. Jesus later appeared to His Apostles and others, showed them His resurrected body, and commissioned them to preach repentance and be witnesses of Him.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 24:1–12

Angels announce to a group of women that Jesus Christ is risen

 Show a portion of the video “Jesus Is Laid in a Tomb” from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos*, pausing before the angels speak to the women (time code 0:00–2:27). This video is available on LDS.org.

If you are unable to show the video, invite students to imagine that they had been at the tomb when Jesus was placed there and had seen the stone being rolled in front of the doorway. Ask them to imagine the thoughts and feelings they might have had there. Invite a student to read Luke 24:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the women discovered when they returned to the tomb three days later.

After showing the video clip or reading verses 1–4, ask:

- What did the women find at the tomb?
- How might you have reacted if you had seen the angels standing at the opened tomb?

Invite a student to read Luke 24:5–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the angels told the women. Invite students to report what they find.

Summarize Luke 24:9–10 by explaining that the women left the tomb and told the disciples what they had seen and heard.

Invite a student to read Luke 24:11 aloud, and ask the class to look for the Apostles' reaction to the women's words. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that after hearing the women's report, Peter and John ran to the sepulchre and found that Jesus's body was gone (see Luke 24:12; John 20:1–4).

Luke 24:13–32

The risen Lord speaks to two disciples on the road to Emmaus

Ask students to ponder a time when they, like the disciples in this account, have struggled to believe a gospel concept.

Explain that in Luke 24:13 we learn that two disciples left Jerusalem “that same day,” traveling about 6–7.5 miles (10–12 kilometers) “to a village called Emmaus.” Studying their experience on the road to Emmaus can help us know how to strengthen our testimonies of Jesus Christ and His gospel.

Invite a student to read Luke 24:14–17 aloud, and ask the class to look for who joined the two disciples as they walked.

- Who joined the disciples as they traveled?
- Why did the disciples not recognize Jesus? (Explain that the word *holden* [verse 16] means restrained or covered.)

 Show the video “Christ Appears on the Road to Emmaus” (3:32) from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos*, which is available on LDS.org. Ask students to watch for what the

disciples learned from Jesus as they walked with Him without recognizing who He was. Before showing the video, explain that the dialogue in the video is from Luke 24:17–33 so that students can follow along in the scriptures if they would like to. (If you are unable to show the video, invite students to take turns reading aloud from these verses.)

Point out that in this video, we do not hear what Jesus taught the disciples as they walked. Invite a student to read Luke 24:27 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Jesus taught the disciples.

- What did Jesus teach the disciples? What tool did He use to teach about Himself?
- According to Luke 24:32, how did the Savior’s teachings from the scriptures affect the two disciples?
- What does it mean that the disciples’ “heart[s] burn[ed] within” them? (The Holy Ghost testified that the teachings about Jesus in the scriptures were true.)

Invite students to ponder what the disciples might have learned from Jesus’s using the scriptures to teach them rather than simply revealing who He was. You might ask a few students to share their thoughts.

- What can we learn from these verses about the effects of our own scripture study? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **As we study the scriptures, we invite the Holy Ghost to teach us of Jesus Christ.**)
- Besides a burning in our hearts, how else would you describe what we might experience as the Holy Ghost testifies of Jesus Christ?

Ask students to locate a scripture that has helped them feel the Holy Ghost teaching them about Jesus Christ. Invite them to share their scriptures and the effects of what they have felt. You may also want to share a scripture that has helped you personally.

Remind students that even though it is important to read the New Testament for seminary credit, it is even more important to study the scriptures in a way that the Holy Ghost can strengthen their testimonies of the Savior.

Provide copies of a bookmark that contains the following statement by Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (or invite students to write the statement on a blank bookmark):



“The central purpose of all scripture is to fill our souls with faith in God the Father and in His Son, Jesus Christ. . . .

“ . . . Faith comes by the witness of the Holy Spirit to our souls, Spirit to spirit, as we hear or read the word of God. And faith matures as we continue to feast upon the word. . . .

“ . . . Study the scriptures carefully, deliberately. Ponder and pray over them.

Scriptures are revelation, and they will bring added revelation” (D. Todd Christofferson, “The Blessing of Scripture,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2010, 34, 35).

Ask a student to read the statement by Elder Christofferson aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for ways in which they can improve their personal scripture study.

Invite students to set a goal to study their scriptures in ways that invite the Holy Ghost to increase their faith in and knowledge of Jesus Christ. You might suggest that they write this goal on the back of the bookmark so that they can use it as a reminder during their scripture study.

Luke 24:33–53

Jesus appears to His disciples and shows them His resurrected body

Invite two students to bring their scriptures to the front of the class to help role-play a scene that portrays missionaries approaching someone’s door. Instruct them to knock. Pretend to open a door and greet them. Tell them to introduce themselves. After they do so, say something like the following:

“I have a question. A lot of people I know do not believe in life after death. Some of them say they believe in Jesus Christ but do not believe He was resurrected with a physical body. They say He continued to live only as a spirit. What do you believe about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ?”

Give the two students time to answer the question.

Point out that Luke 24:36–39 is a scripture mastery passage and can help teach about the literal Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Provide context for this passage by explaining that the disciples who were with Jesus on the road to Emmaus immediately returned to Jerusalem and related their experience to the Apostles and other disciples (see Luke 24:33–35). While they were talking, the Savior appeared (see verse 36).

Invite one of the students who helped role-play to read Luke 24:36–39 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for evidence that Jesus was literally resurrected and has a body of flesh and bones.

- What did Jesus invite His disciples to do to help them understand that He was not merely a spirit but had a physical body? (Consider displaying the picture *Jesus Shows His Wounds* [*Gospel Art Book* (2009), no. 60; see also LDS.org].)
- How do you think you would feel if you had been present when Christ appeared to His disciples?

Thank the students who helped role-play, and ask them to sit down. Invite a student to read Luke 24:40–43 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else Jesus did to show that He had a tangible (or physical) resurrected body.

- What else did the Savior do to show that He had a resurrected body?
- What doctrines can we learn from these verses? (Students may identify a variety of doctrines, but be sure to emphasize that **Jesus Christ has a resurrected body of flesh and bones**. Write this doctrine on the board.)
- Why is this doctrine important to understand and believe?

Invite a student to read the following statement aloud:

“Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, all people will be resurrected—saved from physical death (see 1 Corinthians 15:22). Resurrection is the reuniting of the spirit with the body in a perfect, immortal state, no longer subject to disease or death (see Alma 11:42–45). . . .

“An understanding and testimony of the resurrection can give you hope and perspective as you experience the challenges, trials, and triumphs of life. You can find comfort in the assurance that the Savior lives and that through His Atonement, ‘he breaketh the bands of death, that the grave shall have no victory, and that the sting of death should be swallowed up in the hopes of glory’ (Alma 22:14)” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 139, 140).

- What are some examples of trials that the hope of our own resurrection could help us endure?

Ask a few students to testify of the Savior’s Resurrection and to explain why the doctrine of the Resurrection is important to them.

Invite a student to read Luke 24:44–53 aloud. Ask the class to listen to the Savior’s words as though they had been part of the group of disciples who were with Him and to consider which teachings may have been most meaningful to them. Invite a few students to share their thoughts about the teachings in these verses.

Conclude by testifying of the truths you have discussed.

Scripture Mastery—Luke 24:36–39

To help students memorize Luke 24:36–39, divide the class into four groups. Assign a different verse from this passage to each group, and instruct the students in each group to work together to memorize their assigned verse. After a few minutes, ask each group to recite their assigned verse in order of the verses. You may want to invite students to recite their verses again for the next few class periods until the entire passage becomes familiar to everyone.

Luke 24:36–39

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.



INTRODUCTION TO

The Gospel According to St. John

Why study this book?

During a time of increasing persecution against Christians, growing apostasy, and disputations about the nature of Jesus Christ, the Apostle John recorded his testimony of the Savior. Studying the Gospel of John can help students come to know Heavenly Father through the ministry of His Son, Jesus Christ. John's account teaches that those who live according to the teachings of Jesus Christ can receive great blessings, including eternal life.

Who wrote this book?

The Apostle John wrote this book. Throughout the book he referred to himself as the "disciple whom Jesus loved" (see John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20). John and his brother James were fishermen (see Matthew 4:21). Before becoming a disciple and Apostle of Jesus Christ, John was apparently a follower of John the Baptist (see John 1:35–40; Guide to the Scriptures, "John, Son of Zebedee," scriptures.lds.org).

When and where was it written?

We do not know exactly when John wrote this book. Proposed dates for its writing range from A.D. 60 to A.D. 100. Early

Christian writers of the second century A.D. suggested that John wrote this book at Ephesus in Asia Minor (modern Turkey).

To whom was it written and why?

Although John's writings are meant for everyone, his message also has a more specific audience. Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles wrote: "The gospel of John is the account for the saints; it is pre-eminently the gospel for the Church" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:65). John stated that his purpose for writing this book was to persuade others to "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31). "The scenes from Jesus' life that [John] describes are carefully selected and arranged with this object in view" (Bible Dictionary, "John, Gospel of").

What are some distinctive features of this book?

About 92 percent of the material in the Gospel of John is not found in the other Gospel accounts. This is probably because

John's intended audience—Church members who already had an understanding of Jesus Christ—was decidedly different from Matthew's, Mark's, and Luke's intended audiences. Of the seven miracles reported by John, five are not recorded in any other Gospel. While Matthew, Mark, and Luke presented considerable information about Jesus's ministry in Galilee, John recorded numerous events that took place in Judea. John's Gospel is richly doctrinal, with some of its major themes being the divinity of Jesus as the Son of God, the Atonement of Christ, eternal life, the Holy Ghost, the need to be born again, the importance of loving others, and the importance of believing in the Savior.

John emphasized Jesus's divinity as the Son of God. John recorded over 100 of Jesus's references to His Father, with over 20 references in John 14 alone. One of John's major contributions is his inclusion of the Savior's teachings to His disciples in the hours before His arrest, including the great Intercessory Prayer, offered the night He suffered in Gethsemane. This portion of John's account (John 13–17) represents over 18 percent of the pages in John, providing us with a greater understanding of the Savior's doctrine and what He expects of His disciples.

Outline

John 1 John testifies of Jesus Christ's premortal divinity and mission to offer salvation to all men. John records the baptism of Jesus and the calling of some of His disciples.

John 2–4 Jesus Christ turns water into wine. He teaches Nicodemus about spiritual rebirth and testifies to the woman at the well that He is the Christ. He heals the son of a nobleman.

John 5–7 The Savior heals a lame man at the pool of Bethesda and proclaims His divine power and authority. He feeds the five thousand in preparation for his Bread of Life discourse, proclaims that He is the Messiah, and declares at the Feast of Tabernacles that only those who receive Him can receive eternal life.

John 8–10 Through the experience of the woman taken in adultery, Jesus teaches about compassion and repentance. He declares Himself to be Jehovah, the great I Am. He heals a man who was born blind and describes Himself as the Good Shepherd, who loves and lays down His life for His sheep.

John 11–13 Jesus Christ raises Lazarus from death, demonstrating His power over death. He enters Jerusalem triumphantly. During the Last Supper, Jesus washes the feet of His disciples and teaches them to love one another.

John 14–16 Jesus instructs His disciples on the relationship between love and obedience. He promises to send the Comforter (the Holy Ghost) and to minister personally to His

disciples. He declares that He is the True Vine and that He has overcome the world.

John 17–19 Jesus offers the Intercessory Prayer in behalf of His disciples and those who will believe in their preaching. He is betrayed, arrested, tried, and condemned. After suffering on the cross, He dies and is buried.

John 20–21 The resurrected Jesus Christ appears to Mary Magdalene at the Garden Tomb and then to some of His disciples in Jerusalem. He appears to seven of the disciples at the Sea of Galilee and commissions Peter to lead the disciples in ministering to others.

LESSON 60

John 1

Introduction

John the Beloved recorded important doctrines related to Jesus Christ's role in the premortal existence. John the

Baptist also bore witness of Jesus Christ and baptized Him. Jesus Christ invited others to learn of Him.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 1:1–18; Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:1–19

John testifies of Jesus Christ as the Son of God

Divide students into pairs. Display a picture of Jesus Christ on the board. Ask students to imagine that they are talking with someone who knows very little about Jesus Christ. Invite one student in each pair to take one minute to teach the other student about Jesus as if the other student knew very little about Him. Following this activity, invite a few students who were taught about Christ to share with the class what they were taught by their partners.

Briefly introduce the book of John by explaining that the Apostle John recorded what he wanted the Saints to know about Jesus Christ. John was an eyewitness to many of the accounts he wrote about. Most of the material in John's Gospel is not found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, which were written to help Jews and Gentiles believe that Jesus was the Messiah and Savior of mankind. In contrast, John specifically wrote to those who already believed that Jesus was the Christ.

As students study John 1, invite them to look for truths about the Savior that can strengthen their faith in and testimonies of Jesus Christ.

Ask a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:1–2 (in the Bible appendix). Invite the class to follow along. Ask them to look for truths that John taught about Jesus Christ.

- What truths do we learn about Jesus Christ in these verses? (One truth students should identify is that **Jesus Christ was with God in the beginning**. Write this truth on the board near the picture of the Savior.)
- What does it mean that Jesus Christ was with God in the beginning? (Explain that the phrase "in the beginning" refers to the premortal existence. Jesus Christ was the First-born of the Father in the spirit [see D&C 93:21], He was like unto God among the spirits gathered "before the world was" [Abraham 3:22–24], and He was chosen by the Father from the beginning [see Moses 4:2].)

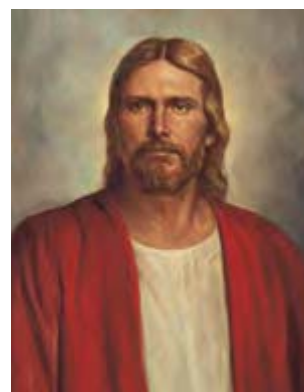
Invite a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:3 (in the Bible appendix), and ask the class to look for an additional truth John taught about Jesus Christ.

- What else did John teach about Jesus Christ? (Students should identify a doctrine similar to the following: **All things were made by Jesus Christ**. Write this truth near the picture of the Savior on the board.)

Explain that Jesus Christ created the heavens and the earth under the direction of the Father and that Jesus Christ has created worlds without number (see Moses 1:33). However, Heavenly Father has reserved "two creative events" to Himself: the creation of all spirits (including Jesus Christ's) and the creation of the physical bodies of Adam and Eve (Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 63; see also Moses 2:27).

Invite a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:4–5 (in the Bible appendix). Ask the class to look for how John described Jesus and His gospel.

- How did John describe Jesus and His gospel?
- What does it mean that "in him was the gospel"? (Jesus Christ was the good news, the embodiment of the gospel.)
- What do you think it means that "the light shineth in the world, and the world perceiveth it not"? (Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:5).



Help students understand the Basic Doctrines

Students will learn the Basic Doctrines as they study and discuss the scriptures and as they master key scripture passages. You should not divert from sequential scripture study to focus on the Basic Doctrines. Rather, identify and help students understand the Basic Doctrines as they arise in the course of study. For instance, in this lesson you could emphasize the doctrines of the Godhead that relate to what is taught in John 1.

Explain that the Apostle John next taught about John the Baptist. Invite a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:6–10 (in the Bible appendix). Ask the class to look for what John the Baptist declared about Jesus Christ. Invite students to report what they find.

- In verses 9–10, what doctrine did the Apostle John teach about Jesus? (Students should identify a doctrine similar to the following: **Jesus Christ is the Light of the World.** Write this truth near the picture of the Savior on the board.)
- In what ways is Jesus Christ the Light of the World? (See D&C 88:5–13.)

Summarize Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:11–18 (in the Bible appendix) by explaining that John the Baptist testified that all those who believe on Jesus Christ will receive immortality and eternal life.

Point out that in verses 14 and 16, John referred to Jesus Christ as “the Word.” Explain that this is a title of Jesus Christ found in several places in the scriptures (see John 1:1, 14; 1 John 1:1; Revelation 19:13; D&C 93:8–10; Moses 1:32).

Point out that we use words to communicate and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas to others.

- In what ways is “the Word” an appropriate title of Jesus Christ?

Also explain that without the Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:18 could be misunderstood as stating that no man has ever seen God the Father. Invite a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:19 (in the Bible appendix).

- How does Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:19 clarify John 1:18?

Divide students into the same pairs that they were in for the activity at the beginning of the lesson. Ask one student in each pair to take one minute to teach his or her partner about Jesus Christ using the doctrines the class identified in Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:1–19 (in the Bible appendix). After sufficient time, ask:

- Why would it be important for someone to know these doctrines about Jesus Christ?

John 1:19–34; Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:20–34

John the Baptist bears witness of Jesus Christ and baptizes Him

Summarize Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:20–28 (in the Bible appendix) by explaining that the Jews sent priests to John the Baptist asking if he was the Messiah. John explained that his role was to bear record of the Messiah, who would baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost. The next day, John the Baptist saw Jesus, whom he had previously baptized.

Invite a student to stand and read aloud, as if the student were John the Baptist, the words of John the Baptist in Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:29–33 (in the Bible appendix). Invite the class to follow along and look for what John the Baptist wanted people to know about Jesus Christ.

Point to the picture of Jesus Christ and the truths written on the board and ask:

- What other truths or descriptions about Jesus Christ could we add from Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:29–33? (List students’ responses on the board.)
- Why do you think John the Baptist referred to Jesus as “the Lamb of God”?

John 1:35–51

Jesus invites His followers to learn more about Him

Ask students to imagine that a teenager attending fast and testimony meeting hears several friends bear testimony that they know that Jesus Christ is their Savior. This young person wonders how those friends “know” those things.

- How would you respond to this question?

As the class studies John 1:35–51, invite students to look for what we can do to receive (or strengthen) our own witness of Jesus Christ as the Savior.

Invite a student to read John 1:35–37 aloud, and ask the class to look for what John the Baptist did the day after he baptized Jesus.

- What did John do when he saw Jesus?

Invite a student to read John 1:38–39 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus said to the two disciples.

- What did Jesus ask the two disciples?
- What was their response?
- What did Jesus invite the two disciples to do?

Invite a student to read John 1:40–42 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Andrew learned after he accepted the Savior’s invitation to “come and see.”

- What did Andrew learn by accepting the Savior’s invitation to “come and see”? (That Jesus is the Messiah, or the Christ. You may also want to point out that we learn from the Joseph Smith Translation of John 1:42 that Peter would be called “Cephas, which is, by interpretation, *a seer*, or a stone” [in footnote *a*], indicating that Peter would become a seer in the Church.)

Invite a student to read John 1:43–46 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the Savior invited Philip to do. Ask students to share what they find.

- Which words in verse 45 indicate that Philip received a witness of Jesus Christ after he accepted the Savior’s invitation to follow Him?
- What invitation did Philip then give to Nathanael?

Invite three students to read John 1:47–51 aloud. Assign one to be the narrator, one to read the words of Jesus, and one to read the words of Nathanael. Invite the class to listen for what happened as Nathanael accepted the invitation to learn of Jesus.

- What happened after Nathanael accepted the invitation to learn of Jesus?
- What principle can we learn from these accounts? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we accept the invitation to learn of and follow Jesus Christ, we will receive our own witness of Him.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.



“It seems that the essence of our mortal journey and the answers to the most significant questions in life are distilled down to these two very brief elements in the opening scenes of the Savior’s earthly ministry. One element is the question put to every one of us on this earth: ‘What seek ye? What do you want?’ The second is His response to our answer, *whatever that answer is*.

Whoever we are and whatever we reply, His response is *always* the same: ‘Come,’ He says lovingly. ‘Come, follow me.’ Wherever you are going, first come and see what I do, see where and how I spend my time. Learn of me, walk with me, talk with me, believe. Listen to me pray. In turn you will find answers to your own prayers. God will bring rest to your souls” (“He Hath Filled the Hungry with Good Things,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 65).

Invite students to ponder their own efforts to learn of Jesus Christ and follow Him.

- In what ways has your testimony of Jesus Christ increased as you have learned of and followed Him?

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a few sentences about what they will do to more fully accept the Savior’s invitation to “come and see” and to learn of and follow Him.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the principles identified in class today.

Home-Study Lesson

Luke 18–John 1 (Unit 12)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Luke 18–John 1 (unit 12) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Luke 18–21)

In this lesson students studied the parables of the unjust judge and of the Pharisee and publican. They also read about a blind man who sought the Lord's help and about Zacchaeus. From these accounts students learned that if we are sincere and persistent as we exercise faith in the Lord, we can obtain His mercy.

Day 2 (Luke 22)

As students read about the Lord's counsel to Peter, they learned that when we are converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ, we can strengthen others. Students also learned the following truths as they read about the Savior's suffering in Gethsemane: If we are willing to obey Heavenly Father, He will give us the strength to do His will. Jesus Christ sweat great drops of blood as He suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Day 3 (Luke 23–24)

In this lesson students read about the Crucifixion, burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. They learned the following truths: We can follow Jesus Christ's example by choosing to forgive those who mistreat us. The spirits of all people enter the spirit world at the time of their death. Jesus Christ has a resurrected body of flesh and bones.

Day 4 (John 1)

As students studied the words of John the Beloved and John the Baptist, they learned that Jesus Christ was with God in the beginning, that all things were made by Him, and that He is the Light of the World. As students read about how some of the disciples came to know Jesus Christ, they learned that as we accept the invitation to learn of and follow Jesus Christ, we will receive our own witness of Him.

Introduction

This lesson can help students understand how to invite the Holy Ghost to teach them of Jesus Christ. Additionally, they will learn that Jesus Christ is a resurrected being with flesh and bones.

Suggestions for Teaching

Luke 24:13–32

The risen Lord speaks to two disciples on the road to Emmaus


Ask students to ponder whether they have ever struggled to know whether a gospel concept is true.

Explain that in Luke 24:13 we learn that two disciples left Jerusalem the same day that a group of women found Jesus's empty tomb. They traveled about 6–7.5 miles (10–12 kilometers) "to a village called Emmaus." Studying their experience on the road to Emmaus can help us know how to strengthen our testimonies of Jesus Christ and His gospel.

Invite a student to read Luke 24:14–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who joined the two disciples as they walked.

- Who joined the disciples as they traveled to Emmaus?
- Why did the disciples not recognize Jesus? (Explain that the word *holden* in Luke 24:16 means restrained or covered.)

Invite students to take turns reading aloud from Luke 24:17–33. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the disciples learned from Jesus as they walked with Him without recognizing who He was.

 If it is available in your language, instead of reading Luke 24:17–33, you may want to show the video "Christ Appears on the Road to Emmaus" (3:32) from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos*, which can be found on LDS.org. Ask students to watch for what the disciples learned from Jesus as they walked with Him without recognizing who He was. Before showing the video, explain that the dialogue in the video is from Luke 24:17–33 so that students can follow along in their scriptures if they would like to.

Point out that in this video, we do not hear what Jesus taught the disciples as they walked. Invite a student to read Luke 24:27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus taught the disciples.

- What did Jesus teach the disciples?
- What tool did He use to teach about Himself? (The scriptures.)
- In verse 32, what does it mean that the disciples' hearts burned within them? (The Holy Ghost testified that the teachings about Jesus in the scriptures were true.)

Invite students to ponder what the disciples might have learned from Jesus's using the scriptures to teach them rather than simply revealing who He was. You might ask a few students to share their thoughts.

- What principle do these verses teach about the effects of our own scripture study? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **As we study the scriptures, we invite the Holy Ghost to teach us of Jesus Christ.**)
- Besides a burning in our hearts, how else would you describe what we might experience as the Holy Ghost testifies of Jesus Christ?

Ask students to locate a scripture that has helped them feel the Holy Ghost teaching them about Jesus Christ. Invite them to share their scriptures and the effects of what they have felt. You may also want to share a scripture that has helped you personally.

Remind students that even though it is important to read the New Testament for seminary credit, it is even more important to study the scriptures in a way that invites the Holy Ghost to strengthen their testimonies of the Savior.

If possible, provide copies of a bookmark with the following statement by Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, or invite students to write the statement on a blank piece of paper or cardstock that can be used as a bookmark. (A printable PDF sheet with multiple bookmarks is available in the online version of this lesson.)



"The central purpose of all scripture is to fill our souls with faith in God the Father and in His Son, Jesus Christ. . . .

". . . Faith comes by the witness of the Holy Spirit to our souls, Spirit to spirit, as we hear or read the word of God. And faith matures as we continue to feast upon the word. . . .

". . . Study the scriptures carefully, deliberately. Ponder and pray over them. Scriptures are revelation, and they will bring added revelation" (D. Todd Christofferson, "The Blessing of Scripture," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2010, 34–35).

Invite a student to read the statement by Elder Christofferson aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for ways in which they can improve their personal scripture study.

Invite students to set a goal to study their scriptures in ways that invite the Holy Ghost to increase their faith in and knowledge of Jesus Christ. You might suggest that they write this goal on the back of the bookmark so they can use it as a reminder during their scripture study.

Luke 24:36–39

Jesus appears to His disciples and shows them His resurrected body

Explain that the disciples who were with Jesus on the road to Emmaus immediately returned to Jerusalem and related their experience to the Apostles and other disciples (see Luke 24:33–35).

Invite the class to read aloud in unison the scripture mastery passage in Luke 24:36–39, looking for what happened while the disciples reported their experience to the disciples.

- What happened while the disciples reported their experience?

Display the picture *Jesus Shows His Wounds* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 60; see also LDS.org).

- What did Jesus invite His disciples to do to help them understand that He was not merely a spirit but had a physical body?
- What doctrine can we learn from these verses? (Students may identify a variety of doctrines, but be sure to emphasize that **Jesus Christ is a resurrected being with a body of flesh and bones.** Write this doctrine on the board; see also D&C 130:22.)

Invite a few students to share their testimonies of the Savior's Resurrection and to explain why this doctrine is important to them, or invite them to share what they wrote in their scripture study journals for assignment 3 from the Unit 12: Day 3 lesson. Conclude by testifying of the reality of Jesus Christ's Resurrection.

Next Unit (John 2–6)

Explain to students that as they study John 2–6, they will learn the answers to the following questions: What was Jesus's first public miracle? How did it help His mother? Why did He cleanse the temple? To whom did Jesus first declare that He is the Messiah? What did He reveal to this woman about her life that only He could know? Why did the Savior refer to Himself as living water and the Bread of Life? Students will also read about Jesus Christ ministering in majesty and power.

John 2

Introduction

In Cana, the Savior performed the first public miracle of His earthly ministry when He turned water into wine. Jesus Christ went to Jerusalem for the Passover. He

cleansed the temple by driving out the money changers who were desecrating His Father's house.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 2:1–11

Jesus changes water into wine

Invite students to think about the following “firsts” that may have occurred in their lives: their first day of school, their first job, the first time they remember feeling the Holy Ghost.

- Why do we sometimes place importance on these and other “firsts” in our lives?

Explain to students that as they study John 2:1–11, they are going to learn about the first recorded miracle that Jesus performed during His earthly ministry. Invite students to look for why this first recorded miracle may be significant.

Explain that a short time after Jesus was baptized, He and His disciples attended a wedding feast in Cana, a village near Jesus's hometown of Nazareth. Invite a student to read John 2:1–3 aloud, and ask the class to look for what problem arose during the wedding feast.

- What problem arose during the wedding feast?

Explain that wine was a customary drink at a wedding feast. Sometimes the wedding feast would continue for multiple days. To run out of wine would have been embarrassing for the hosts of the feast. Mary seemed to feel some responsibility for the feast, so when the wine ran out, she approached her Son and asked for His help in an effort to save the hosting family from embarrassment. Jesus's response demonstrated respect and compassion for His mother's desire to help at the wedding.

Invite a student to read John 2:4 aloud, including the Joseph Smith Translation in footnote *a*. Ask the class to follow along and look for Jesus's response to His mother.

- What did Jesus say in response to His mother?
- How does Jesus's response show His respect for His mother? (Jesus not only asked His mother what she wanted Him to do, but He also expressed willingness to do it. You may need to explain that in Jesus's day, “woman” was a respectful way to address one's mother.)
- What was Jesus referring to when He said, “Mine hour is not yet come”?

Invite a student to read John 2:5 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Mary said to the servants. Invite students to report what they find.

- What do Mary's instructions to the servants teach us about her faith in Jesus?

Invite a student to read John 2:6–7 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Jesus instructed the servants to do.

- What did Jesus instruct the servants to do?

Explain that during Jesus's time, waterpots made from stone were considered ritually pure for use in religious ceremonies. It was the practice of Jews to ceremonially purify themselves prior to eating a meal by washing their hands using the water from these waterpots.

- How full did the servants fill the waterpots?

To help students understand the amount of water held in the waterpots, display an open container that can hold one gallon (or one liter). Explain to students that a “firkin” was about nine gallons (or 34 liters), so the six pots could have held between about 100 and 160 gallons (or about 380 and 600 liters). Fill the container with water.

Invite a student to read John 2:8 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Jesus instructed the servants to do next. Ask students to report what they find. As students report, dip a cup into the container of water, and hold up the cup.

- If you were one of these servants, what might you have thought or felt as you took a cup to the governor, or leader, of the feast?

Ask a student to read John 2:9–10 aloud, and invite the class to look for what the governor said after tasting the drink that was brought to him.

- What had Jesus done to the water?
- What did the governor of the feast say about the new wine? (Explain that the best wine was often used at the beginning of the feast and lesser-quality wine was used later into the feast.)

Explain that Jesus never provided a specific interpretation of the meaning or symbolism of this first recorded miracle of His mortal ministry. There are, however, many significant truths we can learn from this account of Jesus’s first recorded miracle.

Divide students into small groups of two or three. Invite each group to list on a piece of paper as many truths that can be learned from John 2:1–11 as they can. After sufficient time, invite a member from each group to share with the class the truths the group identified.

Invite a student to act as scribe. Ask the scribe to write on the board each unique truth that is shared. The following are some of the possible truths students may identify: **Jesus Christ has power over physical elements. The Savior knew He had a divine mission to fulfill. The Messiah manifested His divine power through miracles. The Son of God loved and respected His mother.**

Invite a student to read John 2:11 aloud, and ask the class to look for what effect this miracle had on Jesus’s disciples.

- What effect did this miracle have on Jesus’s disciples?

Circle the following truth on the board from the list of truths the students identified: **Jesus Christ has power over physical elements.** (Note: If the students didn’t list this truth, add it to the list.)

- How does understanding that Jesus has power over physical elements strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ?
- What other accounts that we have studied in the New Testament also illustrate that Jesus Christ has power over physical elements? (Answers could include the following: the two miracles of the loaves and fishes [five thousand: Mark 6:33–44; four thousand: Mark 8:1–9], calming the storm [Mark 4:35–41], and walking on water [Matthew 14:22–33].)

John 2:12–25

Jesus cleanses the temple

Invite students to name outdoor games they played as children. After they list several games, ask the following:

- Although these games are innocent and fun, would you feel comfortable playing them on the grounds of the temple?

Divide students into groups of two. Invite each group to read John 2:12–17. As they read, have the groups look for and discuss the answers to the following questions (write these questions on the board):

1. Who did Jesus find in the temple?
2. Why do you think Jesus became upset?
3. What did Jesus do to correct the problem?



Limestone pots from the New Testament era found in Israel



Help students understand doctrines and principles

Help students understand doctrines and principles by asking questions that lead students to analyze their meaning or to liken them to modern situations. Understanding doctrines and principles means that students comprehend the identified doctrines and principles and in what circumstances they might be applied in their lives. Understanding a doctrine or principle is a prerequisite to feeling its truth and importance and recognizing how it can be applied.

After sufficient time, display the picture *Jesus Cleansing the Temple* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 51; see also LDS.org), and ask a few groups to report their answers. You may need to explain that the thousands of visitors who came to Jerusalem for the celebration of Passover needed to purchase animals to offer as sacrifices in the temple as part of their worship. Money changers exchanged Roman and other currency for temple currency so that sacrificial animals could be purchased, and other merchants sold the needed animals. While the commerce needed to happen, handling such business at the temple was disrespectful and irreverent.

- What truth about temples can we learn from Jesus’s description of the temple in verse 16? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **The temple is the house of God.**)
- In what ways are temples the house of God? (Students’ responses may vary but may include the following ideas: Temples are places where God may come, where His presence or Spirit may be felt, and where ordinances pertaining to His work of salvation are performed. Temples are the most holy places of worship on the earth.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Howard W. Hunter. Ask students to listen for how Jesus’s understanding of the holiness of temples contributed to His decision to drive the money changers and merchants from the temple.



“The reason for the tempest lies in just three words: ‘My Father’s house.’ It was not an ordinary house; it was the house of God. It was erected for God’s worship. It was a home for the reverent heart. It was intended to be a place of solace for men’s woes and troubles, the very gate of heaven. . . . [Jesus’s] devotion to the Most High kindled a fire in his soul and gave his words the force that pierced the offenders like a dagger” (“Hallowed Be Thy Name,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 53).

- How did Jesus’s actions show His reverence for His Father’s house?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *We show reverence for the temple by . . .*

Divide students into groups of two or three. Invite the groups to write on a piece of paper as many ways to complete the statement as they can. After a minute or two, ask one group to share its list with the class. While the first group shares, ask the other groups to put a check mark next to each item on their lists that is mentioned. Next, have another group share the items on its list that were not mentioned by the first group. Repeat this process until all of the groups have shared.

- How is it possible to show our reverence for the temple even when we are not in the temple?

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals why they feel it is important that they do all they can to show reverence for the temple. Also invite students to write a goal to do one thing to show reverence for the temple. Encourage them to act on this goal.

Share your testimony of the principles identified in the lesson today.

Scripture Mastery Review

This activity could be used to introduce or review a set of scripture mastery passages. Select a number of the scripture mastery cards, and prepare to distribute them among your students. (Be sure to have multiple copies of each card so more than one student receives the same scripture mastery passage. You may want to have enough cards for each student to have two or three different passages.) Distribute the cards to students. Allow students time to study the scripture mastery passage, the reference, the key words, the context statement, the doctrine or principle, and the application ideas on each card. Call out clues from the cards (for example, words from the scripture mastery passage or the key words, context, doctrine or principle, or application). Students who have the associated card should stand and say the scripture mastery reference aloud.

LESSON 62

John 3

Introduction

One night a Pharisee named Nicodemus approached Jesus and conversed with Him. Jesus taught Nicodemus that all men must be born again to enter the kingdom

of God. Later, John the Baptist explained to his disciples that his role was to prepare the way for Jesus Christ.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 3:1–21

Jesus teaches Nicodemus spiritual truths

Invite students to imagine that one day while they are discussing religion with some friends, one says, “As long as I am a good person, I can go to heaven.” Invite students to ponder how they would respond to this friend.

Encourage students to look in John 3 for what we must do to enter God’s kingdom.

Explain that near the beginning of His ministry, the Savior went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. Many people in Jerusalem believed in Jesus after they saw the miracles He performed (see John 2:23–25).

Invite a student to read John 3:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened while the Savior was in Jerusalem.

- Who visited Jesus?

Explain that as “a ruler of the Jews” (John 3:1), Nicodemus was a member of the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was a governing council made up of Pharisees and Sadducees that directed many of the civil and religious affairs of the Jewish people.

- Why do you think Nicodemus may have come to visit Jesus at night?
- According to verse 2, what did Nicodemus acknowledge about Jesus?

Explain that Nicodemus’s acknowledgment that Jesus was “a teacher come from God” (verse 2) suggests that Nicodemus wanted to learn from Jesus. Invite a student to read John 3:3–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught Nicodemus.

- According to verse 3, what did the Savior teach Nicodemus?
- What did Nicodemus think the Savior meant by the phrase “born again” (verse 3)?

Explain that to be born again is “to have the Spirit of the Lord cause a mighty change in a person’s heart so that he [or she] has no more desire to do evil, but rather desires to seek the things of God” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Born Again, Born of God,” scriptures.lds.org; see also Mosiah 5:2; Alma 5:14–15; Moses 6:59).

- According to verse 5, what two things did Jesus teach Nicodemus are necessary to enter the kingdom of God? What do you think it means to be “born of water and of the Spirit”?
- How would you summarize what these verses teach about what is necessary for being spiritually reborn and entering the celestial kingdom? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board using students’ words: **Being baptized and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost are necessary for being spiritually reborn and receiving exaltation in the celestial kingdom.**)

Remind students of the scenario with the friend. Divide students into pairs. Invite one student in each pair to be the friend who thinks that all that is necessary to enter the kingdom of God is to be a good person. Invite the other student in each pair to practice clarifying the misunderstanding using John 3:5.



Nicodemus visits Jesus




John 3:5

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.



Summarize John 3:6–12 by explaining that Nicodemus asked Jesus what makes it possible for someone to be born again. Jesus responded by asking how Nicodemus could be a religious leader and teacher in Israel and not know that spiritual rebirth is necessary and what makes spiritual rebirth possible.

In John 3:13–21 we read that the Savior explained to Nicodemus how it is possible for someone to be born again. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from John 3:13–15. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Jesus answered Nicodemus’s question.

 Instead of inviting students to read John 3:13–15 aloud, you may want to show the video “Heavenly Things” (8:55) from time code 5:30 to the end. This video depicts the Savior teaching Nicodemus. Ask students to follow along in their scriptures, looking for how Jesus answered Nicodemus’s question. This video is available on LDS.org.

- What did the Savior say about Himself in John 3:13? (He testified of Himself as the Son of God who came down from heaven.)

Display the picture *Moses and the Brass Serpent* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 16; see also LDS.org). Ask students to explain the account from the scriptures that the picture represents. If necessary, explain that during the time of Moses the Lord sent poisonous serpents in consequence of the Israelites sinning against God. The Israelites were poisoned when the serpents bit them. The Lord directed Moses to raise up a brass serpent on a pole and promised that any Israelite who looked at the serpent on the pole would be healed. (See Numbers 21:4–9.)

- According to John 3:14, what did Jesus say the brazen serpent represented?

Display the picture *The Crucifixion* (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 57; see also LDS.org).

- According to verse 15, what blessing comes to those who look to the Savior?
- What doctrine can we learn from these verses about the Atonement of Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words, but be sure to emphasize the following truth: **All mankind can obtain eternal life through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.** Write this principle on the board.)

Invite a student to read John 3:16–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a doctrine we can learn about Heavenly Father.

- What did Heavenly Father send His Son to do?
- What doctrine can we learn from these verses about Heavenly Father? (Students may use different words to identify the following doctrine: **Heavenly Father loves His children so much that He sent His Only Begotten Son to suffer for their sins.** Add this doctrine to those already listed on the board.)
- How did Heavenly Father sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to the earth show His love for each of us?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to consider how knowing of Heavenly Father’s love for them makes them feel.

“There is no greater evidence of the infinite power and perfection of God’s love than is declared by the Apostle John [in John 3:16]. . . . Think how it must have grieved our Heavenly Father to send His Son to endure incomprehensible suffering for our sins. That is the greatest evidence of His love for each of us!” (“Love and Law,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 26).

- How do you feel knowing that Heavenly Father loves you so much that He sent His Only Begotten Son to suffer and die for you?
- According to John 3:16–17, how can we be saved through the Atonement? (After students respond, add the following principle to the board: **If we believe in Jesus Christ, which includes repenting of our sins and obeying His word, we can have everlasting life through His Atonement.**)

Invite students to review the truths Jesus taught Nicodemus that are listed on the board.

- How do these truths relate to each other?
- What are some ways in which we can show our belief in Jesus Christ?

Testify that as we demonstrate our belief in Jesus Christ by repenting and following Him, we can be saved and receive eternal life through the Atonement.

Write the following phrase on the board: *I will show my belief in Jesus Christ by . . .* Ask students to finish this phrase in their class notebooks or scripture study journals by writing what they will do to show their belief in Jesus Christ.

John 3:22–36

John the Baptist teaches that Jesus is the Christ

Display a clear container full of water. Add a drop or two of food coloring to the water.

- How might the food coloring be compared to our influence upon others?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statements by President David O. McKay. Ask the class to listen for what we can learn about our influence in the lives of others.



“Every person who lives in this world wields an influence, whether for good or for evil (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: David O. McKay* [2003], 227).

“The effect of our words and acts is tremendous in this world. Every moment of life you are changing to a degree the lives of the whole world” (*Teachings: David O. McKay*, 227).

Ask students to look for a principle in John 3:22–36 that teaches us how we can influence others for good.

Summarize John 3:22–26 by explaining that some of John the Baptist’s disciples were concerned because people were following Jesus instead of John the Baptist.

Invite a student to read John 3:27–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what John the Baptist understood about his role in relation to Jesus Christ.

- What did John the Baptist want his disciples to understand about his role? (He had been sent before Jesus Christ to prepare others for Him.)
- What analogy did John the Baptist use (verse 29)?

Explain that the bridegroom represents Jesus, the bride can represent those who were coming unto Christ, and the friend of the bridegroom represents John the Baptist.

- What do you think John the Baptist meant when he said, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (verse 30)? What does this show about the character of John the Baptist?
- What could Jesus Christ do for people that John the Baptist could not do?
- What can we learn from John the Baptist’s example about what we can do to influence others for good? (Students may identify a variety of truths, but make sure it is clear that **we can influence others for good by directing them to Jesus Christ.**)
- Why is it so important that we use our influence to direct others to Jesus Christ?
- When have you seen someone direct others to the Savior?

Invite students to consider ways in which they can direct others to the Savior. Encourage them to seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost in their efforts to do so.

Summarize John 3:31–36 by explaining that John the Baptist declared that Jesus had been sent by God and that all who believe in Him can receive everlasting life.

Scripture Mastery—John 3:5

To help students memorize John 3:5, invite students to write the first letter of each word in the verse in their scripture study journals. Encourage students to practice saying the scripture aloud using the first letters and referring to the scripture passage as needed. When students can say the entire passage using the first letters, invite them to practice reciting the passage from memory. You could invite them to practice reciting this scripture at the beginning or end of class for several days.

John 4

Introduction

While traveling to Galilee, Jesus passed through Samaria and taught a woman at a well. The woman testified to

others that Jesus was the Christ. Later, Jesus healed the son of a nobleman.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 4:1–42

Jesus teaches a woman of Samaria

Write the following question on the board:

What is the most valuable natural resource on the earth?

Ask students to respond to the question on the board. Consider displaying pictures of natural resources such as soil, iron, coal, oil, gold, or diamonds.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“We might initially think that gold, oil, or diamonds have the greatest worth. But of all the minerals, metals, gems, and solvents found on and in the earth, the most valuable is water” (“A Reservoir of Living Water” [Church Educational System fireside for young adults, Feb. 4, 2007], 1, lds.org/broadcasts).

Display a clear glass of clean water.

- Why is clean water so valuable? (You might invite one or two students to share an experience that helped them appreciate the importance of water.)

Invite students to look for what Jesus compared water to as they study John 4.

Summarize John 4:1–3 by explaining that Jesus left Judea and traveled to Galilee.

Ask a student to read John 4:4 aloud, and ask the class to look for the area Jesus passed through while traveling to Galilee. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite students to locate Judea, Samaria, and Galilee on the chart “The Mortal Life of Jesus Christ at a Glance” (located in lesson 5), or invite them to look at Bible Maps, no. 11, “The Holy Land in New Testament Times” to locate the three regions.

- Why is it significant that Jesus traveled *through* Samaria instead of going around it? (Jews typically traveled around Samaria rather than passing through it because of the hostility that existed between Jews and Samaritans [see James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. (1916), 172].)

Ask a student to read John 4:6–9 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus asked of a woman when He stopped in Samaria.

- What did Jesus ask of this woman?
- Why was she surprised when Jesus asked her for a drink?

Display the picture Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 36; see also LDS.org).

Ask a student to read John 4:10–12 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for Jesus’s response to the woman.

- According to verse 10, what did the Savior offer the woman? (Explain that the phrase “gift of God” refers to Jesus as the Savior of the world.)
- According to verse 11, what did the woman ask Jesus?

Invite a student to read John 4:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus said about the water He offered.

- What did Jesus say about the water He offered?



Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar. Ask the class to follow along, listening for what the living water represents.



“The living water referred to in this episode is a representation of the Lord Jesus Christ and His gospel. And as water is necessary to sustain physical life, so the Savior and His doctrines, principles, and ordinances are essential for eternal life. You and I need His living water daily and in ample supply to sustain our ongoing spiritual growth and development” (“A Reservoir of Living Water,” 2).

- According to Elder Bednar, what does the living water represent?

On the glass of water that you have displayed, place a label that says *The Savior and His gospel*.

- Why is water an appropriate symbol of the Savior and His gospel?
- How would you summarize the Savior’s words in verse 14 as a principle? (Students may use their own words but should identify the following principle: **If we come unto Jesus Christ and earnestly partake of His gospel, then we will receive eternal life.**)

Ask a student to read John 4:15–18 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the woman requested of Jesus and how the Savior responded.

- According to verse 15, what did the woman request of Jesus?

Explain that Jesus’s response helped the woman understand her need for the living water He offered.

- According to verses 17–18, what did Jesus reveal about this woman? (Point out that Jesus’s answer indicated that He knew this woman had struggled to find a meaningful and lasting marriage relationship but that by living with a man who was not her husband, she was not obeying the law of chastity.)
- What thoughts or feelings might this woman have had when Jesus revealed details about her that a typical stranger could not have known?
- How might the Savior’s words have helped the woman realize her need for the living water He offered?
- What truth about the Savior can we learn from these verses? (After students have responded, write the following truth on the board: **Jesus Christ knows our sins and offers us His gospel to help us overcome them.**)
- Why is this truth important to understand?

Invite a student to read John 4:19–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the woman said to Jesus.

- What did the woman say that demonstrated that her perception of Jesus was changing?

Explain that in Samaria is a mountain named Mount Gerizim. Centuries before the Savior’s mortal ministry, the Samaritans built a temple there as a place of worship. Unlike the Jews, however, the Samaritans did not have the priesthood authority to perform ordinances, and they rejected many teachings of God’s prophets.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from John 4:21–23 and Joseph Smith Translation, John 4:26 (in John 4:24, footnote *a*). Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus taught the woman about worshipping God.

- How do true worshippers worship Heavenly Father?
- According to the Joseph Smith Translation, what blessing comes as we worship God “in spirit and in truth”?
- What principle can we learn from these verses? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we worship the Father in spirit and in truth, He will bless us with His Spirit.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for what it means to worship the Father in spirit and truth.



“Our purpose is to worship the true and living God and to do it by the power of the Spirit and in the way he has ordained. The approved worship of the true God leads to salvation; devotions rendered to false gods and which are not founded on eternal truth carry no such assurance.

“A knowledge of the truth is essential to true worship. . . .

Do not be afraid of silence

Students might not respond to a question immediately, but do not be troubled by this silence. Sometimes students simply need an opportunity to reflect on the question and how to respond. This reflection can facilitate instruction by the Holy Ghost.

“. . . True and perfect worship consists in following in the steps of the Son of God; it consists in keeping the commandments and obeying the will of the Father to that degree that we advance from grace to grace until we are glorified in Christ as he is in his Father. It is far more than prayer and sermon and song. It is living and doing and obeying. It is emulating the life of the great Exemplar [Jesus Christ]” (“How to Worship,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1971, 129, 130).

- According to Elder McConkie, what does it mean to worship God in spirit and truth?
- When have you been blessed as you have sought to worship the Father in spirit and truth?

Invite students to consider what they can do to better worship the Father in spirit and truth.

- Ask a student to read John 4:25–26 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus revealed about Himself to the woman.
- What did Jesus reveal about Himself to the woman?

Invite a student to read John 4:27–30 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the woman did after talking with the Savior.

- What did the woman do after talking with the Savior?
- What did she say that indicated she had gained a testimony of Jesus Christ?
- What truth can we learn from this account about what will happen as we gain a testimony of Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **As we gain a testimony of Jesus Christ, we are filled with a desire to share it with others.**)

Summarize verses 31–37 by explaining that Jesus’s disciples returned with food. When they asked Him to eat, He taught them that He was sustained not by eating but by performing His Father’s will. He then invited them to see that opportunities to preach the gospel were abundant.

Invite a student to read John 4:39–42 aloud. Ask the class to look for the impact of the woman’s testimony on the people in her city.

- What impact did the woman’s testimony have on the people in her city?
- According to verse 42, what did the people say to the woman?

Testify that as we come to know the Savior and partake of His living water, we will be filled with a desire to share our testimonies of Him with others.

John 4:43–54***Jesus heals a nobleman’s son***

Summarize John 4:43–45 by explaining that after Jesus taught the woman in Samaria, He entered Galilee, where He was received by the people.

Provide students with copies of the following handout. Invite them to read John 4:46–54 silently and answer the questions on the handout.

John 4:46–54

1. Who met Jesus and what blessing did he seek from the Savior?
2. Based on what Jesus said, why did He delay granting the blessing this man sought?
3. How did this man demonstrate that he did not need a sign to believe?
4. According to verses 51–53, how was this man’s belief in Jesus Christ confirmed?
5. What principle can we learn from this man’s experience?

After sufficient time, invite students to share their answers. As they report the principles they learned from the nobleman’s experience, help them identify the following truth: **As we believe in Jesus Christ without needing signs, the Lord will confirm our belief.**

- Why is it important to believe in Jesus Christ without needing signs?
- What are some ways that the Lord confirms our belief as we exercise faith in Him?

Conclude by testifying that as we seek the Lord in faith, He will bless us with evidence to sustain our beliefs.

LESSON 64

John 5

Introduction

The Savior attended a feast (likely the Passover) in Jerusalem and healed a feeble man at the pool of Bethesda. Jesus Christ taught that He represents Heavenly Father

and explained why people need to honor the Son of God. He also described other witnesses who had testified of His divinity.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 5:1–30

Jesus heals an infirm man on the Sabbath and teaches about His relationship to the Father

Display a picture of pieces of a broken pot or dish (or you could draw a picture of a broken dish on the board).

Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever broken something important or valuable. Explain that as children of Heavenly Father, we are important and have great worth. However, because of our choices or the challenges we face, at times we may feel broken or like we have little value.

- What are some ways in which someone might feel broken spiritually, physically, or emotionally? (List students' responses on the board.)

Invite students to look for a truth as they study John 5:1–9 that can help comfort us and give us hope when we feel broken.

Summarize John 5:1 by explaining that after Jesus Christ ministered in Galilee, He traveled to Jerusalem to observe a Jewish feast, most likely the Passover (see John 5:1, footnote *a*). While in Jerusalem, He went to a pool near the temple.

Invite a student to read John 5:2–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who was gathered around the pool.

- What kind of people gathered to the pool of Bethesda? (Point out that the words *impotent*, *blind*, *halt*, and *withered* [verse 3] describe people who were sick, feeble, or disabled in some way.)
- What were these afflicted people waiting for? (Explain that there may have been a spring that occasionally flowed into the pool and caused the surface of the water to bubble, which may have provided some relief to these people's ailments [see Bible Dictionary, "Bethesda"].)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"No doubt the pool of Bethesda was a mineral spring whose waters had some curative virtue. But any notion that an angel came down and troubled the waters, so that the first person thereafter entering them would be healed, was pure superstition. Healing miracles are not wrought in any such manner" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:188).

- What did Elder McConkie teach about the belief that an angel caused the waters to heal the first person to enter them?
- What do you think the scene was like at the pool, with so many people hoping to be healed by being the first to step into it?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from John 5:5–7. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom the Savior saw lying near the pool.

Display the picture *Christ Healing the Sick at Bethesda* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 42; see also LDS.org).

- How do these verses describe the man the Savior saw?



Invite students to read John 5:8–9 silently, looking for the Savior’s response to the man. Ask them to report what they find. Invite them to consider marking the phrase “the man was made whole” (verse 9).

Write the word *Bethesda* on the board. Explain that *Bethesda* can be translated as “house of mercy” (Bible Dictionary, “Bethesda”). Write this definition next to *Bethesda* on the board. Explain that mercy is compassion or kindness. The greatest act of mercy ever performed was the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

- Why was *Bethesda* an appropriate name for this location, especially after the Savior healed this man?
- In what ways might we all be like this man at the edge of the pool of Bethesda?
- What truth can we learn from the Savior’s healing of this man? (Although students may state it differently, be sure to emphasize that **through the power and mercy of Jesus Christ, we can be made whole.**)

To help students understand this truth, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Merrill J. Bateman, who gave this insight while serving as the Presiding Bishop. Ask the class to listen for ways in which the Savior can make us whole:

“Just as the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda needed someone stronger than himself to be healed (see John 5:1–9), so we are dependent on the miracles of Christ’s atonement if our souls are to be made whole from grief, sorrow, and sin. . . . Through Christ, broken hearts are mended and peace replaces anxiety and sorrow” (“The Power to Heal from Within,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 13).

- What are some ways in which we can be made whole through the mercy of Jesus Christ and His Atonement? (You may want to explain that we may be made whole either in this life or in the next.)
- What must we do to receive mercy and healing through the Savior’s Atonement?

Ask students to ponder times when they have witnessed or felt the power, mercy, or compassion of Jesus Christ help them or someone else who felt broken, whether spiritually, physically, or emotionally. Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *I know the Savior is merciful and compassionate because . . .*

Ask students to consider how they would complete this statement. Invite a few students to share their responses.

Summarize John 5:10–16 by explaining that the Savior later found the man in the temple and counseled him to “sin no more” (John 5:14). When the Jewish leaders learned that the man had been healed by Jesus on the Sabbath, they persecuted and tried to kill the Savior.

Invite a student to read John 5:17–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for another reason the Jewish leaders were angry with Jesus.

Explain that as recorded in verse 17, the Savior taught the Jewish leaders that by healing the man, He was doing Heavenly Father’s work. The Savior then taught about His relationship to the Father.

- According to verse 18, what is another reason why the Jewish leaders were angry with Jesus? (They believed Jesus was guilty of blasphemy because He had said God was His Father and therefore claimed to be equal with God.)

Write the following question on the board: *What did the Savior teach about His relationship to our Heavenly Father?* Divide students into pairs. Invite each partnership to read John 5:19–22, 26–27, 30 aloud together. Invite them to look for answers to this question.

After sufficient time, invite students to report what they found. Summarize their answers to the question by writing the following truth on the board: **In all He does, Jesus Christ represents Heavenly Father and seeks to obey His will.** Explain that the Savior invites us to do the same.)

- Why is it important to understand that in all He does, Jesus Christ stands as the perfect representative of our Father in Heaven?

John 5:31–47

Jesus taught about numerous witnesses that testify of His divinity

Bring to class a small nut that is still in its shell (a small pea pod would also work). Hold the nut in your hand so that students cannot see it. Explain that you are holding something that has never been seen by the human eye. Ask students to raise their hands if they believe you. Invite a student who is unsure whether this is true to pick a few classmates to view the object. Show these students the object, and invite them to tell the class whether you are telling the truth.

- How is the truthfulness of any claim strengthened by having more than one witness?

Show the class the nut, and explain that its interior has never been seen by the human eye.

Invite a student to read John 5:31 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior said about His own witness of His relationship to Heavenly Father. Ask students to report what they find.

Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation clarifies verses 31 and 32: “If I bear witness of myself, yet my witness is true. For I am not alone” (Joseph Smith Translation, John 5:32–33). Explain that the Savior was teaching the Jews that they had other witnesses in addition to His.

Write the following scripture references on the board: *John 5:32–35; John 5:36; John 5:37–38; John 5:39; John 5:45–47*. Assign each reference to one or more students. Ask them to read these verses and to look for other witnesses of Jesus’s divinity. Help students make a list of these witnesses by inviting them to write what they find on the board next to their assigned references.

Explain that despite having many witnesses of Jesus Christ, the Jewish leaders did not believe in Jesus’s divinity. Point out in verse 39 that as Jesus spoke of the scriptures He said, “For in them ye think ye have eternal life.”

- What false belief was Jesus pointing out to the Jews? (Explain that many Jews in Jesus’s day believed that merely studying the scriptures would allow them to receive eternal life. They failed to understand that the purpose of the scriptures was to point them to Jesus Christ. He said, in essence, “You think you have eternal life, but search the scriptures, for they testify of me.”)

Invite a student to read John 5:40 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Jews needed to do to gain eternal life.

- Even though the Jews studied the scriptures, what did they refuse to do that would have helped them qualify to receive eternal life?
- According to the Savior’s teachings in verses 39 and 40, what must we do to receive eternal life? (Help students identify a principle similar to the following: **Only by coming unto Jesus Christ can we receive eternal life.** Write this principle on the board.)

Remind students that eternal life includes becoming like Heavenly Father and living forever with our worthy family members in His presence.

- What does it mean to come unto Jesus Christ? (To come unto Christ is to exercise faith in Him, repent of our sins, and obey His commandments.)
- Why is coming unto Jesus Christ essential to receiving eternal life?

Invite students to consider the ways in which the witnesses listed on the board can help someone come unto the Savior.

- When has one of these witnesses of Jesus Christ helped you come unto Him?

Ask students to ponder what they will do to more fully come unto the Savior so that they can receive eternal life.

Conclude by testifying of the truths taught in John 5.

Make lists

A list is a series of related ideas or instructions. Looking for lists in the scriptures can help you and your students identify key points that are emphasized in the scriptures.

John 6

Introduction

The day after He miraculously fed a multitude of more than 5,000 people, Jesus taught that He is the Bread of Life. Some of His followers rejected His teachings and

turned away from Him. In contrast, Peter testified that Jesus taught the words of eternal life and was the Son of God.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 6:1–21

Jesus miraculously feeds more than 5,000 people and walks on the sea

Explain that after the Savior testified of His divinity at Jerusalem (see John 5), He returned to Galilee, where He and His Apostles taught the gospel and healed many people (see Matthew 5–13). Jesus then crossed the Sea of Galilee with His disciples and miraculously fed a multitude of more than 5,000 people (see John 6:1–13).

Display a loaf of bread. Invite a student to summarize the account of the Savior feeding more than 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two small fish.

- What might you have thought if you had been present for this miracle and learned that Jesus had the ability to miraculously provide food?

Ask a student to read John 6:14–15 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the people wanted to do after Jesus miraculously fed them.

- What did the people want to do?

Explain that a tradition among the Jews at the time of Jesus suggested that when the Messiah or King of Israel came, He would feed people with bread from heaven.

- According to verse 15, what did Jesus do rather than allow the people to crown Him as their king?
- Why did Jesus not want to be acknowledged as the king of the Jews?

Summarize John 6:16–21 by reminding students that the Savior sent His disciples across the Sea of Galilee, and then late in the night as the disciples struggled to row against the waves and wind, Jesus walked across the sea to join them. Point out that John’s account of this event emphasizes that when the disciples “willingly” received Jesus into their ship, they “immediately” (verse 21) landed safely at their destination. Explain that as we willingly receive the Savior and His teachings, He can help guide us safely through the struggles of mortality.

John 6:22–59

Jesus teaches that He is the Bread of Life

Explain that John 6:22–25 records that many of the people whom Jesus had miraculously fed traveled to Capernaum seeking Him.

Invite a student to read John 6:26–27 aloud, including the Joseph Smith Translation (see verse 26, footnote *a*). Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus said to the people. Explain that the word *meat* in verse 27 refers to food.

- According to the Savior, why did these people seek Him? (The Savior’s words suggest they had followed Him to obtain more food from Him.)
- What did the Savior tell them they should be seeking?

Explain that the “meat [or food] which endureth unto everlasting life” (verse 27) can refer to the eternal truths of the Savior’s gospel.

- How might these verses help us understand why Jesus did not allow this group of people to crown Him as their King?

Invite a student to read John 6:28–31 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the people desired of Jesus to further prove to them that He was the Messiah.

- What did the people want Jesus to do for them? (Explain that manna was “bread from heaven” [verse 31] that God provided for the children of Israel as they wandered in the wilderness.)
- Considering what the Savior did the previous day, what might this request indicate about the multitude?
- As followers of Jesus Christ today, what are some ways we might be tempted to behave like the multitude?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from John 6:32–35, and ask the class to look for what the Savior taught the people in response to their request for a sign.

- What did the Savior teach about Himself when He referred to manna, or bread from heaven?

You may want to suggest that students mark the phrase “I am the bread of life” in verse 35.

- In what ways can we liken the Savior and His teachings to bread?
- What do you think it means that those who come to Jesus Christ “shall never hunger”? (verse 35).
- What truth can we learn from the Savior’s teachings in verse 35? (Although students may use different words, they should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we come to Jesus Christ, He will nourish us spiritually.** You may want to suggest that students write this principle in the margin of their scriptures next to John 6:35.)

Write the following incomplete statements on the board:

We come to Jesus Christ by . . . He will nourish us by . . .

Divide students into pairs. Ask them to work together to make a list in their class notebooks or scripture study journals of some things we can do to come to Jesus Christ and ways He will nourish us spiritually. Invite a few students to report their responses to the class.

To help the class feel the truth and importance of the principle they identified in verse 35, consider inviting a few students to share how they have felt when they have received spiritual nourishment as they have come unto the Savior.

Summarize John 6:36–47 by explaining that some people murmured against the Savior because He taught that He was the bread that came down from heaven.

To prepare students to identify an additional principle the Savior taught, invite a few students to come to the front of the class and give them each a piece of bread. Invite them to smell the bread and imagine what it would taste like.

- How well would this bread nourish you if you only smelled it, imagined how it tasted, and carried it with you all day?
- What must you do to benefit from what the bread has to offer?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from John 6:49–54. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how their classmates’ experience with the bread can relate to what the Savior taught in these verses.

- How is the Bread of Life different from regular bread? (Unlike the bread that can satisfy us only for a short time, Jesus Christ offers us blessings that will last forever.)

Point out the following phrase in verse 51: “The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

- How did the Savior offer His flesh and blood for the life of the world?
- According to verses 53–54, what did the Savior teach the people to do?

Explain that the Savior used the terms *eating* and *drinking* symbolically. To help the class understand the Savior’s teachings, invite the student volunteers to eat the bread. Then invite them to return to their seats.

Encourage students to mark and annotate their scriptures

You can help students capture and retain the things they learn by encouraging them to mark and annotate their scriptures. To mark means to designate, distinguish, set apart, or bring attention to, which can be done by underlining, shading, or outlining key words or passages. To annotate means to add explanatory notes and commentary. Allow students to choose how and whether they will mark and annotate their scriptures.

- What happens to the bread and its nutrients when it is eaten? (The vitamins and nutrients become part of the body, giving it strength and good health.)
- What do you think it means to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus Christ? (It can mean to internalize His teachings and Atonement. It can also represent partaking of the sacrament, which the Savior would institute later.)
- According to verse 54, what blessing can we receive if we internalize, or apply, the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we internalize, or apply, the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can receive eternal life.**)

Ask students to ponder the following question, and then invite several of them to share their responses:

- How do we internalize the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ? (Possible answers may include accepting Jesus Christ as the literal Son of God, partaking of the sacrament each week, keeping the commandments, and enduring to the end in righteousness [see Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. (1965–73), 1:358].)

Explain that eternal life is to live forever with and become like our Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ. Invite a student to read John 6:56–57 aloud, and ask the class to look for how we can become like Them as we internalize the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that the Savior will not physically dwell in us, but rather His divine influence will remain with us to help us become more like Him and Heavenly Father.

Share your testimony of the truths students have identified. Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a goal for how they will better internalize the Savior’s Atonement or one of His teachings.

John 6:60–71

Peter testifies that Jesus has the words of eternal life

Write the following question on the board: *Continue or quit?*

Ask students to think of a time when they had to choose between continuing to do something difficult or quitting. You might ask one or two students to share their experiences.

Explain that after Jesus gave the sermon recorded in John 6, His disciples faced a similar decision.

Invite a student to read John 6:60, 66 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the response of many of Jesus’s disciples to His teachings.

- Why did many of Jesus’s disciples choose to stop following Him? (Explain that the phrase “an hard saying” [verse 60] means they felt Jesus’s teachings were too difficult to follow.)
- Why do some people find it difficult to keep the Lord’s commandments?

Invite a student to read John 6:67 aloud, and ask the class to look for the question Jesus Christ asked His Apostles.

- What did the Savior ask His Apostles?

Invite a student to read John 6:68–69 aloud, and ask the class to look for how Simon Peter responded to the Savior. Ask students to report what they find.

- From Peter’s response, what truth can we learn that will help us remain faithful during times when it may be difficult to follow the Savior or live His teachings? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **A firm testimony of Jesus Christ will help us remain faithful during times when it may be difficult to follow the Savior or live His teachings.**)
- How has a firm testimony of the Savior helped you or someone you know remain faithful, even when the teachings of the gospel seemed hard to follow?

Encourage students to rely on their testimonies of Jesus Christ when the teachings of the gospel may be difficult for them to live. Invite students who may feel they lack a firm testimony of Jesus Christ to strengthen their testimony by seeking to internalize His teachings and Atonement.

Home-Study Lesson

John 2–6 (Unit 13)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied John 2–6 (unit 13) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (John 2)

As students read about the Savior’s first miracle of turning water to wine, they learned that Jesus Christ has power over physical elements. They also learned that the Savior loved and respected His mother. As they studied the account of Jesus cleansing the temple, students learned that the temple is the house of God.

Day 2 (John 3)

Students learned the following truths from the Savior’s teachings to Nicodemus: Being baptized and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost are necessary for being spiritually reborn and receiving exaltation in the celestial kingdom. All mankind can obtain eternal life through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Heavenly Father loves His children so much that He sent His Only Begotten Son to suffer for their sins. If we believe in Jesus Christ, which includes repenting of our sins and obeying His word, we can have everlasting life through His Atonement. From John the Baptist’s example, students learned that we can influence others for good by directing them to Jesus Christ.

Day 3 (John 4)

As students read about the Savior’s teachings to a Samaritan woman at a well, they learned the following truths: If we come unto Jesus Christ and earnestly partake of His gospel, then we will receive eternal life. Jesus Christ knows our sins and offers us His gospel to help us overcome them. If we worship the Father in spirit and in truth, He will bless us with His Spirit. As we gain a testimony of Jesus Christ, we are filled with a desire to share it with others.

Day 4 (John 5–6)

As students read about the Savior healing a feeble man, they learned that through the power and mercy of Jesus Christ, we can be made whole. They also learned that only by coming unto Jesus Christ can we receive eternal life. From the Savior’s sermon on the Bread of Life, students learned that a firm testimony of Jesus Christ will help us remain faithful during times when it may be difficult to follow the Savior or live His teachings.

Introduction

The day after Jesus miraculously fed a multitude of more than 5,000 people, He taught that He is the Bread of Life.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 6:22–59

Jesus teaches that He is the Bread of Life

Display a loaf of bread. Invite a student to summarize the account of the Savior feeding more than 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two small fish.

- What might you have thought if you had been present for this miracle and learned that Jesus had the ability to miraculously provide food?

Explain that John 6:22–25 records that many of the people whom Jesus had miraculously fed traveled to Capernaum seeking Him.

Invite a student to read John 6:26–27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus said to the people.

Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation of John 6:26 clarifies, “Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye desire to keep my sayings, neither because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled” (Joseph Smith Translation, John 6:26 [in John 6:26, footnote a]). Also explain that the word *meat* in John 6:27 and throughout the Bible refers to food. The word *flesh* is used to refer to what we call meat.

- According to the Savior, why did these people seek Him? (The Savior’s words suggest they had followed Him to obtain more food from Him.)
- What did the Savior tell them they should be seeking?

Explain that the “meat [or food] which endureth unto everlasting life” (John 6:27) can refer to the eternal truths of the Savior’s gospel.

Invite a student to read John 6:28–31 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the people desired of Jesus to further prove to them that He was the Messiah.

- What did the people want Jesus to do for them? (Explain that manna was “bread from heaven” [John 6:31] that God provided for the children of Israel as they wandered in the wilderness; see Exodus 16:14–15, 35.)

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from John 6:32–35. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught the people in response to their request for a sign.

- What did the Savior teach about Himself when He referred to manna, or bread from heaven?

You may want to suggest that students mark the phrase “I am the bread of life” in John 6:35.

- In what ways can we liken the Savior and His teachings to bread?
- What do you think it means that those who come to Jesus Christ “shall never hunger”? (John 6:35). (One possible answer is that He will nourish them spiritually.)
- What truth can we learn from the Savior’s teachings in verse 35? (Although students may use different words, they should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we come to Jesus Christ, He will nourish us spiritually.** Write this principle on the board.)

Write the following incomplete statements on the board:

We come to Jesus Christ by . . . He will nourish us by . . .

Divide students into pairs. Ask them to work together to make a list in their class notebooks or scripture study journals of some things we can do to come to Jesus Christ and ways He will nourish us spiritually. Invite a few students to report their responses to the class.

Consider inviting a few students to share how they have received spiritual nourishment as they have come unto the Savior.

To prepare students to identify an additional principle the Savior taught, invite a few students to come to the front of the class and give them each a piece of bread. Invite them to smell the bread and imagine what it would taste like.

- How well would this bread nourish you if you only smelled it, imagined how it tasted, and carried it with you all day?
- What must you do to benefit from what the bread has to offer?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from John 6:49–54. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how their classmates’ experience with the bread can relate to what the Savior taught in these verses.

- How is the Bread of Life different from regular bread? (Unlike the bread that can satisfy us only for a short time, Jesus Christ offers us blessings that will last forever.)
- According to verses 53–54, what did the Savior teach the people to do?

Explain that the Savior used the words *eating* and *drinking* symbolically. To help the class understand the Savior’s teachings, invite the student volunteers to eat the bread. Then invite them to return to their seats.

- What happens to the bread and its nutrients when it is eaten? (The vitamins and nutrients become part of the body, giving it strength and good health.)
- What do you think it means to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus Christ? (It can mean to internalize His teachings and Atonement. It can also represent partaking of the sacrament, which the Savior would institute later.)

- According to John 6:54, what blessing can we receive if we internalize, or apply, the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we internalize, or apply, the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can receive eternal life.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for ways he said we can internalize the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ.



“To eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God is, first, to accept him in the most literal and full sense, with no reservation whatever, as the personal offspring in the flesh of the Eternal Father; and, secondly, it is to keep the commandments of the Son by accepting his gospel, joining his Church, and enduring in obedience and righteousness unto the end. Those who by this course eat his flesh and drink his blood shall have eternal life, meaning exaltation in the highest heaven of the celestial world” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:358).

- How did Elder McConkie suggest we internalize the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ?

Explain that eternal life is to live forever with and become like our Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ. Invite a student to read John 6:56–57 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how we can become like Them as we internalize the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that the Savior will not physically dwell in us, but rather His divine influence will remain with us to help us become more like Him and Heavenly Father.

Summarize John 6:59–66 by explaining that some of Jesus’s disciples rejected His teachings and turned away from following Him.

Share your testimony of the truths students have identified. Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a goal for how they will better internalize the Savior’s Atonement or one of His teachings.

Next Unit (John 7–10)

Tell students that in the next unit they will learn how Jesus Christ treated a woman who was caught committing adultery and what He said to disperse the crowd who wanted to kill her. You could have students close their eyes and imagine what it might be like to be blind. Then ask what it might have felt like to be healed of blindness and then to see for the first time. Students will read about a blind man who not only received physical sight but also received spiritual sight and gained a witness that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. They will also learn why the Savior calls Himself the Good Shepherd and what power He said He received from the Father.

LESSON 66

John 7

Introduction

Jesus attended the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. He went to the temple and taught the people there how they could receive a witness that His teachings were from God the Father. Because the people were contending

about who Jesus was, He used images of water and light to testify of His divinity. He also taught them about the Holy Ghost.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 7:1–13

Jesus attends the Feast of Tabernacles

Write the following question on the board: *Did Jesus have brothers and sisters?*

Invite students to respond to the question. If necessary, help students understand that Joseph and Mary had children who were born after Jesus and who would have been raised in the same household with Him. However, because Jesus Christ was the literal son of Mary and God the Father, not Joseph, these individuals were Jesus's half brothers and half sisters (see Mathew 13:55–56).

- What do you think it would have been like to grow up in the same home as Jesus?
- Do you think it would be easier to believe in Him if you had grown up with Him? Why or why not?

Point out that in John 7 we learn how some of Jesus's "brethren" (John 7:3, 5) viewed Him. The term *brethren* probably refers to Jesus's half brothers, though it might also include other close relatives.

Invite several students to take turns reading John 7:1–5 aloud.

- What do we learn from verse 5 about Jesus's brethren?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"A testimony of the divinity of Christ and of the saving power of his gospel is not bestowed automatically because of family relationship.

"... Though they were reared in the same household and came under the benign influence of Joseph and Mary, though they were aware of the teachings, ministry, and miracles of Jesus himself, yet these his close relatives had not so far accepted him as the Messiah. However, all of them, apparently, were converted later (Acts 1:14)" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:437).

- How is it possible that some of Jesus's own family members did not yet believe in Him, even though they were aware of His teachings and miracles?

Point out that John 7 records events that occurred when the Feast of Tabernacles was being held in Jerusalem (see John 7:2). During this eight-day feast, considered to be "the greatest and most joyful of all" (Bible Dictionary, "Feasts"), many Jews traveled to Jerusalem to commemorate God's blessings upon the children of Israel when they sojourned in the wilderness, living in makeshift booths, or tabernacles, following their delivery from slavery in Egypt (see Leviticus 23:39–43). The Jews also celebrated and gave thanks for the yearly harvest of fruits and grains (see Exodus 23:16).

- According to verses 3–4, what did Jesus's brethren want Him to do?

Summarize John 7:6–10 by explaining that Jesus decided to delay going to the feast, but He encouraged His brethren to go. After the feast had started, Jesus then went in secret—knowing that some of the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem wanted to kill Him but that His time to die had not yet come.

Understanding context and content

One fundamental of gospel teaching and learning is to understand context and content of the scripture block. Context includes the circumstances or background of a particular scriptural passage, event, or story. The content is the story line, people, events, sermons, and inspired explanations in the text. As you help your students understand the context and content of the scriptures, they will be prepared to recognize the messages of the inspired authors.

Invite a student to read John 7:11–13 aloud.

- What were various people in Jerusalem saying about Jesus?

Point out that just as in Jesus’s day, there are varying opinions about Jesus Christ in our day. Some people know and testify that He is the Son of God and Savior of all mankind. Others believe in Him and hope His gospel is true. However, there are also people who doubt the divinity of Jesus Christ and the truthfulness of His teachings. Invite students to look as they continue to study John 7 for how we can know that Jesus Christ is our Savior and that His teachings are true.

John 7:14–36

Jesus teaches the Jews at the temple

Invite a student to read John 7:14–15 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what Jesus did at the temple. It may be helpful to explain that the temple was the focal point of the celebrations that took place during the Feast of Tabernacles.

- What did Jesus do?
- Why did the Jews marvel?

Invite a student to read John 7:16–18 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what Jesus said the people could do in order to know whether His doctrine, or teachings, were true.

- According to verse 16, from whom did Jesus receive the doctrine He taught?
- How can someone know that the doctrine Jesus taught is truly from God?
- What principle can we learn about how we can receive a testimony of Heavenly Father’s teachings? (Using their own words, students should identify a principle such as the following: **If we do Heavenly Father’s will, then we will receive a testimony of His doctrine.** You may want to invite students to mark the words in verse 17 that teach this principle.)

To help students understand how this principle can be applied in our lives, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President James E. Faust of the First Presidency:

“We acquire a testimony of the principles of the gospel by obediently trying to live them. . . . A testimony of the efficacy of prayer comes through humble and sincere prayer. A testimony of tithing comes by paying tithing” (“Lord, I Believe; Help Thou Mine Unbelief,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2003, 22).

Although His own brethren did not initially believe in Him, they later gained a testimony and were converted (see Acts 1:14).

- How would the principle identified in John 7:17 help Jesus’s brothers gain a testimony of Jesus Christ and His teachings?

Ask students to imagine they have a friend who is struggling with his or her testimony of the gospel.

- How might you use the principle we identified in John 7:17 to help this friend?

To help students testify of the principle they identified above and feel its truth and importance, display the following statement:

I know _____ is true because as I have lived it I have _____.

Encourage students to complete the statement in their class notebooks or scripture study journals by writing about a gospel commandment or principle they have come to know is true through their efforts to live it.

Invite a few students to share what they wrote with the class.

Invite students to write down a gospel truth, commandment, or teaching that they would like to receive a stronger testimony of. Invite them to also write what they will do to receive a greater testimony of this truth, commandment, or teaching by applying the principle they learned in John 7:17.

Summarize John 7:19–36 by explaining that Jesus rebuked the Jewish leaders for rejecting His teachings and miracles and seeking to kill Him. Many people wondered if He was the Messiah, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to take Him.

John 7:37–53

Jesus Christ teaches about the gift of the Holy Ghost

Ask for a volunteer who is thirsty to come to the front of the class. Give the student an empty cup, and ask him or her:

- Will this satisfy your thirst?
- What else do you need?

Display a source of water such as a water bottle or a pitcher full of water. Fill the cup with water, and invite the student to drink. Then ask the student to return to his or her seat.

Hold up the pitcher or water bottle you used to fill the student’s cup. Explain that during each of the eight days of the Feast of Tabernacles an appointed priest drew water from the pool of Siloam with a golden pitcher and poured the water into the silver basin at the base of the temple altar. On the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, when the priest had done so, Jesus stood and offered an invitation to the people. (See Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:446.)

Invite a student to read John 7:37 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Savior invited the people to do after He appeared at the temple on the eighth and final day of the feast.

- What did the Savior invite the people to do?
- Considering the drawing and pouring of water performed by the priest on this feast day, why do you think Jesus would extend this invitation at this precise time?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we come unto Jesus Christ and believe on Him . . .*

Invite a student to read John 7:38–39 aloud, including the Joseph Smith Translation of John 7:39 found in verse 39, footnote *b*. Invite students to look for the promise Jesus made to those who come unto Him and believe on Him.

Explain that the phrase “out of his belly” suggests that the living water will be within and flow from the believer, rather than coming from an outside source.

- According to verse 39, what did the living water the Savior spoke of represent?

Explain that “for some reason not fully explained in the scriptures, the Holy Ghost did not operate in the fulness among the Jews during the years of Jesus’s mortal sojourn (John 7:39; 16:7)” (Bible Dictionary, “Holy Ghost”). While the *gift* of the Holy Ghost would not be given in that dispensation until after the Savior was glorified by completing His mortal mission, the *power* of the Holy Ghost was available to help people receive a testimony of the truths the Savior and His disciples taught.

- Based on the Savior’s teachings in John 7:37–39, how would you complete the statement on the board? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we come unto Jesus Christ and believe on Him, then we will be filled with the Holy Ghost.**)

Explain that those filled with the Holy Ghost are able to influence others for good. Invite students to think of a time when they were filled with the Holy Ghost and, as a result, were able to influence someone else for good. Invite a few students to share their experiences.

Summarize John 7:40–53 by explaining that the chief priests and Pharisees again desired to have Jesus arrested. Nicodemus, the Pharisee who had come to the Savior by night (see John 3:1–2), came to the Savior’s defense and reminded his fellow Pharisees and the chief priests that their own law would not allow an individual to be condemned until he was given a chance to be heard.

Conclude by testifying of the truths students identified in their study of John 7.

John 8:1–30

Introduction

While the Savior was in Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, some scribes and Pharisees brought a woman to Him who was guilty of adultery, and they asked whether

she should be stoned. He confounded the accusers and showed mercy to the woman. Jesus also taught that the Father bears witness of Him.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 8:1–11

A woman taken in adultery is brought before the Savior

Invite students to think of times when they may have encountered or associated with people whose appearance or behavior was not in harmony with the Lord's standards.

- What challenges might we face when we are with others whose appearance or behavior is not in harmony with the Lord's standards? (Students may respond that we may be tempted to judge such individuals unrighteously or treat them unkindly.)

Write the following question on the board:

What should we do in situations when we are with others whose appearance or behavior is not in harmony with the Lord's standards?

Encourage students to look for truths as they study John 8:1–11 that can help answer this question.

Explain that after the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus Christ remained in Jerusalem for a time and taught people at the temple (see John 8:1–2).

Invite a student to read John 8:3–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened as Jesus taught the people.

- What happened as Jesus taught the people?
- What question did the scribes and Pharisees ask the Savior?
- According to verse 6, what was the scribes and Pharisees' intention? (They were seeking to discredit Jesus in front of the people and establish a reason to accuse Him because they wanted a reason to arrest Him and put Him to death [see John 7:1, 32].)

Explain that if Jesus said to stone the woman, He would have been endorsing a penalty that was unpopular among the Jewish people and prohibited by Roman law. If Jesus said not to stone the woman, He would be accused of disregarding the law of Moses or treating the accepted practices of the past disrespectfully. (See Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:450–51.)

Invite a student to read John 8:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior responded.

- According to verse 7, what was Jesus's response?
- What do you think the Savior wanted these men to realize when He said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her"? (verse 7).

Invite a student to read John 8:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened as the Pharisees and scribes considered the Savior's statement.

- What do you think the phrase "convicted by their own conscience" means?
- What did these men acknowledge by choosing to walk away?
- What truth can we learn from this account about how to avoid condemning others? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **Acknowledging our own imperfections can help us avoid condemning others.** Write this principle under the question on the board.)

- How do you think acknowledging our own imperfections helps us avoid condemning others?

Remind students that this woman was guilty of adultery, which is an extremely serious sin (see Alma 39:3–5).

- What feelings do you think this woman may have had as her sin was exposed to Jesus and a large crowd of people?

Invite a student to read John 8:10–11 aloud. Ask the student to also read aloud the Joseph Smith Translation in verse 11, footnote *c*. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior responded to this woman.

- In what way did the Savior show love and mercy to this woman?
- What instructions did the Savior give to the woman?

To help students understand that the Savior was not condoning this woman’s sin, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball:

“His command to her was, ‘Go, and sin no more.’ He was directing the sinful woman to go her way, *abandon her evil life, commit no more sin, transform her life*. He was saying, Go, woman, and start your repentance; and he was indicating to her the beginning step—to *abandon her transgressions*” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness* [1969], 165).

- What truth can we learn about the Savior from verses 10–11? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **The Savior shows us mercy by giving us opportunities to repent.** Write this truth on the board.)
- How can understanding this truth help us when we sin?
- How can the two truths we have identified help us respond in situations when we are with others whose appearance or behavior is not in harmony with the Lord’s commandments and standards?
- According to the Joseph Smith Translation of verse 11, what effect did the Savior’s mercy have on the woman?

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals the feelings they have for the Savior because of His willingness to show us mercy and give us opportunities to repent.

John 8:12–30

Jesus teaches that His Father bears witness of Him

Invite students to close their eyes and try to draw a simple picture of a specific object. Then ask students to open their eyes and compare their drawing with their neighbors’ drawings.

- What are some things you can do better with light?

Invite a student to read John 8:12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus declared about Himself.

- What did Jesus call Himself? (Write the following doctrine on the board: **Jesus Christ is the Light of the World.**)

Remind students that Jesus made this declaration at the Feast of Tabernacles. During each evening of the eight-day feast, massive lamp stands, or menorahs, were lit in the courtyards of the temple, providing illumination for the many people who were in Jerusalem for the celebration.

- How did Jesus Christ provide light to the woman taken in adultery and the men who accused her?
- What principle can we learn from the Savior’s words in verse 12? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we follow the Savior, we will avoid spiritual darkness and be filled with His light.**)
- How do you feel the Savior helps you to avoid walking in spiritual darkness?

Explain that several Old Testament prophecies indicate that the Messiah would be a light to all nations (see Isaiah 49:6; 60:1–3). Therefore, in declaring Himself to be the Light of the World, Jesus was proclaiming that He was the Messiah.

Invite a student to read John 8:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Pharisees responded to the Savior's declaration.

- How did the Pharisees respond to the Savior's declaration?
- Why did they say Jesus's record or testimony was not true? (Because He had testified of Himself.)

Explain that Jesus reminded the Pharisees that the law of Moses required the testimony of at least two men to establish truth (see John 8:17; Deuteronomy 17:6). Invite a student to read John 8:18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who else bore witness that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

- According to verse 18, who did the Savior state was a second witness to His divinity? (You may want to emphasize that through this statement Jesus confirmed that He and His Father are two separate beings.)

Invite a student to read John 8:19 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the Pharisees did not understand about Jesus and His Father.

- According to verse 19, why didn't the Pharisees know the Father? (The Pharisees did not know the Father because they did not know Jesus and who He truly was.)
- Based on what the Savior told the Pharisees, what can we do to come to know Heavenly Father? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **as we learn of Jesus Christ, we come to know the Father.** Using students' words, write this principle on the board.)

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"In all that Jesus came to say and do, including and especially in His atoning suffering and sacrifice, He was showing us who and what God our Eternal Father is like, how completely devoted He is to His children in every age and nation. In word and in deed Jesus was trying to reveal and make personal to us the true nature of His Father, our Father in Heaven. . . .

"So feeding the hungry, healing the sick, rebuking hypocrisy, pleading for faith—this was Christ showing us the way of the Father, He who is 'merciful and gracious, slow to anger, long-suffering and full of goodness.' In His life and especially in His death, Christ was declaring, 'This is God's compassion I am showing you, as well as that of my own'" ("The Grandeur of God," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2003, 70, 72).

- According to Elder Holland, what do we learn about our Heavenly Father as we learn about Jesus Christ?

Summarize John 8:21–24 by explaining that the Savior warned the Pharisees that if they did not believe in Him they would die in their sins.

Invite a student to read John 8:25–30 aloud. Ask the class to look for additional truths Jesus taught the Pharisees about Himself and Heavenly Father. You may want to invite students to mark what they find.

- What additional truths did Jesus Christ teach about Himself and Heavenly Father?
- How do the Savior's teachings in these verses further help us to understand the relationship between the Savior and Heavenly Father?

Invite students to take a few minutes to review and ponder the accounts they have studied concerning Jesus Christ's words and actions in the New Testament this year (including, for example, the account of the woman taken in adultery). You may want to display pictures from the *Gospel Art Book* ([2009]; see also LDS.org) that depict events from the Savior's mortal ministry. Invite a few students to summarize an account that they each thought of and explain to the class what it teaches about our Father in Heaven.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

LESSON 68

John 8:31–59

Introduction

The Savior continued teaching at the temple following the Feast of Tabernacles. He taught about freedom from

sin. When Jesus Christ proclaimed He was the great Jehovah, the Jews tried to stone Him.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 8:31–36

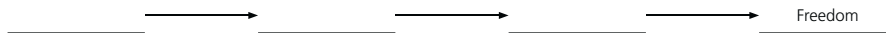
Jesus teaches about freedom from sin

To help students remember what they learned in the previous lesson, hold up a small stone. Invite students to briefly summarize how the Savior responded when some scribes and Pharisees brought Him a woman taken in adultery and what He taught afterward (see John 8:1–30). (The Savior did not condemn the woman and told her to “sin no more” [verse 11]. Afterward Jesus taught that He is the “light of the world” [verse 12] and that as we believe in Him and obey His teachings, we come to know the Father.)

- According to John 8:30, how did Jesus’s actions and words affect many of the Jews?

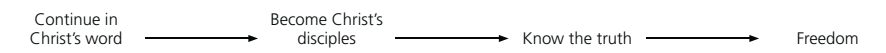
Point out that although many of the Jews believed in Jesus, some Jews continued to challenge Him as He taught the people about discipleship, truth, and freedom versus bondage.

Draw the following diagram on the board:



Invite a student to read John 8:31–32 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus said we need to do in order to be free.

Invite students to come to the board and fill in the blanks based on what Jesus said we need to do in order to be free. The completed diagram should look similar to the following:



- What does it mean to “continue in [Christ’s] word”? (verse 31).
- How would you summarize as a principle statement Jesus Christ’s teachings recorded in verses 31–32? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **if we continue in Jesus Christ’s word, then we will be His disciples and know the truth, which will make us free.** Consider writing this principle on the board. You may also want to point out that John 8:36 emphasizes that it is because of Jesus Christ that we can be made free.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for what we can be free from if we live according to the Savior’s word:

“Free from the damning power of false doctrine; free from the bondage of appetite and lust; free from the shackles of sin; free from every evil and corrupt influence and from every restraining and curtailng power; free to go on to the unlimited freedom enjoyed in its fulness only by exalted beings” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:456–57).

Invite a student to read John 8:33 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Jews believed made them free.

- What did the Jews believe would make them free? (They mistakenly believed that simply being descendants of Abraham and heirs to the Abrahamic covenant entitled them to spiritual freedom.)

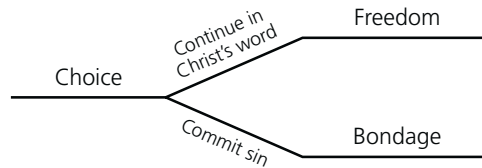
Invite a student to read John 8:34–36 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus indicated the people needed to be freed from.

Adapt teaching methods to meet students’ needs

Teaching methods and skills are merely tools to help students learn and are not ends in themselves. Select methods that will best help students understand the content, doctrines, and principles of a particular scripture block and apply those doctrines and principles in their lives. Remember that without the Spirit, even the most effective teaching methods will not fully succeed.

- According to verse 34, what did the Savior indicate the people needed to be freed from? Point out that the Greek verb translated as “committeth” in verse 34 suggests the idea of continuing in sin rather than repenting.
- What principle can we learn from verse 34? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we commit sin and do not repent, then we become the servants of sin.**)
- What does it mean to be a “servant of sin”? (You may want to point out that the word translated as “servant” may also be rendered as “slave.”)

To help students visualize the relationship between the two principles they have identified, draw the following diagram on the board:



- Why might some people today confuse these truths by believing that following the Savior places us in bondage, while committing sin results in freedom?

To help the class further understand the two principles they identified, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“Yielding to [Satan’s] temptations leads to a narrower and narrower range of choices until none remains and to addictions that leave us powerless to resist. . . .

“ . . . The world looks at things through Korihor’s lens, considering obedience to God’s laws and ordinances to be ‘bondage’ (Alma 30:24, 27). . . .

“ . . . Does anyone doubt that, as a consequence of possessing all light and truth, God possesses ultimate freedom to be and to do?

“Likewise, as our understanding of gospel doctrine and principles grows, our agency expands. First, we have more choices and can achieve more and receive greater blessings because we have more laws that we can obey. . . . Second, with added understanding we can make more intelligent choices because we see more clearly not only the alternatives but also their potential outcomes” (“Moral Agency,” *Ensign*, June 2009, 49, 50–51).

Divide students into pairs. Invite each pair to study an assigned section of *For the Strength of Youth* (booklet, 2011). Ask students to draw the following chart in their class notebooks or scripture study journals (you may want to draw it on the board). Invite each pair to read together their assigned section of *For the Strength of Youth* and fill out the chart.

Standard discussed in <i>For the Strength of Youth</i> :	In what ways can living this standard bring freedom?	In what ways can failing to live this standard bring bondage?

After sufficient time, invite each pair to switch partners with another pair and teach what they learned about the standard they studied. After sufficient time, invite a few students to report what they learned to the class.

- What freedoms promised in *For the Strength of Youth* have you personally experienced?

Invite students to write down a specific way they will seek to be free by living according to the Savior’s word.

John 8:37–59

Jesus testifies of His divinity

Invite students to briefly respond to the following question:

- Whom do you know who is very similar to his or her father?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from John 8:37–40, 44–45. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Jewish leaders who opposed the Lord were different from the great Old Testament prophet Abraham, whom they claimed as their father.

- According to verse 39, what did the Savior say they would do if they were the children of Abraham?
- According to verse 40, what were they seeking to do that Abraham would never have done?
- According to verses 44–45, who did Jesus say was their father? (The devil.) In what ways did they follow the devil?

Summarize John 8:46–50 by explaining that the Savior taught that those who are of God receive His word. The Jewish leaders tried to insult Jesus by calling Him a Samaritan (as Samaritans were generally despised by the Jews) and claiming He was possessed by a devil.

Invite a student to read John 8:51–53 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the question the Jewish leaders asked Jesus.

- What question did they ask Jesus? (You may want to invite students to mark the question “Art thou greater than our father Abraham?” in verse 53.)

Invite a student to read John 8:56–58 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Jesus’s response to the Jews’ question.

- What was Jesus’s response to the question “Art thou greater than our father Abraham?” (You may want to invite students to mark the phrase “before Abraham was, I am” in verse 58.)

Invite students to read John 8:58, footnote *b* silently, looking for the meaning of the term “I am.” Then ask the following questions:

- What does the term “I am” mean? (The term identifies Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; you may also need to explain that the Septuagint is the Greek translation of the Old Testament. You may want to invite students to write in their scriptures the following truth: **Jesus Christ is Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament.**)
- Based on your study of verse 58, what was Jesus’s response to the question about whether He was greater than Abraham?

Display several pictures from the *Gospel Art Book* ([2009]; see also LDS.org) that depict miracles recorded in the Old Testament (such as Three Men in the Fiery Furnace, no. 25; or Daniel in the Lion’s Den, no. 26).

- If you had been standing before Jesus and had heard Him declare that He was the one who had wrought the miracles recorded in the Old Testament, how might you have responded to Him?

Invite a student to read John 8:59 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Jewish leaders responded to Jesus’s declaration that He was Jehovah. Invite students to report what they find.

- Why do you feel it is important for us to know that Jesus Christ is Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament?

Consider inviting a few students to share with the class their testimonies of Jesus Christ. You may want to conclude by sharing your own testimony as well.

Scripture Mastery Review

Quizzes and tests give students opportunities to test their memory of scripture mastery passages. Clues could include key words or scripture references, quotations from passages, or scenarios that illustrate the truths taught in passages. Quizzes and tests could be given verbally, on the board, or on paper. After students have taken a quiz or test, consider pairing any students who are struggling with scripture mastery passages to work with high-scoring students. The higher-scoring student could act as a tutor to help the student with the lower score study and improve. (If you do this, make sure to do it in a manner that does not embarrass students who are struggling.)



John 9

Introduction

Jesus healed a man who had been born blind. The Pharisees questioned this man and cast him out of the synagogue because he refused to condemn Jesus as a sinner

for healing on the Sabbath. The Savior sought out the man, and the man worshipped Jesus as the Son of God.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 9:1–7

Jesus heals a man who was born blind

Bring to class a news article that describes someone who has faced an adversity. Summarize the article for students, or write its headline on the board.

- What other examples have you seen of people who experience adversity?

Point out that some people wonder why God allows adversity to drastically affect their lives. Ask students to look for a truth as they study John 9:1–5 that can help us better understand why God allows adversity to affect our lives.

Invite a student to read John 9:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the adversity a man faced. Invite students to report what they find.

- According to verse 2, what did the disciples ask about the cause of this man’s adversity?

Explain that many people in the Savior’s day believed, as do some people in our day, that the adversities people face are the consequences of sins that they or their parents had committed. (You may also want to point out that the disciples’ question assumes the reality of a premortal existence.)

- Do you think this belief was correct? Why or why not?


Invite a student to read John 9:3–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior’s teachings about this man’s blindness.

- What do you think it means that “the works of God should be made manifest in him”? (verse 3).
- From the Savior’s teachings in these verses, what truth can we learn about our adversities? (Students may use different words but should identify a truth such as the following: **God can use our adversities to show forth His works and power.**)

Explain that while there may be many different causes of adversity in our lives, God can use our challenges to help accomplish His righteous purposes.

Invite students to think of an adversity they have faced or are currently facing. As students continue to study John 9, ask them to ponder ways in which God could demonstrate His works and power through them because of those adversities.

Invite a student to read John 9:6–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the way in which God manifested His works and power through the blind man’s experience.

 You could also show a portion of the *Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos* video “Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind” [time code 0:00–3:37]. This video is available on LDS.org.

- What do you imagine it was like for this man to see for the first time?
- How did this man’s adversity allow others to witness God’s power?
- In this account, the man needed to wash in the pool of Siloam in order to receive his sight. What might you need to do so that God can demonstrate His works and power in your life?

John 9:8–41


The Savior seeks out the man He had healed after the Pharisees cast the man out

Summarize John 9:8–15 by explaining that after the blind man was healed, some people disputed whether he was really the man who had been born blind. Others wondered how he had been healed and took him to the Pharisees, who began questioning him.

Invite students to search John 9:14 for the day on which the Savior healed the blind man. Ask a student to report what he or she finds.

- What reaction do you think the Pharisees had to Jesus healing the man on the Sabbath?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from John 9:16–38. Ask the class to follow along, looking for another adversity that the healed man faced.

 Instead of having students read, you could show the rest of the video “Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind” (time code 3:37–7:47). Instruct students to look for another adversity that the healed man faced.

Help prepare students to identify a principle from this account by reminding them that the blind man’s parents were brought before the Pharisees to be questioned.

- According to verse 22, why did the blind man’s parents defer to their son to explain how he was able to see?

Explain that “synagogues served as the religious and social center for many Jewish communities. Synagogues offered access to spiritual instruction and worship, as well as educational and social opportunities. Because the synagogue was so integral to Jewish society, to be cast out of the synagogue . . . meant more than being excommunicated and losing fellowship with the religious community. It meant banishment from cultural and social affairs as well. This threat was apparently severe enough to keep the parents of the man born blind from getting too involved in the investigation of [their son’s healing]” (*New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 230).

- According to verse 24, what pressure do you think the healed man was experiencing?

Invite students to read verses 30–33 silently, including the excerpt of Joseph Smith Translation, John 9:32 found in verse 32, footnote *a*, looking for the man’s response to the Pharisees.

- What reasoning did the man use to defend Jesus? (You may want to suggest that students mark his words in verse 33.)
- What did this man know about Jesus Christ?

Point out that this man was cast out of the synagogue for fearlessly defending the person who had healed him (see verse 34).

- Why do you think this man was willing to stay true to what he knew about Jesus Christ, even though it meant being cast out of the synagogue?

Remind students that after the man was cast out of the synagogue, the Savior found him and asked whether he “believe[d] on the Son of God” (verse 35). Invite a student to read John 9:36–38 aloud, and ask the class to look for the man’s response.

- What happened to this man’s testimony of Jesus Christ? (He came to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.)
- What principle can we learn from this man about remaining true to what we know? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure they understand the following principle: **As we remain true to what we know in spite of opposition, our testimonies will be strengthened.** Write this principle on the board.)

To help students better understand this principle, invite a student to read Ether 12:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happens after we remain true to the Lord when we experience opposition to our faith.

- Why do you think our testimonies are strengthened after withstanding opposition or trials of faith?
- How has your testimony been strengthened because of opposition?

To help students identify another principle from this account, ask how many students use corrective lenses (such as glasses or contact lenses).

- What do these lenses do to your vision?

- What was this man’s physical vision like after Jesus healed him?
- How was this man’s spiritual vision or understanding of the Savior corrected or improved?

Invite students to read John 9:11, 17, 33 silently, looking for phrases that describe the man’s vision or understanding of who Jesus was. Ask them to report what they find. (Their answers should include “a man that is called Jesus,” “a prophet,” and a man “of God.” Write these phrases on the board, and invite students to mark them in their scriptures.)

- According to these phrases, what happened to this man’s spiritual vision? (It was corrected and improved. These phrases reflect the growth of this man’s spiritual maturity and comprehension of Jesus’s true identity.)
- Why do you think his vision and understanding of the Savior became clearer? (He exercised faith by staying true to what he knew.)

Ask students to scan John 9:36–38, looking for the way this man ended up seeing the Savior.

- What did this man end up seeing about the Savior? (He came to realize that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.)
- How correct did this man’s vision become?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Howard W. Hunter. Ask the class to listen for what President Hunter said happened to this man.

“Now sight had been given *twice*—once to remedy a congenital defect [a physical defect from birth] and once to behold the King of Kings before He would ascend to His eternal throne. Jesus had quickened both temporal *and* spiritual vision” (“The God That Doest Wonders,” *Ensign*, May 1989, 16–17).

- How might the man’s healing from physical blindness represent his healing from spiritual blindness?
- What principle can we learn from this account about what can happen to us as we exercise faith in Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we exercise faith in Jesus Christ, our spiritual vision and understanding become clearer.** Write this principle on the board.)
- Why do you think exercising faith is necessary in order to see and understand spiritual truth more clearly?

Explain that some Pharisees were standing nearby when the man saw and worshipped Jesus as the Son of God. Invite a student to read John 9:39–41 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught about blindness.

- How would you summarize what the Savior taught the Pharisees?

Explain that in response to the Pharisees’ question, “Are we blind also?” (verse 40), “the Savior used a metaphor, teaching that individuals who were ‘blind’—those who did not know who He was—‘should have no sin’ (John 9:41). On the other hand, individuals who could ‘see’—those who had received enough witnesses concerning the Savior and His divine mission that they should have known who He was—would be accountable for their actions. The Pharisees were among those who could ‘see,’ and thus their ‘sin remaineth.’ Spiritually speaking, they chose to be blind because they refused to recognize Jesus as the Son of God, despite the many witnesses they had received” (*New Testament Student Manual*, 231).

To conclude, invite students to look at the two principles on the board and to ponder which one they feel they should apply in their lives (they may feel a need to apply both principles). Give students time to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how they will apply this principle. Encourage them to pray for guidance on how to do this.

Help students apply doctrines and principles

As students apply the principles of the gospel in their lives, they will receive promised blessings. Give students time during class to ponder or write about what they have understood and felt and to consider specific actions they should take to apply a principle. At such times, encourage students to ask for guidance from the Lord.

LESSON 70

John 10

Introduction

Jesus taught that He is the Good Shepherd and that He would lay down His life for His sheep. He also testified that Heavenly Father had given Him power over death.

Some people accused Jesus of blasphemy for proclaiming that He was the Son of God.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 10:1–24

Jesus teaches that He is the Good Shepherd and will lay down His life for His people

Invite a student to come to the front of the class. Blindfold the student, and then gather several sets of scriptures, including the blindfolded student's set. Ask the blindfolded student to feel each set of scriptures and try to determine which set belongs to him or her. After the student attempts this, ask:

- Why were you able (or unable) to determine which is your set of scriptures?
- If I asked you to feel each of your classmates' faces, how many do you think you could correctly identify? (Do not ask the student to actually do this.)

Invite the student to remove the blindfold and return to his or her seat. Explain that a shepherd in the Middle East was once asked how well he knew his sheep. He responded, "If you were to put a cloth over my eyes, and bring me any sheep and only let me put my hands on its face, I could tell in a moment if it was mine or not" (G. M. Mackie, *Bible Manners and Customs* [n.d.], 35).

- If you were a shepherd, what do you think it would take to know the sheep in your flock as well as this shepherd did?

Invite students to read John 10:14 silently, looking for what Jesus called Himself. Ask them to report what they find. Write the following statement on the board: *Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd.*

- Why do you think "the good shepherd" is an appropriate title for the Savior?

Encourage students to look for truths as they study John 10 that teach us how the Savior is our Good Shepherd.

To help students understand the cultural setting of John 10:1–5, explain that in the Savior's day, shepherds led their flocks to food, water, and shelter during the day. At night, several shepherds gathered their individual flocks into a common sheepfold. A sheepfold is a cave or enclosure surrounded by rock walls that have sharp thorns placed along the top to prevent wild animals from entering.

Divide students into pairs. Invite each partnership to read John 10:1–5 aloud together, looking for what a good shepherd does. After sufficient time, invite a few students to report what they found. Write their answers on the board under *Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd.* (Answers might include the following: He enters by the door, He calls His sheep by name, and He goes before His sheep.)

- According to verse 3, how did the shepherd lead his sheep out of the sheepfold?
- According to verses 4–5, why would the sheep follow only their shepherd?
- What did the Savior call those who tried to enter the sheepfold by ways other than the door?

Explain that the Pharisees were among the group of people Jesus was speaking to (see John 9:41).

- How were the Pharisees like thieves, robbers, and strangers in a sheepfold?

Help students understand cultural settings

Writers of the scriptures wrote as directed by the Holy Ghost, yet the words and imagery they each used were influenced by their culture. Helping students understand this culture can clarify and deepen their understanding of the imagery, stories, teachings, doctrines, and principles in the scriptures.

Invite students to read John 10:6 silently, looking for the Pharisees' response to the Savior's teaching. Ask them to report what they find.

Explain that as recorded in John 10:7–16, the Savior continued teaching about the differences between Himself and the Pharisees. Invite a student to read verses 7–10 aloud, including the Joseph Smith Translation in verse 8, footnote *a*. Ask students to follow along, looking for Jesus's teachings in these verses.

- What additional insight about the thieves does the Joseph Smith Translation of verse 8 give?
- What do you think the Savior meant when He said, "I am the door"? (verses 7, 9).

Explain that "shepherds in Israel stood at the entrance of the sheepfold and inspected each sheep as it entered, treating injuries as needed. After the sheep were gathered in the sheepfold for the night, the shepherd would lie down to sleep in the entrance, barring the way so predators or thieves could not hurt the sheep" (*New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 231–32).

- How are these shepherds' actions similar to what the Savior does for us?
- How do you think the Savior gives life "more abundantly" (John 10:10) to those who follow Him?

Invite a student to read John 10:11–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else the Savior said good shepherds do. Point out that a hireling is someone whose primary motive for working is merely to get paid.

Invite a few students to come to the board and to write anything else they found about the Good Shepherd under *Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd*. (Answers might include the following: He gives His life for His sheep, He knows His sheep, and He is known by His sheep.)

- What is a shepherd willing to do that a hireling is not?
- What truth can we learn about the Savior from these verses? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **As the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ knows each of us and laid down His life for us.** Write this truth on the board under *Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd*.)

Remind students of the Middle Eastern shepherd who knew each of his sheep so well.

- How well do you think the Savior knows you?
- How might the way you live each day be affected by understanding that the Savior knows you and was willing to lay down His life for you?

Explain that after He taught that He would lay down His life for us, the Savior indicated something else He would do. Invite a student to read John 10:16 aloud. Ask the class to look for what else the Savior said He would do for His sheep (meaning His people).

- What did the Savior say He would do for His sheep?
- What does this verse indicate about the location of His sheep?

Explain that the Savior was teaching the Jews in Jerusalem that He would visit God's children in other lands, teach them His gospel, and bring them into His fold (His Church). Explain that the Book of Mormon sheds light on this verse.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 3 Nephi 15:15–17, 21; 16:1–3. You may want to suggest that students write this reference in the margin of their scriptures next to John 10:16 or that they mark verse 16, footnote *a*.

- How do these verses help us better understand John 10:16? (The "other sheep" refer to the Nephites and lost tribes, not the Gentiles.)

Ask students to read John 10:17–18 silently, looking for a doctrine about the Savior. Invite them to report what they find. (Students may use different words but should identify the following doctrine: **As the literal Son of God, Jesus Christ had power to lay down His life and take it up again.** Encourage students to mark the words that teach this doctrine in these verses.)

- Why did the Savior have both the ability to die and the ability to rise again after dying? (From His mother, Mary, a mortal woman, Jesus inherited mortality, including the capacity to die. From Elohim, His Father, He inherited immortality, the power to live forever. Thus, He had inherited the abilities to die and to rise again, which were necessary for Jesus to be able to perform the Atonement. [See the lesson on Matthew 1–2.])

Summarize John 10:19–24 by explaining that after the Savior had taught these things, the people were divided in their opinions about who Jesus was. They approached Jesus at the temple and pressured Him to proclaim His true identity as the Christ.

John 10:25–42

Jesus proclaims that He is the Son of God

Invite another student to come to the front of the class. Blindfold the student, and then instruct several other students to take turns saying a certain word (for example, “shepherd”). Ask the blindfolded student to listen to each person saying the word and determine whether he or she can recognize who is speaking by that person’s voice.

- Why might some voices be easier to recognize than others?

Instruct the student to remove the blindfold and to return to his or her seat. Invite a student to read John 10:25–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior’s response to the people’s request to tell them whether He was the Christ.

- How did the Savior describe His sheep? (The Savior’s sheep hear His voice and follow Him.)
- According to verse 28, what will those who hear the Savior’s voice and follow Him receive?
- What principle can we learn from these verses? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **if we come to know the Good Shepherd’s voice and follow Him, He will lead us to eternal life.** Write this principle on the board under *Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd*. You may want to suggest that students write this principle in the margin of their scriptures next to John 10:27–28.)

Remind the class of the second blindfolded student and his or her ability to recognize classmates’ voices.

- What can we do to come to know the Savior’s voice? (See also D&C 18:34–36.)
- What have you done to become more familiar with the Savior’s voice?
- In what ways can we show that we follow the Savior?

Give students time to ponder how they can better hear the Savior’s voice and follow Him. In their scripture study journals, invite them to write either (1) a goal to listen more carefully for the Savior’s voice and specific ways they will do so or (2) a goal to better follow His voice and how they plan to do so.

Summarize John 10:31–42 by explaining that after the Savior testified that He and His Father are one, the Jewish leaders sought to stone Him for blasphemy. However, He responded to their accusation by quoting Psalm 82:6, which reads, “I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are the children of the most High.” The Savior then asked the Jews why they accused Him of blasphemy when He said He was the Son of God, given that the scriptures say we are children of God and can be gods ourselves.

Conclude by testifying of the truths and principles taught in John 10 and by encouraging students to apply them.

Home-Study Lesson

John 7–10 (Unit 14)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied John 7–10 (unit 14) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (John 7)

From the teachings of Jesus in Jerusalem during the Feast of the Tabernacles, students learned that if we do Heavenly Father's will, then we will receive a testimony of His doctrine. They also identified the principle that if we come unto Jesus Christ and believe on Him, then we will be filled with the Holy Ghost.

Day 2 (John 8)

From the account of the woman taken in adultery, students learned that acknowledging our own imperfections can help us avoid condemning others and that the Savior shows us mercy by giving us opportunities to repent. Students then learned that Jesus Christ is the Light of the World and that if we follow the Savior, we will avoid spiritual darkness and be filled with His light. They also learned the following principles: As we learn of Jesus Christ, we come to know the Father. If we continue in Jesus Christ's word, then we will be His disciples and know the truth, which will make us free. If we commit sin and do not repent, then we become the servants of sin. Jesus Christ is Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament.

Day 3 (John 9)

In John 9 students read about Jesus healing a man who was born blind. From this account they learned the following truths: God can use our adversities to show forth His works and power. As we remain true to what we know in spite of opposition, our testimonies will be strengthened. As we exercise faith in Jesus Christ, our spiritual vision and understanding become clearer.

Day 4 (John 10)

In this lesson students learned that, as the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ knows each of us and laid down His life for us. As the literal Son of God, Jesus Christ had power to lay down His life and take it up again. Students also identified the principle that if we come to know the Good Shepherd's voice and follow Him, He will lead us to eternal life.

Introduction

While the Savior was in Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, some scribes and Pharisees brought a woman to Him who was guilty of adultery, and they asked whether she should be stoned. He confounded the accusers and showed mercy to the woman.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 8:1–11

A woman taken in adultery is brought before the Savior

Invite students to think of times when they may have encountered or associated with people whose appearance or behavior was not in harmony with the Lord's standards.

- What challenges might we face when we are with others whose appearance or behavior is not in harmony with the Lord's standards? (Students may respond that we may be tempted to judge such individuals unrighteously or treat them unkindly.)

Write the following question on the board:

What should we do in situations when we are with others whose appearance or behavior is not in harmony with the Lord's standards?

Encourage students to look for truths as they study John 8:1–11 that can help answer this question.

Explain that after the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus Christ remained in Jerusalem for a time and taught the people at the temple (see John 8:1–2).

Invite a student to read John 8:3–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened as Jesus taught the people.

- What happened as Jesus taught the people?
- What question did the scribes and Pharisees ask the Savior?
- According to verse 6, what was the scribes and Pharisees' intention? (They were seeking to discredit Jesus in front of the people and establish a reason to accuse Him because they wanted a reason to arrest Him and put Him to death [see John 7:1, 32].)

Explain that if Jesus said to stone the woman, He would have been endorsing a penalty that was unpopular among the Jewish people and prohibited by Roman law. If Jesus said not to stone the woman, He would be accused of disregarding the law of Moses or treating the accepted practices of the past disrespectfully. (See Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:450–51.)

Invite a student to read John 8:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior responded.

- According to verse 7, what was Jesus's response?

- What do you think the Savior wanted these men to realize when He said, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her”? (John 8:7).

Invite a student to read John 8:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened as the Pharisees and scribes considered the Savior’s statement.

- What do you think the phrase “convicted by their own conscience” means?
- What did these men acknowledge by choosing to walk away?
- What truth can we learn from this account about how to avoid condemning others? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **Acknowledging our own imperfections can help us avoid condemning others.** Write this principle under the question on the board.)
- How do you think acknowledging our own imperfections helps us avoid condemning others?

Remind students that this woman was guilty of adultery, which is an extremely serious sin (see Alma 39:3–5).

- What feelings do you think this woman may have had as her sin was exposed to Jesus and a large crowd of people?

Invite a student to read John 8:10–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior responded to this woman.

- In what way did the Savior show love and mercy to this woman?
- What instructions did the Savior give to the woman?

To help students understand that the Savior was not condoning this woman’s sin, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball:



“His command to her was, ‘Go, and sin no more.’ He was directing the sinful woman to go her way, *abandon her evil life, commit no more sin, transform her life.* He was saying, Go, woman, and start your repentance; and he was indicating to her the beginning step—to *abandon her transgressions*” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness* [1969], 165).

- What truth can we learn about the Savior from John 8:10–11? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **The Savior shows us mercy by giving us opportunities to repent.** Write this truth under the question on the board.)

- How can understanding this truth help us when we sin?
- How can the two truths we have identified in this lesson help us respond in situations when we are with others whose appearance or behavior is not in harmony with the Lord’s commandments and standards?

Share the following addition to the end of John 8:11 from the Joseph Smith Translation: “And the woman glorified God from that hour, and believed on his name” (Joseph Smith Translation, John 8:11 [in John 8:11, footnote c]).

- According to the Joseph Smith Translation of John 8:11, what effect did the Savior’s mercy have on the woman?

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals the feelings they have for the Savior because of His willingness to show us mercy and give us opportunities to repent. You may want to provide time for students to share what they wrote. Consider also sharing your testimony of the principles identified in this lesson.

Next Unit (John 11–15)

Encourage students to look for answers to the following questions as they study John 11–15: What would it be like to see someone raised from the dead? Why do the scriptures record that “Jesus wept”? (John 11:35). What did Jesus do for His Apostles that servants would normally do? What did the Savior promise His disciples they would receive to comfort them after He was gone?

LESSON 71

John 11

Introduction

Mary and Martha sent word to Jesus that their brother Lazarus was sick. Jesus delayed His journey and arrived four days after Lazarus had died. With love and compassion, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. This dramatic

display of divine power emphasized that Jesus was the chosen Messiah and had power over death. After learning of this miracle, the chief priests and Pharisees plotted to kill Jesus and Lazarus.

Reading long scripture passages in class

When asking students to read long scripture passages, consider inviting one student to read one verse and then asking that student to call on another student to read the following verse. This activity can continue throughout the lesson. Be careful not to embarrass those who do not read well or who are very shy. Students who prefer not to read aloud should not be forced to do so.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 11:1–46

Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead

Provide each student with a small piece of paper. Invite students to write on the paper a trial that they or someone they know has experienced. As students write, inform them that what they write will be shared anonymously with the class, so they should not write their names on their papers. Gather the papers, and read aloud some of the trials. (To avoid the possibility of students being identified with certain trials, if you have only a few students, ask students to list several trials that they have seen others experience.)

- What are some ways people’s faith in Jesus Christ may be affected as they experience trials?

Invite students to look for truths as they study John 11 that can help us increase our faith in Jesus Christ as we experience trials.

Invite a student to read John 11:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a trial some friends of Jesus experienced.

- According to verse 1, what trial did Lazarus experience? How might this have also been a trial for Mary and Martha?
- What did Mary and Martha do because of Lazarus’s sickness? What does this response indicate about them?

Point out that Jesus was in Bethabara of Perea (see John 1:28; 10:40), which was approximately a day’s journey from Bethany. Therefore, it would have taken at least one day for a person to bring this message to Jesus and another day for Jesus to travel to Bethany.

Invite a student to read John 11:4–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the way Jesus responded after hearing of Lazarus’s sickness.

- Knowing that Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, what might the disciples have expected Jesus to do once He heard of Lazarus’s sickness? (Immediately travel to Bethany and heal Lazarus; or perhaps speak and heal him from a distance, as Jesus had done for a nobleman’s son [see John 4:46–53].)
- What did Jesus do instead?
- According to verse 4, what did Jesus say would be accomplished through Lazarus’s sickness?

Remind students that Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem in the land of Judea (see John 11:18). Summarize John 11:8–10 by explaining that some of the disciples advised Jesus not to return to Judea because the Jewish leaders in that region sought to kill Him (see John 10:31–39 and Joseph Smith Translation, John 11:16 [in John 11:16, footnote *a*]). Jesus responded by indicating that He would use the time remaining in His life to do His work without faltering.

Invite a student to read John 11:11–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus said about Lazarus’s condition.

- What did the disciples mistakenly believe Jesus said about Lazarus’s condition?

- According to verse 15, why was Jesus glad He was not there to heal Lazarus of his sickness? (Invite students to consider marking the statement “to the intent ye may believe” in their scriptures.)

Point out that the Savior indicated that what He would do in Bethany would help His disciples increase their faith in Him.

Summarize John 11:16 by explaining that the Apostle Thomas encouraged his fellow disciples to join him in going with Jesus to Judea even if it meant dying with Him.


Invite students to read John 11:17 silently, looking for how long Lazarus had been dead by the time Jesus arrived in Bethany. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for the significance of Lazarus having been dead for four days.

“Decomposition was well under way; death had long since been established as an absolute certainty. . . . To the Jews the term of four days had special significance; it was the popular belief among them that by the fourth day the spirit had finally and irrevocably departed from the vicinity of the corpse” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:533).

- To the Jews, what was the significance of a person being dead for four days?
- If you were Martha or Mary, what might you have been thinking or feeling when Jesus didn’t arrive until Lazarus had been dead for four days?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from John 11:18–27. Ask the class to look for what Martha said to Jesus regarding this trial.


 Instead of asking students to read, you could show them the depiction of this conversation between the Savior and Martha in the video “Lazarus Is Raised from the Dead” from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos* [time code 2:02–3:35]. This video is available on LDS.org.

- Which statements in verses 21–27 indicate that Martha chose to exercise faith in Jesus Christ during this trial? (If you showed the video, you may want to give students one minute to review these verses.)
- Which of Martha’s statements impresses you most? Why?
- What can we learn from Martha’s example about what we can do during trials we experience? (Students may identify a principle such as the following: **We can choose to exercise faith in Jesus Christ during our trials.**)

Direct students’ attention to John 11:25–26. Explain that the phrase “never die” (John 11:26) refers to the second or spiritual death, or separation from the presence and kingdom of God.

- What truths do we learn from the Savior’s statement to Martha? (Students may identify truths such as the following: **Jesus Christ is the Resurrection and the Life. If we believe in Jesus Christ, we can obtain eternal life.**)


Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from John 11:28–36. Ask the class to look for what Mary said to Jesus and how He responded. You may need to explain that “groan” in these verses means to grieve or be distressed.

 Instead of having students read, you could show the depiction of these verses in the video “Lazarus Is Raised from the Dead” [time code 3:36–4:50].

- How does Mary’s statement in verse 32 reflect her faith in the Savior?
- How did Jesus respond when He saw the weeping of Mary and of those with her?
- Why do you think Jesus wept?

Invite students to read John 11:37 silently, looking for what some people wondered regarding what Jesus could have done for Lazarus. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from John 11:38–46. Ask the class to look for what the Savior did next.

 Instead of having students read, you could show the depiction of these verses in the video “Lazarus Is Raised from the Dead” [time code 4:51–7:51].

- In verse 40, what did Jesus remind Martha of after she questioned removing the stone covering Lazarus’s grave?

- How was this promise fulfilled? (You may need to explain that Lazarus was not resurrected from the dead and was not immortal; his spirit body was brought back to his physical body, but his physical body was still mortal.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie. Ask the class to listen for an important purpose the Savior accomplished through raising Lazarus from the dead.

“He was setting the stage, so as to dramatize for all time, one of his greatest teachings: That he was the resurrection and the life, that immortality and eternal life came by him, and that those who believed and obeyed his words should never die spiritually” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:531).

- How did this miracle foreshadow the Savior’s Resurrection?
- How did this miracle manifest His power to provide immortality and eternal life?
- How can we be blessed by understanding the Savior’s power to provide immortality and eternal life?

Remind the class that Martha and Mary initially demonstrated faith in Jesus Christ by sending for Him when Lazarus was sick and continued to believe and trust in Him even after Lazarus died. Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we choose to exercise faith in Jesus Christ during our trials, then . . .*

- How would you complete this principle based on what we have learned from John 11? (After students respond, complete the statement on the board so that it reads as follows: **If we choose to exercise faith in Jesus Christ during our trials, then our faith in Him will be confirmed and deepened.**)

Remind students that some people wondered if Jesus could have prevented Lazarus from dying (see verse 37), yet Jesus waited to arrive in Bethany until Lazarus had been dead for four days (see verse 17).

- How might bringing Lazarus back to life after he had been dead for four days have confirmed and deepened Jesus’s disciples’ and Martha’s and Mary’s faith in the Savior? (In raising Lazarus from the dead after four days, Jesus showed that He has power over death in a way that Jews could not deny or misinterpret.)
- When have you chosen to exercise faith in Jesus Christ during a trial and had your faith in Him confirmed or deepened as a result?

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they will do to help themselves choose to exercise faith in Jesus Christ during trials they are experiencing or may experience.

John 11:47–57

The chief priests and Pharisees counsel together to kill Jesus

Invite a student to read John 11:47–48 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the way the chief priests and Pharisees responded to reports of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. Ask students to report what they find.

Summarize John 11:49–57 by explaining that Caiaphas, the high priest, advocated that Jesus should be killed to prevent their nation’s destruction by the Romans. He also unwittingly prophesied of the effects the death of Jesus would have on God’s children. The Jewish leaders determined to put Jesus to death and commanded that those knowing of His whereabouts should notify them so He could be taken.

Conclude by testifying of the truths discussed in this lesson.

LESSON 72

John 12

Introduction

Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, anointed Jesus's feet as a symbol of His impending burial. The next day Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem

and foretold of His death. Despite Jesus's miracles, some people did not believe in Him. He taught of the consequences of believing and of not believing in Him.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 12:1–19

Mary anoints Jesus's feet, and Jesus makes His triumphal entry into Jerusalem

Invite several students to draw on the board a depiction of one of the Savior's miracles recorded in the New Testament. After each student finishes drawing, invite the class to guess the miracle depicted. Ask the student who drew it to explain why he or she chose to depict this miracle.

Ask students to ponder how witnessing one of these miracles might influence their belief in the Savior. Invite them to look as they study John 12 for different ways in which people may respond to the miracles of the Savior, as well as for truths that can help us understand these responses.

Summarize John 12:1–9 by explaining that six days before the Passover, Jesus ate supper with some friends in Bethany. Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, anointed Jesus's feet with expensive ointment. Many people heard that Jesus was in Bethany and came to see Him and Lazarus, whom Jesus had previously raised from the dead.

Invite a student to read John 12:10–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the chief priests wanted to do to Lazarus. You may need to point out that raising Lazarus had been indisputable evidence that Jesus Christ had power over death.

- What did the chief priests want to do to Lazarus? Why?
- How do these verses help us understand the wickedness of these chief priests and Pharisees? (You may want to remind students that these Jewish leaders also wanted to kill the Savior [see John 11:47–48, 53].)

Summarize John 12:12–16 by explaining that the day after Mary anointed Jesus's feet, He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. (The details of the triumphal entry were initially taught in Matthew 21:1–11.)

Invite a student to read John 12:17–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what people who had heard about Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead did during the Savior's triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

- What did these people do during the Savior's triumphal entry into Jerusalem?
- According to verse 19, how did the Pharisees respond to what was taking place?

John 12:20–36

Jesus foretells His death

Summarize John 12:20–26 by explaining that “certain Greeks” (verse 20)—possibly converts to Judaism—had come to Jerusalem to observe the Passover and requested to visit with Jesus. When Jesus learned of their request, He taught about His approaching suffering, death, and Resurrection. Invite students to read John 12:27–33 silently, looking for what Jesus taught about His Atonement. You may want to invite students to mark what they find.

- According to verse 27, what was Jesus willing to do even though His “soul [was] troubled”? (Even though He sensed the weight of His impending suffering, Jesus resolved to move forward in accomplishing His purpose.)

- According to verse 28, what did Jesus pray for? How did Heavenly Father respond? (Explain that “I . . . will glorify it again” reflects Heavenly Father’s full confidence in His Son that He will complete the Atonement.)
- How do Jesus’s words recorded in verse 32 relate to His Atonement?

Explain that after hearing Jesus’s teachings, the people said that they had learned from the scriptures that the Messiah would never die, and they asked who the “Son of man” was who would be “lifted up” (John 12:34).

Invite a student to read John 12:35–36 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Jesus answered their questions.

- What did Jesus say in response to the people’s questions? (The Savior referred to Himself as “the light.”)

John 12:37–50

Jesus teaches the consequences of believing in and not believing in Him

Direct students’ attention to the drawings on the board depicting some of Jesus’s miracles. Invite one student to read John 12:11 aloud and another student to read John 12:37 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for different ways people responded to the miracles Jesus had performed.

- How did people respond to Jesus’s miracles?
- What truth can we learn from these different reactions about the relationship between miracles and believing in Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **miracles alone do not cause us to believe in Jesus Christ.**)
- Although miracles alone do not cause us to believe in Jesus Christ, how can they influence our faith in Him?
- Why do you think some people believe in Jesus Christ after seeing or learning of His miracles when others do not?

Summarize John 12:38–41 by explaining that the fact that some people chose to not believe in Jesus fulfilled prophecies made by the prophet Isaiah (see Isaiah 6:9–10; 53:1–3). In spite of the Savior’s mighty works, some people chose to blind their eyes and harden their hearts against Him.

Invite a student to read John 12:42–43 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why some of the Jewish leaders who did believe in Jesus did not “confess” (verse 42), or openly acknowledge, their belief.

- Why did some chief rulers not openly acknowledge their belief in Jesus?
- What does it mean to love “the praise of men more than the praise of God”? (verse 43).
- What principle can we learn from these verses? (Help students identify a principle similar to the following: **Caring more about pleasing others than pleasing God can prevent us from openly acknowledging our belief in Jesus Christ and His gospel.**)

To help students understand this principle, ask:

- What are some examples of this principle in our day?
- What are appropriate ways to show we believe in Jesus Christ and His gospel?
- What positive consequences can come from showing we believe in Jesus Christ and His gospel?

To prepare students to identify a principle taught in John 12:44–46, ask them to think of a time when they could not see because of physical darkness (for example, a time when they were inside a dark room or were outside at night). Invite a few students to describe their experiences, including how they felt, whether they were in any potential danger, and how having light would have helped them.

If appropriate, turn off the lights in the room but still provide some light. Point out that physical darkness can help us understand what spiritual darkness can be like.

- How is being in physical darkness similar to being in spiritual darkness?
- What dangers can come from living in spiritual darkness?

Invite a student to read John 12:44–46 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how those who believe in Jesus Christ can be blessed.

- According to John 12:46, how can those who believe in Jesus Christ be blessed? (After students respond, turn on the lights in the room if you turned them off earlier. Using students' words, write the following principle on the board: **If we believe in Jesus Christ, we do not have to live in spiritual darkness.**)
- How is Jesus Christ a light? How can believing in Him remove spiritual darkness from a person's life? (See also D&C 50:23–25; 93:36–39.)

To help students understand how Jesus Christ dispels spiritual darkness by providing light (or direction and clarity) in our lives, divide students into groups of two or three. Provide each group with a copy of the following handout:

Jesus Christ Dispels Spiritual Darkness by Providing Light

For each of the following topics, discuss the following questions:

- What might people in spiritual darkness believe about this topic?
- What light do Jesus Christ and His gospel provide about this topic?

Topics:

- The purpose of our physical bodies
- Entertainment and media
- Obtaining peace and happiness
- Marriage and family
- Life after death

As a class, discuss one of the topics listed on the handout, using the accompanying questions. Then invite students to take several minutes to discuss the remaining topics using these questions. (You may want to replace some of these topics with ones that are more relevant to your students.)

After sufficient time, invite a student from each group to select one of the handout topics and report on the group's discussion of this topic. Then ask the class:

- How can the principle we identified in verse 46 help us understand why we might see certain topics and issues differently than other people?
- In what situations has the light provided by Jesus Christ and His gospel helped you?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Gerrit W. Gong of the Seventy, in which he testified of blessings that come from choosing to believe in and follow Jesus Christ:

"Belief is a choice [see Mosiah 4:9]. . . .

"When we choose to believe, we understand and see things in a different way. When we see and live that way, we are happy and joyful in a way that only the gospel can bring" ("Choose Goodness and Joy," *New Era*, Aug. 2011, 44).

Summarize John 12:47–50 by explaining that Jesus taught that those who do not believe His words and who reject Him will be judged by the words He has spoken, which are the words Heavenly Father gave Him to speak.

Share your testimony of the blessings you have experienced as a result of choosing to believe in Jesus Christ and His gospel. Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how they will apply one of the principles they have learned. Encourage students to choose to believe in Jesus Christ.

Small group discussions and assignments

Small group activities can often allow a greater number of students to participate in the lesson and can provide a safe environment in which students can share their feelings, thoughts, and testimonies with each other. Students can be better prepared to complete some group activities if you first guide them through an example of the task they should complete in their groups.

LESSON 73

John 13

Introduction

After eating the Passover meal, Jesus washed His Apostles' feet and identified Judas as His betrayer. Despite the turbulence of the final week of His mortal ministry,

Jesus focused His teachings on obedience, service, and love—attributes that defined His life and should define the lives of His disciples in all ages.

Have confidence in the power of the word

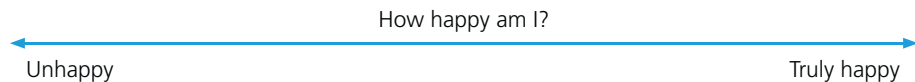
You may be tempted to believe that students will not like studying the scriptures, or that you cannot teach the scriptures day after day and maintain students' interest. Remember, however, that the scriptures contain "the words of life" (D&C 84:85) and that the word has a "more powerful effect upon the [mind] . . . than the sword, or anything else" (Alma 31:5).

Suggestions for Teaching

John 13:1–17

Jesus washes His Apostles' feet

Before class, copy the following diagram on the board:



Read the following questions aloud, and invite students to ponder how they would answer (explain that they do not need to answer aloud):

- Where would you place yourself on this continuum?
- Would you like to be happier than you currently are?
- Can you think of someone whom you would like to help become happier?

Invite students to look for a principle as they study John 13 that will help them know what they can do to be happier.

To help students understand the context of John 13, remind them that Jesus celebrated the Passover feast with His Apostles. Summarize John 13:1–3 by explaining that as Jesus shared this last supper with His Apostles before His Crucifixion, He knew that He would soon be killed and return to His Heavenly Father.

Invite a student to read John 13:4–5 aloud, and ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus did after He and His Apostles finished eating the Passover meal. Explain that the phrase "laid aside his garments" in verse 4 means that Jesus took off an outer garment, similar to someone removing a jacket in our day.

- What service did the Savior perform for His disciples?

Explain that "in New Testament times, people wore open sandals, walked on mostly dirt roads that accumulated the filth of beasts, and had only irregular access to bathing water. Their feet became very dirty, and washing another person's feet could have been a distasteful task. . . . This custom of hospitality was usually performed by the lowest level of servants" (*New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 242). During this final supper, "Christ quietly arose, girded himself as a slave or servant would, and knelt to wash the Apostles' feet" (Jeffrey R. Holland, "He Loved Them unto the End," *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 25).

Show the picture *Jesus Washing the Apostles' Feet* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 55; see also LDS.org).

- If you had been there when Jesus washed His Apostles' feet, how might you have reacted if Jesus started washing your feet?
- What does the act of washing His Apostles' feet reveal about Jesus's character?

Invite a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, John 13:8 (in the Bible appendix). Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter said when the Savior began to wash his feet.

- According to Joseph Smith Translation, John 13:8, what did Peter say when the Savior began to wash his feet?



Invite a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, John 13:9–10 (in the Bible appendix). Ask the class to follow along, looking for Peter’s response to what the Lord told him.

- What do we learn about Peter from his response, recorded in verse 9, to what the Lord told him? (Peter respected the Lord and wanted to follow Him completely.)

Explain that by washing His Apostles’ feet, the Savior not only performed a beautiful act of service, but He also fulfilled the law of Moses and instituted a sacred ordinance (see Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:708–9). This ordinance was restored in our dispensation through the Prophet Joseph Smith (see D&C 88:74–75, 137–41).

Invite a student to read John 13:11 aloud, and ask the class to follow along, looking for why Jesus said the Apostles were “clean, but not all.”

- Who was the Savior referring to when He said the Apostles were “clean, but not all”? (Judas Iscariot, who would shortly betray Him.)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from John 13:12–17. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior taught His Apostles after He washed their feet.

- According to verses 13–16, what example did the Savior set and invite His Apostles to follow? (Even though the Savior was “Master and Lord” [verse 13] and the greatest of all, He served others.)
- Based on the Savior’s promise to His Apostles recorded in verse 17, what blessing will we receive as we follow His example by serving others? (Using their own words, students should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we follow the Savior’s example by serving others, we will be happier.**)
- Why do you think we will be happier if we serve others as the Savior did?

Ask students to think of a time when they were happier because they followed the Savior’s example by serving others. Invite several students to share their experiences with the class. You may want to share one of your own.

To help students learn one way they could apply this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“In your morning prayer each new day, ask Heavenly Father to guide you to recognize an opportunity to serve one of His precious children. Then go throughout the day with your heart full of faith and love, looking for someone to help. If you do this, your spiritual sensitivities will be enlarged and you will discover opportunities to serve that you never before realized were possible” (“Be Anxiously Engaged,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 31).

- According to Elder Ballard, how can we find opportunities to serve others?

Encourage students to follow the Savior’s example by serving others. Consider inviting students to be prepared during the next few class sessions to report their experiences serving others.

John 13:18–30

Jesus identifies His betrayer

Summarize John 13:18–30 by explaining that after Jesus taught His Apostles that they would be happy if they served others, He said that one of them would betray Him. When John asked Jesus who would betray Him, Jesus indicated that one of His Apostles (Judas) would betray Him.

John 13:31–38

Jesus teaches His disciples to love one another

Ask students if someone has ever accused them of not being Christians, or true disciples of Jesus Christ, because they are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. If any students raise their hands, ask how they responded to the accusation that they are not Christian. If no one has had this experience, ask:

- How would you respond if someone told you that you are not a Christian?

Invite a student to read John 13:34–35 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior said would help others recognize that the Apostles were disciples of Jesus Christ.

- According to verse 34, what commandment did Jesus give His Apostles?
- According to verse 35, what would others know if the Apostles loved one another as Jesus loved them?
- What principle can we learn from the Savior’s teachings to His Apostles? (Using their own words, students should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we love one another as Jesus Christ loves us, others will know that we are His disciples.**)
- According to what you have studied this year about Jesus Christ, in what ways does He show that He loves people?

To help students feel the truth and importance of the principle they just identified, invite a student to read aloud the following account, which was related by Elder Paul E. Koelliker of the Seventy:



“Two young missionaries knocked on a door, hoping to find someone to receive their message. The door opened, and a rather large man greeted them in a less-than-friendly voice: ‘I thought I told you not to knock on my door again. I warned you before that if you ever came back, it would not be a pleasant experience. Now leave me alone.’ He quickly closed the door.

“As the elders walked away, the older, more experienced missionary put his arm on the younger missionary’s shoulder to comfort and encourage him. Unknown to them, the man watched them through the window to be sure they understood his message. He fully expected to see them laugh and make light of his curt response to their attempted visit. However, as he witnessed the expression of kindness between the two missionaries, his heart was instantly softened. He reopened the door and asked the missionaries to come back and share their message with him.

“. . . This principle of having love one to another and developing our ability to be Christ-centered in how we think, speak, and act is fundamental in becoming disciples of Christ” (“He Truly Loves Us,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 17).

- How did the missionaries described in this account follow the Lord’s counsel to love one another?

Invite students to sing “Love One Another” (*Hymns*, no. 308), and ask them to think about someone they know who is easily recognizable as a disciple of Jesus Christ because of the love he or she shows to others. After singing the hymn, invite students to share the names of the persons they thought of and to explain specific ways those persons show their love for others. Consider telling the class about someone you thought of as well.

Encourage students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they will do to better love others as the Savior loves them.

Summarize John 13:36–38 by explaining that after Peter declared that he would lay down his life for Jesus Christ, Jesus told Peter that he would deny Jesus three times before the rooster crowed.

Scripture Mastery Review

Lead students in a scripture chase by using clues to help them practice quickly locating passages in their scriptures. For clues, you could use key words, context statements, doctrines and principles, and application ideas from the scripture mastery cards. You could also make up your own clues. Scripture chase activities in which students race to locate passages can help them actively engage in learning scripture mastery passages. When using scripture chase activities, do them in a way that does not cause hurt feelings or offend the Spirit. Help students avoid treating their scriptures irreverently or being overly competitive. Also consider inviting students to compete against a standard rather than against each other. For example, students could race against the teacher, or they could race to see if a certain percentage of the class can find a particular passage in a specified amount of time.

LESSON 74

John 14

Introduction

Following the Passover meal, Jesus taught His Apostles how to return to Heavenly Father and how to show their

love for the Savior. Jesus then promised His Apostles that He would send them another Comforter.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 14:1–14

The Savior teaches His Apostles how to return to Heavenly Father

If possible, display a map of your city and invite students to identify their current location on it. On the map, identify another place students are familiar with. Ask them to write down on a piece of paper how to get from their current location to that place. Invite one or two students to report what they wrote.

Write *Celestial Kingdom* on the board. Ask students to consider the directions they would give to someone who wants to know how to reach the celestial kingdom.

Invite students to look for a truth as they study John 14 that could help them know how to return to Heavenly Father and enter the celestial kingdom.

To help students understand the context of John 14, remind them that the Savior observed the Passover with His Apostles in an upper room in Jerusalem. Following the Passover meal, Jesus told His disciples He would soon be leaving them (see John 13:33).

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from John 14:1–5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus taught His Apostles to help comfort them.

- What did Jesus teach His Apostles to help comfort them?
- What do you think the phrase “in my Father’s house are many mansions” in verse 2 means?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith:



“[The statement] ‘In my Father’s house are many mansions’ . . . should be—‘In my Father’s kingdom are many kingdoms,’ in order that ye may be heirs of God and joint-heirs with me. . . . There are mansions for those who obey a celestial law, and there are other mansions for those who come short of the law, every man in his own order” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 219).

You may want to suggest that students write the words *kingdom* and *kingdoms* in their scriptures above the words *house* and *mansions* in John 14:2.

- Which teachings in John 14:1–4 might have been comforting to the Apostles?
- According to verse 5, how did Thomas respond to the Savior’s teaching that His Apostles knew the way to Heavenly Father’s kingdom?

Invite a student to read John 14:6 aloud, and ask the class to look for Jesus’s response to Thomas’s question.

- How did Jesus respond to Thomas’s question?

Draw a path on the board. At one end of the path write *Us*, and at the other end write *Heavenly Father’s Kingdom*. Write *The Way* under the path, and point out that this phrase refers to the path that leads from one place to another.

- How is the Savior the Way? (Students might respond that the Savior shows us how to live in order to become like God and how to be worthy to dwell in Heavenly Father’s presence.)

Write *The Truth* and *The Life* on the board under “The Way.”

- In what ways is Jesus Christ the Truth? (He is the source of all truth and lived all truth perfectly.)



John 14:6

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

- In what ways is Jesus the Life? (He makes it possible for us to overcome physical death and be resurrected with immortal physical bodies and to overcome spiritual death to obtain eternal life. He is “the light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things” [D&C 88:13].)

Under the drawing of the path on the board, write *Jesus Christ Is* next to “The Way.”

- Based on what we have discussed, how would you summarize the meaning of the Savior’s statement that “no man cometh unto the Father, but by me”? (John 14:6). (Students may use different words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **Only through the Atonement of Jesus Christ and by following His way can we enter Heavenly Father’s kingdom.**)
- What will happen if we try to follow a way that is not the Savior’s way?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Lawrence E. Corbridge of the Seventy. Ask the class to listen for what will happen if we try to follow a way that is not the Savior’s way.



“There is only one way to happiness and fulfillment. He is the Way. Every other way, any other way, whatever other way, is foolishness. . . .

“ . . . We can either follow the Lord and be endowed with His power and have peace, light, strength, knowledge, confidence, love, and joy, or we can go some other way, any other way, whatever other way, and go it alone—without His support, without His power, without guidance, in darkness, turmoil, doubt, grief, and despair. And I ask, which way is easier? . . .

“There is only one way to happiness and fulfillment. Jesus Christ is the Way” (“The Way,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 34, 36).

- According to Elder Corbridge, what will happen if we do not follow the Savior’s way?
- What will happen if we follow the Savior’s way?

Ask students to ponder experiences they have had in which they were blessed by following the Savior’s way. Invite a few of them to share their experiences.

Summarize John 14:7–14 by explaining that the Savior taught His Apostles that one of His purposes in coming to earth was to reveal through His words and deeds the true nature of Heavenly Father. He also promised His Apostles that they would have power to do great works.

John 14:15–31

Jesus teaches His Apostles how to show their love for Him

Ask students to think of someone they love.

- How do you show your love for this person?

Invite a student to read John 14:15 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Jesus told His Apostles to do to show their love for Him.

- Based on what Jesus taught His Apostles, what can we do to show our love for Jesus Christ? (Students should identify the following truth: **We show our love for Jesus Christ by keeping His commandments.**)


Bring to class several slips of paper with commandments written on them (such as obeying the Word of Wisdom, paying tithing, and keeping the Sabbath day holy). Invite several students to come to the front of the class. Instruct each one to take a slip of paper, read the commandment aloud, and explain how keeping that commandment allows us to show our love for Jesus Christ. Afterward, invite them to return to their seats.

Invite students to ponder how well they are showing their love for the Savior by keeping His commandments. Encourage them to set a goal to show their love for the Savior by better keeping one or more commandments that might be difficult for them.

Invite a student to read John 14:16–17, 26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Savior’s promise to His Apostles.

- What did the Savior promise His Apostles?

Explain that the phrase “another Comforter” in verse 16 refers to the Holy Ghost. Because the Savior had been a comforter to His Apostles during His mortal ministry, He called the Holy Ghost *another* Comforter.

 **John 14:15** is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

- According to John 14:16–17, 26, what can the Holy Ghost do for us? (Using their own words, students should identify the following truth: **The Holy Ghost can comfort us, teach us all things, and bring all things to our remembrance.**)

Invite students to record their answers to the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- When have you felt the Holy Ghost comfort you? When have you felt Him teach you? When has He helped you remember things?

After sufficient time, ask for a few volunteers to share what they wrote.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from John 14:18–23.

- According to verses 21 and 23, how will we be blessed if we keep the commandments? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we keep the commandments, Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ will be with us.**)
- What do you think it means that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ will be with us? (This refers to a personal appearance of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ [see D&C 130:3].)

Explain that the Prophet Joseph Smith taught that while the Holy Ghost is referred to as the First Comforter, Jesus Christ is the Second Comforter. To receive Him as the Second Comforter, we must first develop faith in Him, repent, be baptized, receive the Holy Ghost, and strive to be righteous and serve God. If we do these things, eventually we “will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend [us], or appear unto [us] from time to time, . . . and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto [us], and the Lord will teach [us] face to face” (in *History of the Church*, 3:380–81). This promise will be fulfilled according to the Lord’s will and timing (see D&C 88:68).

Invite students to read John 14:27 silently, looking for the Savior’s message to His Apostles.

- How does the Savior’s message in verse 27 relate to the principles we have identified in this lesson?
- What is the difference between the peace the Savior offers and the peace the world offers?

Summarize John 14:28–30 and Joseph Smith Translation, John 14:30 (in verse 30, footnote *a*) by explaining that Jesus told His Apostles they should rejoice because He was about to leave them to return to Heavenly Father. He also told them that Satan had no power over Him because He had overcome the world. Jesus told the Apostles that Satan could still influence them because they had not yet completed their work on the earth.

Invite students to read John 14:31 silently, looking for what the Savior wanted the world to know.

- What did the Savior want the world to know?
- How did the Savior show His love for Heavenly Father?

To conclude, invite students to testify of how the principles in this lesson can help them as they try to return to God’s presence in the celestial kingdom.

Scripture Mastery—John 14:6

To help students memorize John 14:6, consider using one of the ideas in the appendix of this manual.

Scripture Mastery—John 14:15

To help students memorize John 14:15, invite them to write this verse on a slip of paper. Ask them to repeat the verse until they have it memorized. Then invite them to display this paper in a place where it will remind them to show their love for the Lord by keeping His commandments.

John 15

Introduction

On the final evening of His mortal ministry, after the Last Supper, the Savior taught His Apostles that He is the True Vine and that His disciples are the branches.

He commanded His disciples to love one another and warned them of the persecution they would experience because of their association with Him.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 15:1–11

Jesus explains that He is the True Vine

Before class, write on the board the words *successful, unhappy, joyful, dead, worthwhile, unproductive, fruitful, productive, abundant, and unsuccessful*.

Invite students to imagine themselves looking back on their lives 60 years from now.

- Which of these words would you like to describe your life? Why?

Draw a picture of a grapevine on the board. You might suggest that students duplicate the drawing in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Explain that Jesus used a metaphor of a grapevine to help His disciples understand how to have a fruitful, productive, and abundant life.



Invite a student to read John 15:1–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the elements of this metaphor represent.

- What does the vine represent? (Label the vine on the board *Jesus Christ*.)
- What do the branches represent? (Label the branches *Disciples of Jesus Christ*.)
- If Jesus Christ is the vine and we are the branches, what does the fruit represent? (The fruit can represent the righteous works and actions that Jesus Christ's disciples should produce. Label the fruit *Righteous works*.)

Point out the word *husbandman* in verse 1.

- What is a husbandman? (Someone who cares for a vineyard.)
- According to verses 1–2, how is Heavenly Father like a husbandman? (Explain that God the Father planted the true vine [Jesus Christ] from which all others would take nourishment.)

Show the class a small branch or twig that you have cut from a tree and explain how excited you are for the time when you will be able to pick some fruit from this branch and eat it. Ask the class when they think you will be able to eat the fruit from this branch.

- Why won't this branch produce any fruit? (Because it was cut off from the tree, it cannot receive nourishment to produce fruit.)

Invite a student to re-read John 15:4–5 aloud. Invite students to follow along, looking for what the Savior said is necessary for fruit to grow on a branch.

- What did Jesus say is necessary for fruit to grow on a branch? (The branch must "abide" in the vine.)
- How is this branch like someone who has been separated or cut off from the Savior?

Invite students to consider marking each instance of the words *abide* or *abideth* in verses 4–5. Explain that the word *abide* as used in these verses means to remain firmly and permanently attached to Jesus Christ and His Church (see Jeffrey R. Holland, "Abide in Me," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2004, 32).

- According to verse 5, what is the result of abiding in, or being firmly connected to, the Savior? (Jesus Christ's disciples will bring forth much fruit.)

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we keep the commandments, we will abide in the Savior's love and . . .*

To help the class understand one way Jesus Christ helps us keep the commandments and abide in His love, invite a student to read the following statement aloud:

“It is . . . through the grace of the Lord that individuals, through faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ and repentance of their sins, receive strength and assistance to do good works that they otherwise would not be able to maintain if left to their own means. This grace is an enabling power that allows men and women to lay hold on eternal life and exaltation after they have expended their own best efforts” (Bible Dictionary, “Grace”).

- What are some ways Jesus Christ strengthens us to keep the commandments?

Summarize John 15:6–8 by explaining that the Savior taught that those who do not abide in Him are like the branch that has been cut off. It withers and dies, but individuals who abide in Jesus Christ produce righteous works that glorify God.

- What can we do to abide in, or be firmly connected to, the Savior?

Invite a student to read John 15:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus taught His disciples to do and what blessings they would receive.

- What did Jesus teach His disciples to do?
- How does keeping the commandments allow us to abide in the Savior’s love? (Explain that while the Father and the Son love us with a perfect and everlasting love, keeping Their commandments allows us to receive a fulness of the blessings They lovingly desire to give us [see 1 Nephi 17:35; D&C 95:12; 130:20–21].)
- According to verse 11, why did Jesus teach His disciples to abide in Him and bring forth righteous works?

Ask students how they would complete the incomplete statement on the board as a principle based on what they read in verse 11. (Using students’ words, complete the statement on the board so that it conveys the following principle: **If we keep the commandments, we will abide in the Savior’s love and receive a fulness of joy.**)

- Why do you think abiding in the Savior allows us to receive a fulness of joy?

Ask students to think of someone they know who has joy because he or she abides in the Savior. Invite a few students to share about the person they thought of and to explain why that person is a good example of this principle. You might also consider inviting students to share how abiding in the Savior has brought them joy.

Invite students to ponder ways in which they can stay firmly connected to the Savior and thereby receive greater joy.

John 15:12–17

Jesus commands His disciples to love one another

Write on the board the following statement by President Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. (This statement is found in “The Mission and Ministry of Jesus Christ,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2013, 38.)

“Surely the best evidence of our adoration of Jesus is our emulation of Him” (President Russell M. Nelson).

Underline the words *adoration* and *emulation* in the statement on the board. Invite students to explain what the underlined words mean. (*Adoration* is great love and respect, and *emulation* means to imitate or copy.)

- Why do you think emulating Jesus is the best way to show that we love and respect Him?

Invite a student to read John 15:12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior asked us to emulate Him.

- What has Jesus commanded us to do? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **The Savior has commanded us to love one another as He loves us.** Encourage students to consider marking this truth in verse 12.)
- What do you think it means to love someone the way Jesus Christ loves you?

Invite students to read John 15:13–17 silently, looking for the way the Savior has loved us. After sufficient time, divide them into pairs and ask them to discuss with their partners what they found. Then ask the following questions:

- According to verse 13, what did the Savior say is the greatest manifestation of love?

Help students apply doctrines and principles

Students are more likely to apply doctrines and principles they have found in the scriptures when they feel their truth and importance through the Spirit and sense some urgency to incorporate them in their lives. One effective way to help students feel the truth and importance of doctrines and principles is to encourage them to reflect on and write about ways they can apply or live the truths they have learned.

- How did He demonstrate this kind of love?

To help students understand more about what it means to lay down our lives, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Claudio R. M. Costa of the Seventy:



“[Jesus Christ] gave us the supreme example of love when He declared, ‘Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends’ [John 15:13]. He later atoned for all our sins and finally gave His life for all of us.

“We can lay down our lives for those we love not by physically dying for them but rather by living for them—giving of our time; always being present in their lives; serving them; being courteous, affectionate, and showing true love

for those of our family and to all men—as the Savior taught” (“Don’t Leave for Tomorrow What You Can Do Today,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 74).

- According to Elder Costa, what are some ways we can lay down our lives for others?
- When has someone laid down his or her life in one of these ways for you?

Invite students to ponder the Savior’s commandment to love others as He loves us. Give them a few minutes to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals about someone they think the Savior would like them to show love for and a plan for how they will do so.

John 15:18–27***Jesus warns His disciples of the persecution they will experience for testifying of Him***

Explain that after the Savior taught His disciples about abiding in Him and showing love for one another, He taught them what would happen to them because of the special witness they had of Him and the responsibility to share it.

Invite a student to read John 15:18–20 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Jesus taught about how the world would treat His disciples. (Explain that in these verses, “the world” refers to people who are sinful and oppose God.)

- What did Jesus teach about how the world would treat His disciples?

You may want to point out to students that because “the world hateth” the Savior’s disciples, students will likely encounter anti-Mormon and hate-filled media and websites. Some students will face exclusion, ridicule, and intimidation through angry behavior, including cyberbullying.

If applicable, you might consider instructing students on how and where to find answers for hate-filled accusations against the Church. In addition to seeking help from trusted adults, students can find online resources at mormonnewsroom.org, lds.org/topics, and seektruth.lds.org.

Summarize John 15:21–25 by explaining that Jesus Christ affirmed that those who hate Him also hate the Father and that they will be held accountable for their choices.

Explain that despite others’ hatred and persecution of the Savior’s followers, Jesus Christ provided ways for the world to receive a testimony of Him. Invite students to read John 15:26–27 silently, looking for the witnesses who would testify of Jesus Christ to the world.

- Who did the Savior say would testify of His divinity? (The Holy Ghost and the Savior’s disciples.)

Invite students to ponder the principles and truths in this lesson. Encourage them to review what they have felt impressed to do and to follow the promptings they may have received from the Holy Ghost.

Home-Study Lesson

John 11–15 (Unit 15)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied John 11–15 (unit 15) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (John 11)

As students read about Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, they learned the following principles: We can choose to exercise faith in Jesus Christ during our trials. Jesus Christ is the Resurrection and the Life. If we believe in Jesus Christ, we can obtain eternal life. If we choose to exercise faith in Jesus Christ during our trials, then our faith in Him will be confirmed and deepened.

Day 2 (John 12)

In this lesson students studied about Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, anointing Jesus's feet and of the Savior's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. They also studied about the Savior's teachings in Jerusalem. From the Savior's teachings, students learned the following truths: Miracles alone do not cause us to believe in Jesus Christ. Caring more about pleasing others than pleasing God can prevent us from openly acknowledging our belief in Jesus Christ and His gospel. If we believe in Jesus Christ, we do not have to live in spiritual darkness.

Day 3 (John 13)

As students read the account of the Savior washing the feet of the Apostles, they learned the following truths: As we follow the Savior's example by serving others, we will be happier. As we love one another as Jesus Christ loves us, others will know that we are His disciples.

Day 4 (John 14–15)

In this lesson, students studied the teachings the Savior presented to His Apostles before He began His atoning sacrifice. They learned that only through the Atonement of Jesus Christ and by following His way can we enter Heavenly Father's kingdom. They also learned that we show our love for Jesus Christ by keeping His commandments and that the Holy Ghost can comfort us, teach us all things, and bring all things to our remembrance. As students studied about the vine and the branches, they learned that if we keep the commandments, we will abide in the Savior's love and receive a fulness of joy.

Introduction

This lesson can help students understand what they must do to return to Heavenly Father. Additionally, as students review the Lord's counsel as recorded in John 14, they can consider how they can better follow the Savior's way.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 14:1–14

The Savior teaches His Apostles how to return to Heavenly Father

If possible, display a map of your city and invite students to identify their current location on it. On the map, identify another place students are familiar with. Ask them to write down on a piece of paper how to get from their current location to that place. Invite one or two students to report what they wrote.

Write *Celestial Kingdom* on the board. Ask students to consider the directions they would give to someone who wants to know how to reach the celestial kingdom.

Remind students that as they studied John 14 in their daily lesson they learned a truth that could help them know how to return to Heavenly Father and enter the celestial kingdom. Explain that in this lesson they will learn more about that truth.

To help students understand the context of John 14, remind them that the Savior observed the Passover with His Apostles in an upper room in Jerusalem. Following the Passover meal, Jesus told His disciples He would soon be leaving them (see John 13:33).

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from John 14:1–5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus taught His Apostles to help comfort them.

Explain that Joseph Smith Translation, John 14:3 states, "And when I go, I will prepare a place for you, and come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, ye may be also."

- What did Jesus teach His Apostles to help comfort them?
- What do you think the phrase "in my Father's house are many mansions" (John 14:2) means?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith. Ask the class to listen for what he said the phrase means.



"[The statement] 'In my Father's house are many mansions' . . . should be—'In my Father's kingdom are many kingdoms,' in order that ye may be heirs of God and joint-heirs with me. . . . There are mansions for those who obey a celestial law, and there are other mansions for those who come short of the law, every man in his own order" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 219).

You may want to suggest that students write the words *kingdom* and *kingdoms* in their scriptures above the words *house* and *mansions* in John 14:2.

- Which teachings in John 14:1–4 might have been comforting to the Apostles?
- According to verse 5, how did Thomas respond to the Savior's teaching that His Apostles knew the way to Heavenly Father's kingdom?

Invite a student to read John 14:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Jesus's response to Thomas's question. Remind them that this is a scripture mastery passage.

- How did Jesus respond to Thomas's question?

Draw a path on the board. At one end of the path write *Us*, and at the other end write *Heavenly Father's Kingdom*. Write *The Way* under the path, and point out that this phrase refers to the path that leads from one place to another.

- How is the Savior the Way? (Students might respond that the Savior shows us how to live in order to become like God and how to be worthy to dwell in Heavenly Father's presence.)

Write *The Truth* and *The Life* on the board under "The Way."

- In what ways is Jesus Christ the Truth? (He is the source of all truth and lived all truth perfectly.)
- In what ways is Jesus the Life? (He makes it possible for us to overcome physical death and be resurrected with immortal physical bodies and to overcome spiritual death to obtain eternal life. He is "the light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things" [D&C 88:13].)

Under the drawing of the path on the board, write *Jesus Christ is* next to "The Way."

- Based on what we have discussed and what you learned in your daily lesson, how would you summarize the meaning of the Savior's statement that "no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"? (John 14:6). (Students may use different words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **Only through the Atonement of Jesus Christ and by following His way can we enter Heavenly Father's kingdom.**)
- What will happen if we try to follow a way that is not the Savior's way?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Lawrence E. Corbridge of the Seventy. Ask the class to listen for what will happen if we try to follow a way that is not the Savior's way.



"Jesus Christ is the Way. He is Light and Life, Bread and Water, the Beginning and the End, the Resurrection and the Life, the Savior of the world, the Truth, and the Way.

"There is only one way to happiness and fulfillment. He is the Way. Every other way, any other way, whatever other way, is foolishness. . . .

"The Lord's way is not hard. Life is hard, not the gospel. 'There is an opposition in all things' [2 Nephi 2:11], everywhere, for everyone. Life is hard for all of us, but life is also simple. We have only two choices. We can either follow the Lord and be endowed with His power and have peace, light, strength, knowledge, confidence, love, and joy, or we can go some other way, any other way, whatever other way, and go it alone—without His support, without His power, without guidance, in darkness, turmoil, doubt, grief, and despair. And I ask, which way is easier? . . .

"There is only one way to happiness and fulfillment. Jesus Christ is the Way" ("The Way," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 34, 36).

- According to Elder Corbridge, what will happen if we do not follow the Savior's way?
- What will happen if we follow the Savior's way?
- What is the Savior's way? (If needed, remind students that the Savior's way includes developing faith in Him and Heavenly Father; repenting; receiving the ordinances of salvation, such as baptism and temple ordinances; and enduring to the end in faith and obedience.)

Ask students to ponder experiences they have had in which they were blessed by following the Savior's way. Invite a few of them to share their experiences.

Invite students to consider how well they are following the Savior's way. Ask them to think of one way in which they can better follow the Savior and to set a goal to implement that action.

Summarize John 14:7–14 by explaining that the Savior taught His Apostles that one of His purposes in coming to earth was to reveal through His words and deeds the true nature of Heavenly Father. He also promised His Apostles that they would have power to do great works.

Next Unit (John 16–21)

Invite students to look for answers to the following questions as they complete their study of the Gospel of John: What did Jesus say to His mother while He hung on the cross? Who was the first person Jesus Christ appeared to after He was resurrected? Who refused to believe others' testimonies that Jesus had been resurrected? Invite students to imagine what the Savior would say to His disciples who had been witnesses of Him and of His Resurrection but who then decided to go back to their old jobs instead of preaching the gospel. Ask them to look in the next unit for what the Savior said to those disciples.

LESSON 76

John 16

Introduction

After the Passover meal, Jesus Christ continued to teach His disciples. He told them that He would soon go to His Father and that the Holy Ghost, or the Comforter, would

come and guide them into all truth. Jesus prophesied of His own death and Resurrection and proclaimed that He had overcome the world.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 16:1–15

Jesus expounds on the role of the Holy Ghost

Invite a student to come to the front of the room. Place a blindfold around the student's head, covering the eyes so the student cannot see. After the student is blindfolded, invite the other students to place their sets of scriptures somewhere in the room. Then ask the blindfolded student how difficult it might be to find a specific set of scriptures in the room and open it to a specific page. Ask the student if it would be helpful if someone was willing to guide him or her to the book.

Invite the blindfolded student to choose another student to act as a guide. Invite the selected student to lead the blindfolded student to a designated set of scriptures and to help him or her find a specific page. After these tasks are complete, explain that when Jesus Christ was on the earth, He tutored and taught His disciples. He personally led them to understand the truths He taught.

Summarize John 16:1–4 by explaining that after Jesus had eaten the Passover meal with His disciples, He told them that the time would come when people would hate them and that these people would believe they were doing a service to God by killing them.

Invite a student to read John 16:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus told His disciples and how they felt about it.

- How were the disciples feeling about the news that Jesus would go away and that they would be persecuted?

Invite the student who was serving as the guide to the blindfolded student to return to his or her seat. Ask the blindfolded student:

- How would it feel to be alone again without a friend to help you?

Provide a chair for the blindfolded student, and invite him or her to sit down (but leave the blindfold on).

Invite a student to read John 16:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom Jesus promised to send after He was gone.

- Whom did Jesus promise would come after He departed? (Jesus would send the Comforter, or the Holy Ghost.)

Explain that the word *expedient*, as used in verse 7, means beneficial or profitable. Point out that “the Holy Ghost did not operate in the fulness among the Jews during the years of Jesus’ mortal sojourn (John 7:39; 16:7)” (Bible Dictionary, “Holy Ghost”). To help the class understand why the Holy Ghost did not operate in its fulness, read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“As long as Jesus was with the disciples in person, there was not the full need for them to have the constant companionship of the Spirit that there would be after Jesus left” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:753).

Summarize John 16:8–12 by explaining that one of the roles of the Holy Ghost is to reprove the world of sin.

Invite a student to read John 16:13 aloud, and ask the class to look for other roles the Comforter would fulfill in the lives of the disciples after Jesus left.

- What roles would the Holy Ghost fulfill in the lives of the Lord's disciples after He was gone? How might the disciples benefit from the help and guidance the Holy Ghost would provide?
- Based on verse 13, what can the Holy Ghost also do for us in our day? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **The Holy Ghost can guide us to all truth and show us things to come.**)
- What are some ways the Holy Ghost guides us to truth?
- In what ways might the Holy Ghost show us things to come? (If needed, explain that through the Holy Ghost, God can provide assurance, hope, vision, warning, and guidance for our future.)

Place an item (a reward) on a shelf or chair or someplace else in the room. Invite the blindfolded student to find the item. Invite another student to whisper directions to the blindfolded student to help him or her navigate to find the reward. After the student has found the item, invite him or her to remove the blindfold. Have both students return to their seats. Ask the class:

- When have you felt the Holy Ghost guide you into truth? How did you recognize that it was the Holy Ghost guiding you?

You may want to share an experience when you have been guided by the Holy Ghost in your own life. To help students apply the truth they have learned, encourage them to live in ways that invite the guidance of the Holy Ghost in their lives.

Point out that John 16:13 indicates that the Holy Ghost, whose role is to bear witness of the Father and the Son, will "not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak." Invite a student to read John 16:14–15 aloud, and ask the class to look for whose messages the Holy Ghost will speak to us.

- Whose messages does the Holy Ghost deliver to us? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **The Holy Ghost reveals truths and instruction that come from Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.**)
- Why is it helpful to know that when the Holy Ghost speaks to us, He is speaking for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ?

Explain to students that the Holy Ghost's "communication to your spirit carries far more certainty than any communication you can receive through your natural senses" (*True to the Faith* [2004], 82). This means that the Holy Ghost is our most valuable guide in learning truth; His influence is more valuable than physical proof, the opinions of others, or the reasoning of the world. Like us, the Savior's disciples needed to learn to rely on the Holy Ghost as a guide in the Lord's physical absence.

John 16:16–33

The Savior discusses His departure from mortality and proclaims that He has overcome the world

Invite students to think of a time when they had to say good-bye to a family member or a friend for a time.

- What did you say to comfort each other as you said good-bye?

Invite a student to read John 16:16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else Jesus told the disciples that may have comforted them as they thought about Him leaving. Ask the class to report what they find.

Explain that in John 16:17–19, we read that the disciples did not understand what Jesus meant when He said that He was leaving but they would see Him again.

Invite a student to read John 16:20–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said His disciples would feel when He left and what they would feel when they saw Him again. You may need to explain that the phrase "woman in travail" refers to an expecting mother going through labor before having a baby.

Sharing relevant experiences

Both teachers and students should have the opportunity to share their insights and understanding as well as personal experiences they have had with a doctrine or principle. They can also relate experiences they have witnessed in the lives of others. However, you may need to help students understand that some experiences are too sacred or personal to share in a classroom setting (see Alma 12:9; D&C 63:64).

- How would the disciples feel when Jesus was gone? What did He promise would happen after that?

Explain that the disciples would see Jesus again after He was resurrected. Although their sorrow over His death would be great, the joy they would feel at His Resurrection would be lasting.

Summarize John 16:23–32 by explaining that Jesus taught His disciples to pray directly to Heavenly Father in His (Christ’s) name and assured them of the Father’s love for them and Him.

Invite a student to read John 16:33 aloud, and ask the class to look for words and phrases the Savior used to comfort His disciples.

- What words and phrases did the Lord use to comfort His disciples?
- According to verse 33, why can we have happiness and peace even in a world filled with tribulation and death? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **Because Jesus Christ has overcome the world, we can be of good cheer and have peace.**)
- What do you think it means that Jesus Christ has overcome the world?

Explain that as the Only Begotten of the Father, Jesus Christ lived a sinless life, overcoming every worldly temptation. He also experienced every pain and affliction and atoned for the sins of all of us. Through His life, His suffering and death, and His Resurrection, He overcame all barriers to us becoming clean, finding peace, and living again with our Father in Heaven and those we love.

- In what ways can knowing that Jesus Christ overcame the world help us be of good cheer and have peace?

Provide students with a copy of the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson. Invite a student to read the statement aloud, and ask the class to look for an explanation about why we can be of good cheer in spite of the trials and difficulties of this world.



“Let us be of good cheer as we go about our lives. Although we live in increasingly perilous times, the Lord loves us and is mindful of us. He is always on our side as we do what is right. He will help us in time of need. . . . Our lives can also be filled with joy as we follow the teachings of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“The Lord admonished, ‘Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world’ [John 16:33]. What great happiness this knowledge should bring to us. He lived for us and He died for us. He paid the price for our sins. May we emulate His example. May we show our great gratitude to Him by accepting His sacrifice and living lives that will qualify us to return and one day live with Him” (“God Be with You Till We Meet Again,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 110–11).

- When has knowing that Jesus Christ overcame the world helped you be of good cheer and have peace?

Invite students to be cheerful and to live the gospel of Jesus Christ. Testify that as they do so, they will feel the peace and hope that are possible through the Lord’s atoning sacrifice and Resurrection.

John 17

Introduction

Before the Savior suffered in Gethsemane, He offered His great Intercessory Prayer. He prayed that His disciples and all who follow Him would come to know Heavenly

Father and obtain eternal life, and He prayed that they might be one with Him and His Father.



John 17:3

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

For an explanation of scripture mastery and a list of additional activities to help students master these selected passages, see the appendix of this manual.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 17:1–8

Jesus Christ addresses Heavenly Father in prayer

Invite students to name famous people whom they know something about. Then ask them to name the people in their lives whom they know the best.

- What is the difference between knowing *about* someone and actually *knowing* that person?
- What does it take to really know someone?
- Who are some individuals whom you feel would be important for you to get to know better? Why?

Explain that the Savior taught about the importance of coming to know Heavenly Father and Him. Invite students to look for truths as they study John 17 that will help them come to know Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

To help students understand the context of John 17, point out that at some point between the time when the Savior and His disciples had eaten the Last Supper and when they entered the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus offered a prayer that is traditionally known as the Intercessory Prayer. One meaning of the word *intercede* is to speak to someone in behalf of another person. In this case, Jesus Christ spoke to Heavenly Father in behalf of His disciples, pleading that they might receive eternal life.

Invite a student to read John 17:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior described eternal life.

- How did the Savior describe eternal life?
- Based on verse 3, how would you state a principle that teaches what we must do to receive eternal life? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **to receive eternal life, we must come to know Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.**)

To help the class understand what it means to know God, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“It is one thing to know about God and another to know him. We know about him when we learn that he is a personal being in whose image man is created; when we learn that the Son is in the express image of his Father’s person; when we learn that both the Father and the Son possess certain specified attributes and powers. But we know them, in the sense of gaining eternal life, when we enjoy and experience the same things they do. To know God is to think what he thinks, to feel what he feels, to have the power he possesses, to comprehend the truths he understands, and to do what he does. Those who know God become like him, and have his kind of life, which is eternal life” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:762).

- How is knowing the Father and the Son different from simply knowing *about* Them?
- Why can’t a person obtain eternal life without knowing God the Father and Jesus Christ?
- What are some ways we can come to know the Father and the Son?

Summarize John 17:4–5 by explaining that the Savior reported to His Father that He had finished the work His Father had given Him to do. He asked His Father to glorify Him with the same glory He had had in the premortal life.

Invite a student to read John 17:6–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what His disciples had done to come to know the Savior.

- What had the disciples done to come to know the Savior? (You may want to encourage students to mark the phrases “received them,” “known surely,” and “believed” in verse 8.)

John 17:9–19

The Savior prays for His disciples

Invite a student to read John 17:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom the Savior specifically prayed for.

- Whom did the Savior pray for as He was about to begin carrying out the Atonement?
- Why do you think the Apostles may have benefited from hearing the Savior plead in their behalf?

Write *John 17:11–18* on the board. Divide students into pairs. Invite them to study these verses with their partners, looking for what Jesus pled for in behalf of His disciples. You may want to invite students to mark what they find. After sufficient time, ask several to report what they found to the class.

Point out that the Savior mentioned that His disciples would continue living in a world that was evil and that hated them.

- What truth can we learn from verses 14–16 about living in the world as disciples of Jesus Christ? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are to be in the world but not of the world.**)
- What do you think it means to be *in* the world but not *of* the world?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“In the Church, we often state the couplet: ‘Be in the world but not of the world.’ . . .

“Perhaps we should state the couplet . . . as two separate admonitions. First, ‘*Be in the world.*’ Be involved; be informed. Try to be understanding and tolerant and to appreciate diversity. Make meaningful contributions to society through service and involvement. Second, ‘*Be not of the world.*’ Do not follow

wrong paths or bend to accommodate or accept what is not right. . . .

“Members of the Church need to influence more than we are influenced. We should work to stem the tide of sin and evil instead of passively being swept along by it. We each need to help solve the problem rather than avoid or ignore it” (“The Effects of Television,” *Ensign*, May 1989, 80).

- Why does the Lord want us to remain in the world while not being of the world?

Invite students to work with their partners again and think of an example of how a person could be in the world but not of the world in each of the following settings:

1. At school
2. With friends
3. Online

After sufficient time, invite a few students to explain to the class the examples they thought of. Invite a few students to share experiences they have had when they, or someone they know, appropriately demonstrated being in the world but not of the world.

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals one specific way they will seek to better follow the Savior by being in the world and not of the world.

John 17:20–26

The Savior prays for all people who accept His gospel

Invite a student to come to the front of the class and perform a task that will get his or her hands dirty (such as cleaning off the erasers from the board or digging for an item in a bowl of dirt). Encourage the student to try to keep his or her hands clean while performing the task.

After the student completes the task, ask the student to display his or her hands to the class.

- How might this activity be like our efforts to be in the world but not of the world? (Despite our best efforts, we do not remain completely clean from the sins and evil that exist in the world.)
- If we could not be cleansed from our sins, what consequences would we ultimately experience? Why? (We would be separated from the presence of God forever because no unclean thing can dwell in His presence [see 1 Nephi 15:33–34].)

Thank the student, and ask him or her to be seated.

Invite a student to read John 17:20–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus Christ prayed for.

- What did Jesus Christ pray for? (You may want to suggest that students mark the word *one* wherever it appears in verses 20–23.)
- What makes it possible for us to become one with the Father and the Son? (The blessings of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, which we receive by obeying His commandments, and the gift of the Holy Ghost.)

Write the following truth on the board: **As we come unto Jesus Christ and receive the blessings of His Atonement, we can become one with the Father and the Son.**

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“The literal meaning of the English word *Atonement* is self-evident: at-one-ment, the bringing together of things that have been separated or estranged” (“The Atonement of Jesus Christ,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2008, 34–35).

- From what you know of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, why do you want to become one with Them?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President James E. Faust of the First Presidency. Ask the class to listen for the blessing that will come to those who seek to be one with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.



“We should earnestly seek not just to know about the Master, but to strive, as He invited, to be one with Him (see John 17:21). . . .

“ . . . The days ahead will be filled with affliction and difficulty. But with the assuring comfort of a personal relationship with God, we will be given a calming courage” (“That We Might Know Thee,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1999, 2, 5).

Testify of the importance of coming to know Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father and of seeking to be one with Them.

Invite students to ponder what they can do to better know Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and strengthen their relationship with Them.

Invite students to record their thoughts in their scripture study journals or class notebooks. After sufficient time, invite a few students who are willing to share their thoughts and feelings with the class.

Scripture Mastery—John 17:3

To help students memorize John 17:3, invite them to carry the scripture mastery card containing this passage with them during the next week. Encourage them to review the passage and practice saying it as opportunities arise. You may want to suggest that they try to recite it from memory to a family member and explain its meaning. At the beginning of class for the next few days, invite students to report on their progress with memorizing this passage.

LESSON 78

John 18–19

Introduction

After Jewish leaders arrested and questioned Jesus, they delivered Him to Pilate to be tried and condemned. Pilate consented to Jesus's Crucifixion, even though he became

convinced of Jesus's innocence. While on the cross, the Savior placed His mother in the Apostle John's care. After Jesus was crucified, His body was placed in a tomb.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 18:1–32

Jesus is arrested and questioned by Jewish leaders, who then bring Him before Pilate

Write the following question on the board:

When is it most difficult to care about the well-being of others?

Invite several students to explain how they would answer the question on the board.

Explain that Jesus Christ and the Roman governor Pilate chose to prioritize, or value, different things during the events described in John 18–19. Write *Jesus Christ's concerns* and *Pilate's concerns* on opposite sides of the board. Invite students to look for a truth as they study John 18–19 that can help them know what concerns should take priority in their lives.

Summarize John 18:1–3 by explaining that after Jesus suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane, Judas Iscariot arrived with officers from the chief priests and Pharisees to arrest Jesus.

- If you knew that a band of armed officers was approaching to arrest you and ultimately put you to death, what might your reaction be?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from John 18:4–11 and Luke 22:50–51. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Jesus responded when this group arrived.

- What did Jesus say to those who came to arrest Him? (You may want to explain that the words *these* in John 18:8 and *them* in John 18:9 refer to the Apostles who were with Jesus.)
- According to these verses, what was Jesus Christ concerned about? (As students respond, list the following phrases on the board under "Jesus Christ's concerns": *protecting His Apostles; healing the servant's ear; doing Heavenly Father's will.*)

Ask a student to read aloud the following summary of John 18:12–32:

Jesus allowed the officers to arrest Him. They took Him to Annas, one of the Jewish leaders, and then to Caiaphas, the high priest who sought to condemn Jesus to death. Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. When three different people asked Peter whether he was one of Jesus's disciples, Peter denied knowing Him each time. After Caiaphas questioned Jesus, the Jewish leaders took Jesus to Pilate, the Roman provincial governor of Judea, to be tried and sentenced. Only the Romans had the authority to carry out a death sentence in Jerusalem.

Explain that this trial may have taken place in the Antonia Fortress near the temple. (You might consider inviting students to turn to Bible Map 12, "Jerusalem at the Time of Jesus," in the Bible appendix and look for the Antonia Fortress [feature 3 on the map].)

John 18:33–19:16

Jesus Christ is tried before Pilate

Invite two students to read aloud the words of the Savior and Pilate, respectively, recorded in John 18:33–37. (You might invite these students before class begins to locate the lines they will read.) Consider performing the role of the narrator, or invite another student to be the narrator. As these students read their parts, ask the class to follow along, looking for what Pilate wanted to know about Jesus.

- According to John 18:33, what did Pilate want to know about Jesus?

Explain that the Jewish leaders accused Jesus of claiming to be the king of the Jews because if Jesus claimed to be a king, He could be charged with sedition, or treason, against the Roman government (see John 19:12), a crime that was punishable by death.

- What did Jesus explain to Pilate? (His kingdom was “not of this world” [John 18:36], and He had come to earth to “bear witness unto the truth” [John 18:37].)

Ask students to read John 18:38–40 silently, looking for what Pilate concluded about Jesus.

- What did Pilate conclude about Jesus? (He said he could “find in him no fault at all” [verse 38].)
- According to verse 39, what did Pilate do to try to have Jesus released?

Summarize John 19:1–5 by explaining that Roman soldiers scourged and mocked Jesus. Pilate then presented Jesus before the people.

Invite students to read John 19:4, 6 silently, looking for what Pilate repeated to the Jews (“I find no fault in him”).

- Based on Pilate’s insistence that he had found no fault in Jesus, what did Pilate likely believe was the right thing to do?

Invite a student to read John 19:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Jewish leaders told Pilate about Jesus.

Invite the students who read the words of Pilate, Jesus, and the narrator to resume their roles and read aloud from John 19:8–11. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Pilate’s response when he heard that Jesus had said He was the Son of God.

- How did Pilate respond after the Jewish leaders told him that Jesus had said He was the Son of God?
- If you had been in Pilate’s position, how might you have felt after hearing what Jesus said about your power as governor? Why?

Explain that Jesus’s statement recorded in verse 11 about the Jewish leaders having the “greater sin” indicated that if Pilate yielded to the multitude’s request and ordered Jesus to be crucified, Pilate would be guilty of sin, but not to the same degree as those who actively sought Jesus’s death.

Invite students to read Matthew 27:19 silently, looking for what Pilate’s wife counseled him to do. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read John 19:12–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Pilate sought to do regarding Jesus and how the Jews responded.

- According to verse 12, what did Pilate seek to do?
- What did the Jewish leaders say to Pilate when they learned he wanted to release Jesus?

Remind students that Caesar was the Roman emperor who had granted Pilate his position as Judea’s governor. On several previous occasions, Pilate had ordered Roman soldiers to slaughter Jews, and he had defiled some of their sacred religious traditions. Pilate’s actions had been reported to Caesar, and Caesar had rebuked Pilate (see chap. 34, note 7, in James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 648–49).

- What might have happened to Pilate if the Jews had reported that he was not a “friend” to Caesar (verse 12)? (If Caesar had suspected Pilate of being disloyal to him, Caesar might have stripped Pilate of his position and power as governor.)

Point out that Pilate had to choose between protecting his own interests and releasing the Savior, who he knew was innocent.

Invite a student to read John 19:16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Pilate chose to do.

- What did Pilate choose to do?
- What does this choice indicate about what Pilate was most likely concerned with? (As students respond, write the following phrases on the board under “Pilate’s concerns”: *himself; his position and power.*)
- What principle can we learn from Pilate’s decision to place his own interests ahead of releasing the Savior, who he knew was innocent? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **Placing our own interests ahead of doing what is right will lead us to sin.**)

- What are some situations in which we might be tempted to place our own interests ahead of doing what is right?
- What can we do to overcome the temptation to place our own interests ahead of doing what is right?

Invite students to look for what they can learn about the character of Christ compared to the character of Pilate as they study the final moments of Jesus Christ’s mortal life.

John 19:17–42

Jesus is crucified, and His body is placed in a tomb

Summarize John 19:17–24 by explaining that Jesus carried His cross to Golgotha, where He was crucified.

Invite a student to read John 19:25–27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who was present when Jesus was crucified.

- Who was standing near the cross when Jesus was crucified? (After students respond, explain that the phrase “the disciple . . . whom [Jesus] loved” [verse 26] refers to the Apostle John, also known as John the Beloved.)
- According to verses 26–27, for whom was Jesus concerned as He hung upon the cross? What did He instruct John to do? (Take care of His mother as if she were John’s own mother. On the board under “Jesus Christ’s concerns,” write *His mother’s well-being*.)

If possible, provide students with copies of the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask a student to read the statement aloud.



“Character is revealed . . . in the power to discern the suffering of other people when we ourselves are suffering; in the ability to detect the hunger of others when we are hungry; and in the power to reach out and extend compassion for the spiritual agony of others when we are in the midst of our own spiritual distress. Thus, character is demonstrated by looking and reaching outward when the natural and instinctive response is to be self-absorbed and turn inward. If

such a capacity is indeed the ultimate criterion of moral character, then the Savior of the world is the perfect example of such a consistent and charitable character” (“The Character of Christ” [Brigham Young University–Idaho Religion Symposium, Jan. 25, 2003], 2–3).

- Based on what we have learned from John 18–19 about the Savior’s character, what can we do to follow His example? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **We can follow the Savior’s example by choosing to help others even when we are in need ourselves.**)
- How can we overcome the desire to be concerned primarily with ourselves and choose to help others even when we may be in need ourselves?
- When have you seen someone follow the Savior’s example by choosing to help others even when he or she was in need?

You may want to share your testimony of Jesus Christ and the perfect example He set of putting others’ needs before His own. Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they will do to follow the Savior’s example.

Summarize John 19:28–42 by explaining that after Jesus died, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for Jesus’s body. Joseph and Nicodemus then prepared the Savior’s body and placed it in a tomb, which Joseph had donated.

Compare and contrast

Noting the similarities or differences between teachings, people, or events can clarify a doctrine, principle, or passage of scripture and bring gospel truths into sharper focus.

John 20

Introduction

On the Sunday after the Crucifixion, Mary Magdalene discovered the empty tomb and informed John and Peter,

who then ran to the empty tomb. The resurrected Christ appeared to Mary Magdalene and later to His disciples.

Help students understand the context of the scriptures

The context of the scriptures includes the circumstances surrounding an event recorded in a scriptural passage. Understanding this context will prepare students to recognize the messages of the inspired authors of the scriptures. It will also help students mentally step into each author's world as much as possible and see the events as the author saw them.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 20:1–10

Mary Magdalene discovers the empty tomb and tells John and Peter, who then run to the tomb

To prepare students to study John 20, invite them to think about a time when a loved one or the loved one of someone they know passed away.

- What feelings might we experience when a loved one passes away?

To help students understand the context of John 20, remind them that after Jesus died at about 3:00 p.m. on Friday, His body was placed in a tomb late that afternoon and a large stone was set to seal the entrance of the tomb. The Sabbath then began at sunset. (You may want to explain that before the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Lord's covenant people observed the Sabbath from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to imagine how the disciples of Jesus felt on that tragic Friday.



"I think of how dark that Friday was when Christ was lifted up on the cross.

"On that terrible Friday the earth shook and grew dark. Frightful storms lashed at the earth.

"Those evil men who sought His life rejoiced. Now that Jesus was no more, surely those who followed Him would disperse. On that day they stood triumphant.

"On that day the veil of the temple was rent in twain.

"Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Jesus, were both overcome with grief and despair. The superb man they had loved and honored hung lifeless upon the cross.

"On that Friday the Apostles were devastated. Jesus, their Savior—the man who had walked on water and raised the dead—was Himself at the mercy of wicked men. They watched helplessly as He was overcome by His enemies.

"On that Friday the Savior of mankind was humiliated and bruised, abused and reviled.

"It was a Friday filled with devastating, consuming sorrow that gnawed at the souls of those who loved and honored the Son of God.

"I think that of all the days since the beginning of this world's history, that Friday was the darkest" ("Sunday Will Come," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2006, 29–30).

- If you had been one of the disciples who were there on that Friday, what thoughts or feelings might you have had?

After students respond, read aloud the following additional statement by Elder Wirthlin:

"But the doom of that day did not endure" ("Sunday Will Come," 30).

Invite students to look for how "the doom of that day did not endure" as they study John 20.

Ask a student to read John 20:1–2 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Mary Magdalene discovered when she arrived at Jesus's tomb early in the morning on the first day of the week, or Sunday.

- What did Mary discover?
- What did Mary do when she discovered that the stone had been removed from the entrance of the tomb? What did she assume?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from John 20:3–10. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter and John, who was referred to as “that other disciple” (verse 3), did after hearing Mary’s news.

- What did Peter and John do after hearing Mary’s news?
- According to verse 8, how did John respond to seeing the empty tomb? What did he believe?

You may want to explain that until John looked into the empty tomb, he had not fully comprehended the Savior’s declarations that He would rise from the dead on the third day. As John saw the empty tomb, he remembered and believed (see John 20:8–9).

John 20:11–31

The risen Savior appears to Mary Magdalene and later to His disciples

Invite a student to read John 20:11–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who spoke to Mary after Peter and John left the tomb.

- In verses 12–13, who spoke to Mary?
- Who spoke to Mary in verse 15? Who did Mary think Jesus was?

Invite a student to read John 20:16–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus instructed Mary to do once she recognized Him.

To help students understand the meaning of the phrase “touch me not” (verse 17), invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“The King James Version quotes Jesus as saying ‘Touch me not.’ The Joseph Smith Translation reads ‘Hold me not.’ Various translations from the Greek render the passage as ‘Do not cling to me’ or ‘Do not hold me.’ Some give the meaning as ‘Do not cling to me any longer,’ or ‘Do not hold me any longer.’ Some speak of ceasing to hold him or cling to him, leaving the inference that Mary was already holding him. There is valid reason for supposing that the thought conveyed to Mary by the Risen Lord was to this effect: ‘You cannot hold me here, for I am going to ascend to my Father.’” (*The Mortal Messiah*, 4 vols. [1979–81], 4:264).

- According to verse 17, what did Jesus instruct Mary to do?

Invite students to imagine that they had been one of the disciples who heard Mary’s witness. Ask students to answer the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What do you think you would have felt as you listened to Mary?
- Would you have believed her? Why or why not?

After sufficient time, invite a few students to share what they wrote. Remind them that some disciples struggled to believe Mary’s witness (see Mark 16:11).

Invite a student to read John 20:19–20 aloud, and ask the class to look for what happened that evening.

- What happened that evening when the disciples were gathered together?
- What important doctrine did Mary and the disciples learn? (Students may use different words but should identify the following doctrine: **Jesus Christ overcame death through His Resurrection.**)
- According to verse 20, how did the disciples feel when they saw the resurrected Lord?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin:

“In an instant the eyes that had been filled with ever-flowing tears dried. The lips that had whispered prayers of distress and grief now filled the air with wondrous praise, for Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God, stood before them as the firstfruits of the Resurrection, the proof that death is merely the beginning of a new and wondrous existence” (“Sunday Will Come,” 30).


- How can knowing that Jesus Christ has been resurrected help us as we grieve when someone we love passes away? (Because Jesus Christ was resurrected, everyone who has lived on this earth will also be resurrected [see 1 Corinthians 15:20–22].)

Summarize John 20:21–23 by explaining that after Jesus showed His disciples the wounds in His hands and side, He commissioned them to do His work and said to them, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost” (verse 22).

Ask a student to read John 20:24–25 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for the Apostle who was not present for that sacred occasion.

- Which Apostle was not present when the other disciples saw the resurrected Lord?
- According to verse 25, what did Thomas say he needed in order to believe?
- How did Thomas’s response recorded in this verse differ from John’s response when John saw the empty tomb as recorded in John 20:8?
- Why do you think it was difficult for Thomas to believe?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from John 20:26–29. Ask the class to look for what Thomas experienced eight days after he said he did not believe that Jesus had been resurrected.

 Instead of having students read, you could show the video “Blessed Are They That Have Not Seen, and Yet Have Believed” (2:29) from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos* to help students visualize Thomas’s experience as recorded in these verses. This video is available on LDS.org.

- After Jesus allowed Thomas to touch His hands and side, what choice did He invite Thomas to make? (Be believing.)
- According to verse 29, what did Jesus want Thomas to understand?
- What principle can we learn from the Savior’s teaching? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **We will be blessed if we choose to believe in Jesus Christ even when we cannot see Him.**)

Divide students into groups of two or three, and provide each group with a handout containing the following questions.

We Will Be Blessed If We Choose to Believe in Jesus Christ Even When We Cannot See Him

1. Why do you choose to believe in Jesus Christ even if you have not seen Him with your mortal eyes?
 2. What can we do to demonstrate that we have chosen to believe in Jesus Christ?
 3. How have you been blessed by choosing to believe in Jesus Christ?
-

Invite each group to discuss these questions together and to write their answers on the handout or in their scripture study journals. After sufficient time, invite a few students to share their answers with the class.

Explain that although Jesus taught that we will be blessed if we choose to believe in Him even if we cannot see Him, He provides witnesses as a basis for our belief.

Invite a student to read John 20:30–31 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why John recorded these events.

- Why did John record these events? (You may want to explain that the word *life* [verse 31] refers to eternal life.)
- What truths can we learn from verse 31 about the testimonies of apostles and prophets? (Students may use different words but should identify truths similar to the following: **Apostles and prophets testify of Jesus Christ so that we may believe that He is the Son of God. By choosing to believe in the testimony of Jesus Christ given by apostles and prophets, we can receive eternal life.** This belief implies that one will strive to keep His commandments and live true to that testimony.)
- How have the testimonies of apostles and prophets strengthened your belief in Jesus Christ?

Conclude by sharing your testimony of Jesus Christ. Encourage students to apply the truths they have identified in John 20 by determining how they will demonstrate their belief in Jesus Christ.

LESSON 80

John 21

Introduction

The resurrected Lord appeared to His disciples while they were fishing. On the shore, Jesus ate with His disciples and invited Peter to demonstrate his love for the

Lord by feeding His sheep. Jesus foretold both Peter's martyrdom and John's translation.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 21:1–17

The resurrected Lord appears to some of His disciples at the Sea of Tiberias (Sea of Galilee)

Draw a large heart on the board.

Invite students to come to the board and write inside the heart two or three of their favorite things. Explain that these could include people, possessions, or activities.

When students have finished, you might also list a few of your favorite things.

Summarize John 21:1–2 by explaining that after seeing the resurrected Lord on two occasions, Peter and some of the other disciples were on the shore of the Sea of Galilee (which is also called the Sea of Tiberias). Invite a student to read John 21:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter decided to do.

- What activity do you think Peter might add to our list of favorite things on the board? (After students respond, write *fishing* inside the heart on the board.)
- How long did Peter and the other disciples fish? How much did they catch?

Ask students to consider how they think Peter and the other disciples may have felt after a long night of fishing without any results.

Invite a student to read John 21:4–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened the following morning.

- Who was on the shore?
- Did the disciples recognize Jesus at first?
- What did Jesus instruct them to do?
- What happened after they followed Jesus's instruction?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“Just three years earlier these very men had been fishing on this very sea. On that occasion too they had ‘toiled all the night, and [had] taken nothing’ [Luke 5:5], the scripture says. But a fellow Galilean on the shore had called out to them to let down their nets, and they drew ‘a great multitude of fishes’ [Luke 5:6], enough that their nets broke, the catch filling two boats so heavily they had begun to sink.

“Now it was happening again” (“The First Great Commandment,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 84).

- How might this second miraculous catch of fish have helped the disciples recognize who was on the shore?
- What might you have thought or felt if you had been in the boat with the disciples?

Summarize John 21:7–14 by explaining that as the disciples struggled to lift the net full of fish into the boat, John declared that the man on the shore was the Lord. Peter eagerly dove into the sea and swam toward Jesus while the others went in their boat. When the disciples arrived on the shore, Jesus was preparing a meal for them.



Explain that Elder Jeffrey R. Holland elaborated on this account by teaching that after Peter and the other disciples had dined with the Savior, Jesus may have “[looked] at their battered little boats, their frayed nets, and a stunning pile of 153 fish” (“The First Great Commandment,” 84), and then He spoke to Peter.

Invite a student to read John 21:15–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a question Jesus repeatedly asked Peter. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What question did Jesus ask Peter three times?
- When Jesus asked, “Lovest thou me more than these?” (verse 15), what do you think the word *these* referred to? (Jesus could have been referring to the pile of fish or other things associated with the life of a fisherman. Write the following question on the board near the heart: *Lovest thou me more than these?*)
- How did Peter respond?
- How might you have felt if you had been in Peter’s position and Jesus had asked you three times if you loved Him?

To help students understand why Jesus may have asked this question three times, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Holland:



“Jesus responded (and here again I acknowledge my nonscriptural elaboration), perhaps saying something like: ‘Then Peter, why are you here? Why are we back on this same shore, by these same nets, having this same conversation? Wasn’t it obvious then and isn’t it obvious now that if I want fish, I can get fish? What I need, Peter, are disciples—and I need them forever. I need someone to feed my sheep and save my lambs. I need someone to preach my gospel and defend my faith. I need someone who loves me, truly, truly loves me, and loves what our Father in Heaven has commissioned me to do. . . . So, Peter, for the second and presumably the last time, I am asking you to leave all this and to go teach and testify, labor and serve loyally until the day in which they will do to you exactly what they did to me’” (“The First Great Commandment,” 84).

- What principle can we learn from Peter’s experience? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we love the Savior and Heavenly Father more than anything else, we will feed Their sheep.**)
- Who are Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ’s sheep? How do we feed them?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“This is the call of Christ to every Christian today: ‘Feed my lambs. . . . Feed my sheep’—share my gospel with young and old, lifting, blessing, comforting, encouraging, and building them, especially those who think and believe differently than we do” (“Being a More Christian Christian,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 91).

To help the class understand how the principle they just identified can relate to us, invite three students to take turns reading the following scenarios aloud. (You can adapt these scenarios according to the needs and interests of your students.) After each scenario has been read, ask the questions that follow.

1. A group of boys invites a young man to sit with them during lunch, and he hopes to become friends with them. During their conversation, one of the boys in the group starts publicly making fun of another boy.
 2. A young woman loves playing soccer. She devotes many hours a week to playing soccer and has little time for other things such as family home evening and personal scripture study.
 3. A young man has been very busy with both academic and extracurricular activities. All week, he has been looking forward to spending some rare free time with friends on Friday night. Just before he calls one of them that night, his home teaching companion calls to see if he can go with him to help one of their assigned families with an urgent need.
- What choices are available to this person?
 - What could this person do to demonstrate his or her love for the Lord? How would that action show love for the Lord?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Holland:

“My beloved brothers and sisters, I am not certain just what our experience will be on Judgment Day, but I will be very surprised if at some point in that conversation, God does not ask us exactly what Christ asked Peter: ‘Did you love me?’” (“The First Great Commandment,” 84).

Share your testimony of the importance of choosing to love Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ above all else and showing that love by feeding Their sheep.

Refer to the items listed in the heart on the board and the question written next to those items: “Lovest thou me more than these?” Underline the word *these*, and invite students to answer the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- If Jesus were asking the same question of you, what do you think He would refer to as “these” in your life?
- How would you answer His question?
- How will you demonstrate your love for the Lord?

John 21:18–25

Jesus foretells Peter’s martyrdom and John’s translation

Summarize John 21:18–21 by explaining that Jesus prophesied that when Peter became old he would “stretch forth [his] hands” (verse 18) and be carried where he did not want to go. It is traditionally believed that Peter died by crucifixion. However, it is said that Peter requested to be crucified upside down because he considered himself unworthy to die in the same manner as the Savior (see Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 3:151–52).

After hearing this prophecy, Peter asked what would happen to the Apostle John, also known as John the Beloved. Invite a student to read John 21:22–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior answered Peter.

- What did Peter learn about John?

Explain that the word *tarry* in verse 22 means to remain alive on the earth. Thus, John would remain on the earth as a translated being until Jesus Christ’s Second Coming. Translated beings are “persons who are changed so that they do not experience pain or death until their resurrection to immortality” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Translated Beings,” scriptures.lds.org).

- According to verse 22, what did Jesus want Peter to focus on rather than concerning himself with what would happen to John?

Invite a student to read John 21:24–25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what John wanted everyone to know as he concluded his record.

- What did John want everyone to know as he concluded his record?

Write the following questions on the board:

Of all that was written in the records of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, what story, event, or teaching from the Savior’s mortal ministry has had the greatest impact on you? Why?

Invite students to ponder their responses to these questions. You might quietly play a recording of a hymn, such as “Come, Follow Me” (*Hymns*, no. 116), and allow students to review their scriptures and class notebooks or scripture study journals to recall some of the truths they have learned. After sufficient time, invite a few students to come to the front of the class and share their responses to the questions.

You may want to conclude by testifying of the truthfulness of the accounts of Jesus Christ’s mortal ministry and Atonement written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Writing exercises

Occasionally inviting students to write down their responses to thought-provoking questions helps deepen and clarify their thinking. Among other things, writing assignments provide students with opportunities to participate personally and to receive inspiration about how to apply what they are learning.

Home-Study Lesson

John 16–21 (Unit 16)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied John 16–21 (unit 16) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (John 16)

From what Jesus taught His Apostles following the Last Supper, students learned that the Holy Ghost can guide us to all truth and show us things to come. Students also learned that the Holy Ghost reveals truths and instruction that come from Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. Because Jesus Christ has overcome the world, we can be of good cheer and have peace.

Day 2 (John 17)

As students studied the Intercessory Prayer of Jesus Christ, they learned that to receive eternal life, we must come to know Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. They also learned that as disciples of Jesus Christ, we are to be in the world but not of the world. As students read about how Jesus prayed that His disciples could be unified with Him and the Father, they learned that as we come unto Jesus Christ and receive the blessings of His Atonement, we can become one with the Father and the Son.

Day 3 (John 18–19)

From the selfish example of Pilate, students learned that placing our own interests ahead of doing what is right will lead us to sin. As students studied John's account of the Crucifixion, they learned that we can follow the Savior's example by choosing to help others even when we are in need ourselves.

Day 4 (John 20–21)

In this lesson, students studied John's account of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. They learned that Jesus Christ overcame death through His Resurrection. From Thomas's experience, they learned that we will be blessed if we choose to believe in Jesus Christ even when we cannot see Him.

Introduction

The resurrected Lord appeared to His disciples while they were fishing. On the shore, Jesus ate with His disciples and invited Peter to demonstrate His love for Him by feeding His sheep.

Suggestions for Teaching

John 21:1–17

The resurrected Lord appears to some of His disciples at the Sea of Tiberias (Sea of Galilee)

Draw a large heart on the board.



Invite students to come to the board and write inside the heart two or three of their favorite things. Explain that these could include people, possessions, or activities.

When students have finished, you might also list a few of your favorite things.

Summarize John 21:1–2 by explaining that after seeing the resurrected Lord on two occasions, Peter and some of the other disciples were on the shore of the Sea of Galilee (which is also called the Sea of Tiberias).

Invite a student to read John 21:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter decided to do.

- What activity do you think Peter might add to our list of favorite things on the board? (After students respond, write *fishing* inside the heart on the board.)
- How long did Peter and the other disciples fish? How much did they catch?

Ask students to consider how they think Peter and the other disciples may have felt after a long night of fishing without any results.

Invite a student to read John 21:4–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened the following morning.

- What happened after the disciples had unsuccessfully fished all night?

Summarize John 21:7–14 by explaining that as the disciples struggled to lift the net full of fish into the boat, John declared that the man on the shore was the Lord. Peter eagerly dove into the sea and swam toward Jesus while the others came in their boat. When the disciples arrived on the shore, Jesus was preparing a meal for them.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"After a joyful reunion with the resurrected Jesus, Peter had an exchange with the Savior that I consider the crucial turning point of the apostolic ministry generally and certainly for Peter personally, moving this great rock of a man to a majestic life of

devoted service and leadership. Looking at their battered little boats, their frayed nets, and a stunning pile of 153 fish, Jesus [spoke] to His senior Apostle" ("The First Great Commandment," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 84).

Invite a student to read John 21:15–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a question Jesus repeatedly asked Peter. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What question did Jesus ask Peter three times?
- When Jesus asked, "Lovest thou me more than these?" (verse 15), what do you think the word *these* referred to? (Jesus could have been referring to the pile of fish or other things associated with the life of a fisherman. Write the following question on the board near the heart: *Lovest thou me more than these?*)
- How did Peter respond?
- How might you have felt if you had been in Peter's position and Jesus had asked you three times if you loved Him?

To help students understand why Jesus may have asked this question and had Peter answer Him three times, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Holland:

"Jesus responded (and here again I acknowledge my non-scriptural elaboration), perhaps saying something like: 'Then Peter, why are you here? Why are we back on this same shore, by these same nets, having this same conversation? Wasn't it obvious then and isn't it obvious now that if I want fish, I can get fish? What I need, Peter, are disciples—and I need them forever. I need someone to feed my sheep and save my lambs. I need someone to preach my gospel and defend my faith. I need someone who loves me, truly, truly loves me, and loves what our Father in Heaven has commissioned me to do. . . . So, Peter, for the second and presumably the last time, I am asking you to leave all this and to go teach and testify, labor and serve loyally until the day in which they will do to you exactly what they did to me' " ("The First Great Commandment," 84).

- What principle can we learn from the Lord's conversation with Peter? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we love the Savior and Heavenly Father more than anything else, we will feed Their sheep.**)
- Who are Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ's sheep? How do we feed them?

To help students understand how we can feed Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ's sheep, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"This is the call of Christ to every Christian today: 'Feed my lambs. . . . Feed my sheep'—share my gospel with young and old, lifting, blessing, comforting, encouraging, and building them, especially those who think and believe differently than we do" ("Being a More Christian Christian," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 91).

To help the class understand how the principle of loving God more than anything else can be applied, invite three students

to take turns reading the following scenarios aloud. After each scenario has been read, ask the questions that follow.

1. A group of boys invites a young man to sit with them during lunch, and he hopes to become friends with them. During their conversation, one of the boys in the group starts publicly making fun of another boy.
 2. A young woman loves playing soccer. She devotes many hours a week to playing soccer and has little time for other things such as family home evening and personal scripture study.
 3. A young man has been very busy with both academic and extracurricular activities. All week, he has been looking forward to spending some rare free time with friends on Friday night. Just before he calls one of them that night, his home teaching companion calls to see if he can go with him to help one of their assigned families with an urgent need.
- What choices are available to this person?
 - What could this person do to demonstrate his or her love for the Lord? How would that action show love for the Lord?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Holland:

"My beloved brothers and sisters, I am not certain just what our experience will be on Judgment Day, but I will be very surprised if at some point in that conversation, God does not ask us exactly what Christ asked Peter: 'Did you love me?' " ("The First Great Commandment," 84).

Share your testimony of the importance of choosing to love Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ above all else and showing that love by feeding Their sheep.

Refer to the items listed in the heart on the board and the question written next to those items: "Lovest thou me more than these?" Underline the word *these*, and invite students to answer the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- If Jesus were asking the same question of you, what do you think He would refer to as "these" in your life?
- How would you answer His question?

As you conclude the Gospels, invite several students to share what they wrote for their day 4 lesson assignment in their scripture study journal about the story, event, or teaching from the Savior's mortal ministry that has helped them to believe or strengthened their belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Next Unit (Acts 1–5)

Invite students to look for answers to the following questions during their study of Acts 1–5: Who would lead the Church after the Savior died and was resurrected? How were other Apostles selected? What miracle occurred on the day of Pentecost? How did the Holy Ghost influence the miracle of that day? What miracle did Peter perform at the temple, and what happened to Peter because of it? What happened to Ananias and Sapphira for lying to their priesthood leader?

The Acts of the Apostles

Why study this book?

The Acts of the Apostles forms a bridge between the record of Jesus Christ's life and teachings in the four Gospels and the writings and labors of His Apostles. The book of Acts illustrates how the Savior continued to direct His Church through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to those who held the keys of the priesthood. The Holy Ghost revealed truth to the Apostles, who then led and taught the Church. The Apostles also performed miracles in the name of Jesus Christ. Through their study of this book, students will learn how the Church of Jesus Christ began to spread from Jerusalem "unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Studying this book can also help students see the wisdom of following modern prophets and apostles and can inspire them to boldly stand as witnesses of Jesus Christ.

Who wrote this book?

Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles as "the second of a two-part work. . . . The first part is known as the Gospel According to Luke" (Guide to the Scriptures, "Acts of the Apostles," scriptures.lds.org; see also Luke 1:1–4; Acts 1:1).

When and where was it written?

Acts was written after the Gospel of Luke (see Acts 1:1), which was likely written in the second half of the first century A.D. We do not know where it was written.

To whom was it written and why?

Luke addressed the book of Acts to a man named Theophilus (see Acts 1:1).

What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Acts recounts the rise and spread of Christianity, beginning in the provincial Jewish capital of Jerusalem and ending in Rome, the great capital of the empire. The events described in Acts occurred over a period of about 30 years (about A.D. 30–62) and focus mainly on the ministries of Peter (see Acts 1–12) and Paul (see Acts 13–28). Without the book of Acts, our knowledge of the early history of the Church would be limited to the small amount provided by the New Testament epistles. In addition, Acts provides valuable historical context for the epistles of Paul.

Critical to the growth of the early Church were the conversion of Paul (Acts 9) and his subsequent missions; the vision Peter received regarding the acceptance into the Church of Gentiles who had not previously converted to Judaism (Acts 10:9–16, 34–35); and the doctrines taught at the Jerusalem conference (Acts 15).

As recorded in Luke 24:49, the Savior instructed the Apostles that they were to begin their ministries only after they had been "endued with power from on high." Acts records the endowment of this power by the Holy Ghost and describes its dramatic results, beginning with the conversion of thousands on the day of Pentecost (see Acts 2). Throughout Acts, Luke emphasized the workings of the Holy Ghost on individuals and congregations. The phrase "endued with power from on high" also likely meant that the Apostles "received certain knowledge, powers, and special blessings, normally given only in the Lord's Temple" (Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:859).

Outline

Acts 1–2 Jesus Christ ministers to His disciples for 40 days following His Resurrection and then ascends into heaven. By inspiration, the Apostles call Matthias to fill the vacancy in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The Holy Ghost is poured out on the day of Pentecost. Peter boldly testifies of the resurrected Savior, and about three thousand people are converted.

Acts 3–8 Peter and John heal a man who has been lame from birth. Peter and John are arrested for preaching and healing in the name of Jesus Christ and are delivered from prison. The Apostles call seven men to assist them in their ministry; one of these men, Stephen, testifies before the Jewish council, and the council

members put him to death. Philip preaches throughout Samaria.

Acts 9–12 Saul is converted and begins his ministry. Through a vision, Peter learns that the gospel should be preached to the Gentiles. Herod Agrippa I has the Apostle James (the brother of John) put to death and imprisons Peter.

Acts 13–15 Saul and Barnabas are called to be missionaries. They encounter opposition from Jews and are accepted by some Gentiles. Church leaders meet in Jerusalem and determine that Gentile converts do not need to be circumcised (or continue to observe the law of Moses) when they join the Church. Paul (as Saul is now called) departs

on his second missionary journey, along with Silas.

Acts 16–20 Paul and Silas strengthen various churches that had been established earlier. On Mars' Hill in Athens, Paul preaches that "we are the offspring of God" (Acts 17:29). Paul concludes his second mission and departs on a third mission throughout Asia Minor. Paul determines to return to Jerusalem.

Acts 21–28 In Jerusalem, Paul is arrested and continues to testify of Jesus Christ. The Lord appears again to Paul. Many Jews plot to kill Paul. In Caesarea, he testifies before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa. Paul is shipwrecked on his way to Rome. Paul preaches the gospel while under house arrest in Rome.

LESSON 81

Acts 1:1–8

Introduction

After His Resurrection, Jesus Christ ministered to His Apostles for 40 days. He prepared them to be witnesses of Him throughout the earth.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 1:1–8

Jesus ministers to His disciples for 40 days

Invite students to imagine that a friend of another faith approaches them with a desire to know more about our Church and asks, “Who leads your church?”

Ask students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how they would respond to this question.

Invite students to look for a truth as they study Acts 1:1–8 that can help answer the question of who leads the Church.

Invite students to turn to the book of Acts and identify the full title of this book. Ask students to report what they find.

- Based on the full title, what do you think we can learn about in this book?

Explain that the book of Acts marks a significant transition in the New Testament. The books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John provide accounts of the Savior’s mortal ministry, including His Atonement and Resurrection. The book of Acts relates the Apostles’ ministry following the Savior’s Ascension into heaven.

Invite a student to read Acts 1:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom this book was written to.

- To whom was the book of Acts written?

Explain that Luke is the author of the book of Acts and that the “former treatise” referred to in verse 1 is the book of Luke, which was also written to Theophilus. Luke’s purpose in writing was to help Theophilus obtain his own testimony of Jesus Christ (see Luke 1:1–4).

Invite a student to read Acts 1:2–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how long Jesus Christ personally ministered to His Apostles following His Resurrection. (You may want to explain that the word *passion* in verse 3 refers to the Savior’s atoning sacrifice, and “infallible proofs” refers to the undeniable evidence Jesus provided that He was resurrected.)

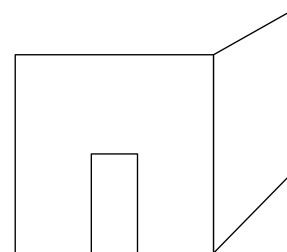
- How long did Jesus Christ spend with His Apostles after He was resurrected?
- What did Jesus teach them during these 40 days? (Things pertaining to the kingdom of God.)

Begin sketching a simple line drawing of a house on the board. (Or you could build a small model of a house using blocks or clay.)

When you are halfway finished, invite a student to come to the board and finish the drawing for you. Give the student very specific instructions on how to finish the house. You might ask him or her to add a roof, some windows, and landscaping. After a short time of working together, move to the other side of the classroom and continue to give the student instructions. When the house is finished, thank the student, and ask him or her to sit down.

Ask students to imagine that the drawing of the house represents the kingdom of God on earth, which is the Church of Jesus Christ.

- How might our method of drawing this house illustrate how Jesus Christ established His Church during His mortal ministry and after His Resurrection? (During His mortal



ministry, the Savior began establishing His Church. He called others to help Him establish it, and after His Resurrection, He directed their efforts even though He was no longer physically with them.)

- According to verse 2, how does Jesus Christ direct His Church? (Using students' words, write the following truth on the board: **Jesus Christ directs His Church by revealing His will to His Apostles through the Holy Ghost.**)

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"From the first verse [of the book of Acts], the declaration is that the Church will continue to be *divinely* led, not mortally led. . . . Indeed, a more complete title for the book of Acts could appropriately be something like 'The Acts of the Resurrected Christ Working through the Holy Spirit in the Lives and Ministries of His Ordained Apostles.' . . .

"The direction of the Church is the same. The location of the Savior has been altered, but the direction and leadership of the Church is exactly the same" ("Therefore, What?" [Church Educational System conference on the New Testament, Aug. 8, 2000], 6, si.lds.org).

- Why is it important to know that Jesus Christ continues to direct His Church by revelation today?

Invite students to ponder experiences that have strengthened their testimony that Jesus Christ directs His Church today through revelation. Invite several students to share their experiences. You may also want to share an experience.

Ask several students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 1:4–8. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus commanded the Apostles to do.

- According to verse 4, what did Jesus command the Apostles to do?
- According to verse 5, what did the Savior promise the Apostles they would receive if they remained in Jerusalem?
- According to verse 8, what would the Holy Ghost give the Apostles power to do?
- What can we learn about Apostles from what the Savior taught as recorded in verse 8? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Apostles are witnesses of Jesus Christ and testify of Him throughout the earth.**)

To help students understand this truth, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley:



"In our day the Lord has called 15 special witnesses to testify of His divinity before all the world. Theirs is a unique calling; they are Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, chosen and commissioned by Him. They have been commanded to bear witness of His living reality by the power and authority of the holy apostleship in them vested" ("Special Witnesses of Christ," *Ensign*, Apr. 2001, 4).

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *The Apostles of our day testify that Jesus Christ . . .*

If possible, provide a copy of "The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles" (*Ensign*, Apr. 2000, 2) for each student in your class. You may also consider taking one copy, cutting it into smaller sections, and dividing the sections among students. Ask students to read the document or section silently, looking for how they could finish the statement on the board. When students have

THE LIVING CHRIST

THE TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTLES
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

As we commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ two millennia ago, we offer our testimony of the reality of His matchless life and the infinite virtue of His great atoning sacrifice. None other has had so profound an influence upon all who have lived and will yet live upon the earth.

He was the Great Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Messiah of the New. Under the direction of His Father, He was the creator of the earth. "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3). Though sinless, He was baptized to fulfill all righteousness. He "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38), yet was despised for it. His gospel was a message of peace and goodwill. He entreated all to follow His example. He walked the roads of Palestine, healing the sick, causing the blind to see, and raising the dead. He taught the truths of eternity, the reality of our premortal existence, the purpose of our life on earth, and the potential for the sons and daughters of God in the life to come.

He instituted the sacrament as a reminder of His great atoning sacrifice. He was arrested and condemned on spurious charges, convicted to satisfy a rack, and sentenced to die on Calvary's cross. He gave His life to atone for the sins of all mankind. His was a great vicarious gift in behalf of all who would ever live upon the earth.

We solemnly testify that His life, which is central to all human history, neither began in Bethlehem nor concluded on Calvary. He was the Firstborn of the Father, the Only Begotten Son in the flesh, the Redeemer of the world.

He rose from the grave to "become the firstfruits of them that sleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20). As Risen Lord, He visited among those He had loved in life. He also ministered among His "other sheep" (John 10:16) in ancient America. In the modern world, He and His Father appeared to the boy Joseph Smith, ushering in the long-promised "dispensation of the fulness of times" (Ephesians 1:10).

Of the Living Christ, the Prophet Joseph wrote: "His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow; his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun; and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying: 'I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father'" (D&C 110:3–4).

Of Him the Prophet also declared: "And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he liveth!" "For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—

"That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God" (D&C 76:22–24).

We declare in words of solemnity that His priesthood and His Church have been restored upon the earth—"built upon the foundation of . . . apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:20).

We testify that He will someday return to earth. "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together" (Isaiah 40:5). He will rule as King of Kings and reign as Lord of Lords, and every knee shall bend and every tongue shall speak in worship before Him. Each of us will stand to be judged of Him according to our works and the desires of our hearts.

We bear testimony, as His duly ordained Apostles—that Jesus is the Living Christ, the immortal Son of God. He is the great King Immanuel, who stands today on the right hand of His Father. He is the light, the life, and the hope of the world. His way is the path that leads to happiness in this life and eternal life in the world to come. God be thanked for the matchless gift of His divine Son.

THE FIRST PRESIDENCY

Joseph Smith
Amos M. Benson
James E. Faust

January 1, 2000

THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE

Jeffrey R. Holland
Richard G. Scott
Robert D. Hales
David A. Bednar
Dieter F. Christensen
Michael G. Jensen
Neil Andrew Larson
Robert L. Williams
Thomas S. Monson
Mark E. Peterson
Colin C. Covey

finished reading, ask a student to come to the board and act as a scribe. Invite students to report what they found, and ask the student at the board to list their responses on the board.

- Which of these declarations are most significant to you?
- How does the witness of modern-day Apostles influence your personal witness or testimony of Jesus Christ?

Explain that even though Acts 1:8 refers specifically to the Apostles' role as special witnesses of the Savior, it also teaches us about what can help us be witnesses of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

- Based on the Lord's promise to the Apostles in Acts 1:8, what makes it possible for us to be witnesses of Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Through the power of the Holy Ghost, we can become witnesses of Jesus Christ.**)
- In what ways does the Holy Ghost help us become witnesses of the Savior?

Invite students to ponder times they have felt the Holy Ghost as others have shared their testimony of Jesus Christ. After a few minutes, invite students to share their experiences. Remind students that they should not share experiences that are too sacred or private.

- When have you felt the Holy Ghost help you testify of Jesus Christ to others?

Encourage students to seek opportunities to share their testimony with others and to trust that the Holy Ghost will confirm the truth of what they witness.

Acts–Revelation

Overview of the second half of the New Testament

Explain that Acts 1:8 not only teaches truths but also provides an overview of the latter half of the New Testament.

- According to Acts 1:8, where did the Savior prophesy that His disciples would witness of Him?

Write the following on the board: *Acts 1–5 = Jerusalem; Acts 6–9 = Judea and Samaria; Acts 10–28 = Uttermost part of the earth* (see Bible Dictionary, "Acts of the Apostles").

Explain that the disciples began to witness of Jesus Christ as directed. First, the Apostles preached in Jerusalem, then Judea and Samaria, and then the uttermost parts of the earth.

Ask students to turn to the Bible's table of contents. Invite students to look at the New Testament books that follow the book of Acts. Explain that the books of Romans through Hebrews are epistles (letters) written by the Apostle Paul. Students will learn about Paul's conversion and ministry as they study Acts 9, 13–28.

Ask students to locate 1 Thessalonians. Explain that the Thessalonians were people who lived in the city Thessalonica. Invite students to turn to Bible Maps, no. 13, "The Missionary Journeys of the Apostle Paul," and locate Thessalonica on the map. Explain that many of the epistles in the New Testament were written to congregations of the Church in different cities to address their specific needs. You may also want to explain that these epistles are not arranged chronologically in the New Testament. The book of 1 Thessalonians is believed to be the first epistle Paul wrote.

Ask students to look at the table of contents and identify some other books that are written as epistles to congregations of Saints.

Explain that in addition to writing to congregations of Saints, Paul wrote to individuals such as Timothy, Titus, and Philemon.

Ask students to look for what books follow Hebrews in the table of contents.

Explain that in addition to Paul, other Apostles and Church leaders wrote to members of the Church. We still have some of these epistles, which are the books of James through Jude. The book of Revelation records a vision seen by the Apostle John.

Invite students to continue reading the second half of the New Testament on their own.

Encourage them to pray as they study so that the Holy Ghost can enlighten them and help them gain greater understanding as they study the teachings of the New Testament Apostles.

Encourage students to read the text for the course

Encourage students to read the entire New Testament. Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, "Reading a book of scripture from beginning to end . . . [introduces] us to important stories, gospel doctrines, and timeless principles [and] enables us to learn about major characters . . . and the sequence, timing, and context of events and teachings" ("A Reservoir of Living Water" [Church Educational System fireside for young adults, Feb. 4, 2007], 2, [lds.org/broadcasts](https://www.lds.org/broadcasts)).

LESSON 82

Acts 1:9–26

Introduction

After instructing His disciples for 40 days, Jesus Christ ascended into heaven. The Apostles and others united in prayer and supplication. Through inspiration, Matthias

was called to fill the vacancy in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles left by the betrayal and death of Judas Iscariot.

Cultivate an environment of love, respect, and purpose

Consistently look for ways to cultivate a learning environment of love, respect, and purpose. Help students feel comfortable with each other by encouraging them to learn about one another's interests, talents, challenges, and abilities. One way to cultivate this type of environment is to invite students to share with each other experiences and insights from their personal scripture study.



Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 1:9–12

The Savior ascends into heaven

Write the following question on the board: *True or False?*

Read aloud the following statements about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Invite students to indicate whether the statements are true or false. (*Note:* At this point in the lesson, students do not need to know the answer to each question or spend a great deal of time discussing their answers.)

1. Jesus Christ will return to the earth in the latter days.
2. At His Second Coming, Jesus Christ will appear only to righteous people.
3. Because Jesus Christ will be in disguise when He comes again, most people will not realize that the Second Coming has occurred.

You may want to briefly review the answer to each statement: (1) True (see Moses 7:60); (2) False (see Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:26; D&C 101:23); (3) False (see D&C 49:22–23).

Explain that during His mortal ministry, Jesus Christ prophesied that in the last days some people would promote false teachings about His Second Coming (see Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:22–25).

- How can we know whether a particular teaching about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is true or false? (If we heeded the Savior's words and the words of His prophets, we can avoid being deceived [see Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:37].)

Invite students to look as they continue to study Acts 1 for an important truth concerning the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Remind students that the Savior instructed His disciples for 40 days after His Resurrection (see Acts 1:3). Display the picture *The Ascension* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 62; see also LDS.org).

Invite a student to read Acts 1:9–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened after the Savior finished instructing His Apostles.

- What happened after the Savior finished instructing His Apostles?
- If you had seen the Savior ascend into heaven, what thoughts and feelings do you think you might have had?

Explain that in ancient Israel a cloud sometimes served as a visible representation of the presence and glory of God (see Exodus 40:34). The cloud mentioned in Acts 1:9 was a cloud of glory (see Bible Dictionary, "Cloud"), and the two men mentioned in verse 10 were angels.

- What did the angels tell the Apostles?
- What do you think it means that Jesus will come again "in like manner" (Acts 1:11) as the manner in which He ascended? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **At His Second Coming, the Savior will descend from heaven in glory.**)

Point out that the Savior's Ascension took place on the Mount of Olives (see verse 12).

Explain that when the Savior comes again, one of His appearances will be when He will descend and actually stand on the Mount of Olives (see Zechariah 14:4; D&C 45:47–53;

D&C 133:19–20). This will occur before His great and grand appearance to the world (see Isaiah 40:5).

- How can knowing the manner in which the Savior will return help us avoid being deceived while we await His Second Coming?

Acts 1:13–26

Matthias is chosen to fill the vacancy in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Explain that after the Apostles returned to Jerusalem, they gathered with some faithful men and women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, to pray and worship. Invite students to read Acts 1:13 silently and count the number of Apostles listed. Ask students to report what they find.

- Why were there only 11 Apostles at that time? (Judas Iscariot had betrayed Jesus Christ and then ended his own life [see Matthew 27:3–5].)

Summarize Acts 1:15–20 by explaining that Peter stood before 120 disciples and recounted the death of Judas Iscariot. Because Judas had been one of the Twelve Apostles, the disciples gathered to choose a new Apostle.

Invite students to describe the different ways in which some of the following leaders are chosen: a team captain, a local government leader, a king or queen, and a president of a company.

- What might some of the qualifications for these leadership positions be?

Show students a picture or pictures of the current First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and testify that each of these men is an Apostle of Jesus Christ. Ask students to consider how an Apostle of Jesus Christ is chosen and what qualifies someone to serve as an Apostle.

Divide students into pairs. Invite them to read Acts 1:21–26 aloud with their partners and look for how a new Apostle was chosen after the death of Judas Iscariot.

- What does it mean that “they gave forth their lots”? (verse 26).

You may need to explain that anciently, casting lots was a faithful means of making a decision that showed trust in God directing the outcome (see Acts 1:26; see also Proverbs 16:33). “If they cast lots, it was an instance in which the Lord chose the result. More probably, however, ‘they gave forth their votes,’ presumably ‘sustaining votes’ to uphold him whom God had chosen to serve in the holy apostleship” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 2:32).

- According to verses 21–22, what qualifications did Peter say the new Apostle must have? (He must be a follower of Jesus Christ who was also a witness of His ministry and Resurrection.)
- What stands out to you about the Apostles’ prayer recorded in verses 24–25?
- What truth can we learn from verse 24 about how an Apostle of Jesus Christ is called? (Students may use different words, but make sure to emphasize that **Apostles of Jesus Christ are called by God through revelation**. Write this truth on the board, and invite students to consider writing it in their scriptures next to verse 24.)
- Why do you think it is important that an Apostle is called by God through revelation instead of being selected the way other leaders in the world are selected?

To illustrate how a modern Apostle is called by God through revelation, invite a student to read aloud the following account from the life of President Heber J. Grant:



“President [Heber J.] Grant received revelations as President of the Church to guide the Church as a whole. One such revelation came just after he was set apart as President of the Church, when he sought the will of the Lord in appointing a new member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. As he pondered this responsibility, his thoughts turned repeatedly to his lifelong friend Richard W. Young, a faithful Latter-day Saint and a proven leader.

President Grant discussed this possibility with his counselors, who supported his decision. When he finally felt confident with this course of action, he wrote his friend’s name on a piece of paper and took the paper with him to the weekly temple meeting with the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve. However, when he was about to present the

name for the approval of his Brethren, he was unable to do so. Instead of presenting the name of Richard W. Young, he presented the name of Melvin J. Ballard, a man whom he hardly knew. President Grant later told of the impact this experience had on him:

“I have felt the inspiration of the living God directing me in my labors. From the day that I chose a comparative stranger to be one of the apostles, instead of my lifelong and dearest living friend, I have known as I know that I live, that I am entitled to the light and the inspiration and the guidance of God in directing His work here upon this earth’ ” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Heber J. Grant* [2002], 181–82).

- How is the truth taught in Acts 1:24 illustrated in this account describing the calling of a modern-day Apostle?
- How does the calling of an Apostle show that the Savior continues to direct His Church? (You may want to remind students of the truth taught in Acts 1:2—that Jesus Christ directs His Church by revealing His will to His Apostles through the Holy Ghost.)

Refer to the picture or pictures you displayed earlier of the living Apostles. You may want to take a moment to help students learn or review their names.

Write the following questions on the board:

What experiences have helped you come to know that the living Apostles have been called by God?

Why is it important to you to have a testimony that the living Apostles have been called by God?

Invite students to write a response to one of the questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Invite a few students to share their responses with the class.

Conclude by testifying of the truths students identified in Acts 1:9–26.

Scripture Mastery Review

To help students review the first 10 scripture mastery passages, write the following references and corresponding key words on the board (if you prefer, you can provide students with copies of the chart):

Matthew 5:14–16	Let your light so shine.	Luke 24:36–39	A resurrected body has flesh and bones.
Matthew 11:28–30	Come unto me.	John 3:5	Born of water and of the Spirit
Matthew 16:15–19	The keys of the kingdom	John 14:6	The way, the truth, and the life
Matthew 22:36–39	Love the Lord; love thy neighbor.	John 14:15	If ye love me, keep my commandments.
Matthew 28:19–20	Teach and baptize all nations.	John 17:3	Knowing God and Jesus Christ is eternal life.

Divide students into pairs. Ask students to review with their partners the scripture mastery passages written on the board. You might suggest that one partner read aloud the key words from a scripture mastery passage and the other partner name the corresponding reference. Invite students to alternate roles until they have reviewed all 10 passages.

If time permits, consider giving students a quiz. Provide students with pieces of paper that include the key words for each scripture mastery passage and a blank line following each set of key words. Invite students to write the corresponding reference on the blank line. After sufficient time, review the quiz.

LESSON 83

Acts 2

Introduction

The disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost and were blessed with the gift of tongues as they preached the gospel. Peter proclaimed that Jesus is “both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36) and invited people

to repent, be baptized, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. About three thousand people were converted and baptized that day, after which they continued faithful in the Church.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 2:1–13

The disciples of Jesus Christ are filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost

Ask students to think about the most recent opportunity they had to speak in church, teach a lesson, or share the gospel with someone.

- What can be challenging about speaking, teaching, or testifying to others about the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Invite students to look for a truth as they study Acts 2:1–13 that will help them when they feel anxious or fearful about teaching and testifying to others about the restored gospel.

Explain that about one week after the Savior ascended into heaven, Jews from many nations came to Jerusalem to participate in the feast of Pentecost and to worship at the temple and give thanks to the Lord. This feast occurred 50 days after the Passover feast and celebrated the first harvest of the season (see Guide to the Scriptures, “Pentecost,” scriptures.lds.org).

Invite a student to read Acts 2:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the disciples of Jesus Christ experienced on the day of Pentecost.

- What did the disciples experience on the day of Pentecost? (The outpouring of the Holy Ghost.)
- How was this outpouring of the Holy Ghost described?

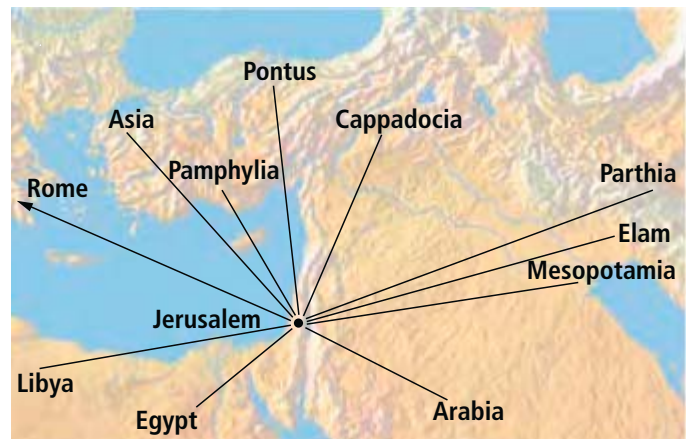
Explain that the phrase “cloven tongues” (verse 3) refers to tongues that are cloven or forked, or that have the appearance of the flame of a fire. Anciently, fire often symbolized the divine presence or influence. This was a sign that the disciples had received the gift of the Holy Ghost, promised by the Savior.

Invite a student to read Acts 2:4–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened as the disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost.

- According to verse 4, what happened as the disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost? (The Spirit “gave them utterance” and enabled them to speak in other languages.)
- Why did the Jews from different nations marvel at what they heard?

Invite students to scan Acts 2:9–11 and count the number of different groups of people or nationalities who heard the disciples speak in tongues by the power of the Holy Ghost. Ask them to report what they find. Consider displaying the accompanying map to help students visualize where these Jews were from.

Point out that according to verse 11, each of these groups heard in their own language “the wonderful works of God” taught by the disciples. You may need to explain that proselytes were Gentiles who had joined the Jewish faith.



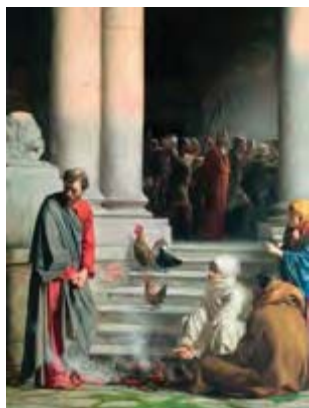
- As illustrated by the disciples’ experience on the day of Pentecost, what can help us teach and testify to others? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **As we are filled with the Holy Ghost, He will help us teach and testify to others.**)

To help students understand this principle, bring to class two empty cups, a pitcher of water, and a tray. Place the cups on the tray so that the tray can hold any water that spills. Then cover the top of one cup with a piece of paper or lid so that water cannot be poured into it, and place an object (such as a rock) in the other cup so that the cup is mostly filled with the object. Invite a student to try filling both cups with water from the pitcher.

- If the cups represent us and the water represents the Holy Ghost, what might the piece of paper (or lid) and the rock represent? What behaviors and attitudes can prevent us from being filled with the Holy Ghost?
- What can we do to be filled with the Holy Ghost so He can help us teach and testify to others?
- In what ways has the Holy Ghost helped you teach the gospel or share your testimony with others?

Testify of the principle written on the board, and invite students to apply this principle by seeking the companionship of the Holy Ghost so they can teach and testify to others.

Summarize Acts 2:12–13 by explaining that some Jews were amazed by what they had heard, while others mocked the disciples by accusing them of having drunk too much wine.



Peter's Denial, by Carl Heinrich Bloch. Courtesy of the National History Museum at Frederiksborg Castle in Hillerød, Denmark. Do not copy.

Acts 2:14–47

Peter testifies of Jesus Christ and teaches how to gain salvation

Invite a student to read Acts 2:14 aloud, and ask the class to look for who began teaching the multitude. Invite students to report what they find.

Ask students to imagine themselves in Peter’s situation, standing before the multitude.

- If you had been in Peter’s situation, what truths of the gospel would you have taught and testified of? Why?

Summarize Acts 2:15–35 by explaining that Peter declared that the events of the gift of tongues and other manifestations of the Spirit among the disciples were one fulfillment and meaning of Joel’s prophecy (see Joel 2:28–32). Peter then taught and testified to the people using some of King David’s words and psalms.

Write the following scripture references and questions on the board:

Acts 2:22–24, 29–33, 36

What are some of the important truths Peter taught and testified of?

What stands out to you about Peter’s testimony to the Jews?

Divide students into pairs. Invite each pair to study the scripture references on the board and discuss their answers to the accompanying questions. After sufficient time, invite a few students to share their responses with the class.

Display a picture that portrays Peter’s denial of the Savior (for example, *Peter’s Denial* by Carl Heinrich Bloch, available on LDS.org). Invite a student to summarize what Peter said and did when asked about his relationship to Jesus on the night the Savior was arrested (see Luke 22:54–62).

- How did Peter’s words and actions on the day of Pentecost differ from his behavior on the night the Savior was arrested?
- What do you think influenced this change in Peter?

Invite a student to read Acts 2:37 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Peter’s words affected the multitude.

- How did Peter’s words affect the multitude?

You may want to invite students to mark the phrase “pricked in their heart.” Explain that the Holy Ghost pricked the people’s hearts as they heard Peter’s testimony. The word *pricked* here means “pierced thoroughly” and suggests that the people felt remorse because the Jews as a people and nation had crucified their Lord, Jesus Christ. Peter was

Acts 2:36–38

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

not implying that the group of Jews from various nationalities that he was teaching on the day of Pentecost were the ones responsible for the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

- According to verse 37, what question did the people ask?
- What does this question reveal about what was happening in the hearts of the people? (The people were beginning to experience a change of heart.)

Invite a student to read Acts 2:38–41 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter instructed the people to do. Explain that *untoward* means rebellious, perverse, or crooked.

- What did Peter instruct the people to do?
- According to verse 41, how did the people respond to Peter’s teachings and invitation to repent and be baptized?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *As we receive the word of God by the power of the Holy Ghost, . . .*

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 2:42–47. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the new converts to the Church did after they received the truth by the power of the Holy Ghost and were baptized. Explain that the phrase “breaking of bread” (verse 42) refers to participating in the ordinance of the sacrament and that to have “all things common” (verse 44) refers to the Saints being unified and living the law of consecration.

- According to these verses, what actions demonstrated that those who were baptized were truly converted (see also 3 Nephi 26:17–21)? (Invite a student to list the class’s responses on the board.)

Remind students that before the Jews heard and acted on Peter’s words, they had not accepted Jesus as their Savior, nor did they follow His teachings. Invite students to consider how the people changed.

- What principle can we learn from Acts 2:37–47 about what can happen as we receive the word of God by the power of the Holy Ghost? (Using students’ words, complete the statement on the board so that it conveys the following truth: **As we receive the word of God by the power of the Holy Ghost, our hearts will change and we will be converted to Jesus Christ.**)
- What can we do to receive the word of God by the power of the Holy Ghost?

Invite students to review the actions listed on the board of those who were baptized and converted.

- As you have endeavored to learn and live the truths of the gospel, how has the Spirit helped you change and become converted to Jesus Christ? (You may want to share an experience from your own life as well.)

Invite students to ponder what they can do to better receive God’s words and teachings by the power of the Holy Ghost. Encourage them to act on any promptings they receive.

Scripture Mastery—Acts 2:36–38

Invite students to compare Acts 2:36–38 to the fourth article of faith. Ask students to identify in Acts 2:36–38 the words that demonstrate or teach the first principles and ordinances of the gospel. Then divide students into pairs, and ask each pair to discuss how each of these principles and ordinances helps us receive the full blessings of the Savior’s Atonement. After sufficient time, ask:

- What blessing did Peter say the people would receive as a result of repenting and being baptized?
- Based on your understanding of Acts 2:38, what must we do to prepare to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost? (Using their own words, students should identify a truth similar to the following: **When we have faith in Jesus Christ, repent, and are baptized, we are prepared to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.** Write this truth on the board.)
- How do faith, repentance, and baptism prepare someone to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost?

Acts 3

Introduction

At the gate of the temple, Peter, accompanied by John, healed a man who had been born lame. Peter then taught the people who had witnessed the healing of

this man. He testified of Jesus Christ, invited them to repent, and prophesied of the latter-day Restoration of the gospel.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 3:1–11

Peter and John heal a man who was born lame

Invite students to think of a time when they asked for something specific (perhaps a birthday or Christmas gift) but received something else instead. Ask a few of them to share their experiences and to explain how they felt when they did not receive what they wanted.

- How might we compare these experiences to seeking blessings from Heavenly Father through prayer? (Sometimes Heavenly Father does not answer our prayers in the ways we expect or provide the blessings we ask for.)

Ask students to ponder experiences in which they did not receive the answer or blessing from Heavenly Father that they were expecting.

Invite the class to look for a principle as they study Acts 3 that will help them when they are not receiving the answers or blessings that they expect from the Lord.

Invite a student to read Acts 3:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom Peter and John met at the gate of the temple.

- Whom did Peter and John meet at the gate of the temple?
- What does it mean that this man “asked an alms”? (verse 3). (You may want to explain that *alms* are items people donate to the poor.)

Point out that we learn from Acts 4:22 that the lame man was more than 40 years old.

- Considering that this man had been unable to walk in 40 years, what condition may the lame man’s legs have been in?

Invite the class to consider how it would feel to be in the lame man’s position.

- What are some typical ways in which people might respond to someone in this man’s situation?

Invite a student to read Acts 3:4–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter did for this man.

- What did Peter do for this man?
- What stands out to you about Peter’s actions and words?

Invite a student to read Acts 3:8 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the man did after Peter “lifted him up” (verse 7).

 To help students visualize the events recorded in Acts 3:1–8, you may want to show the video “Peter and John Heal a Man Crippled Since Birth” (3:21) from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos*, available on LDS.org.

- What did the man do after Peter “lifted him up”?
- In what ways was the blessing this man received greater than the alms he had originally asked for?

Encourage students to recall the experience in which they received an answer or blessing from Heavenly Father that was different from the answer or blessing they had been expecting.

- What truth can we learn from Acts 3:1–8 that can help us when we do not receive the answer or blessing we are expecting from Heavenly Father? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **Heavenly Father might not answer our prayers in the ways we want or expect Him to, but His answers are always for our greater good.** Write this truth on the board, and consider inviting students to write it in the margin of their scriptures next to verse 6.)
- How might Heavenly Father answer our prayers differently than how we want or expect Him to? (For example, He might give us strength to endure a trial rather than removing it, or He might give us wisdom to help us solve a problem rather than solving it for us.)

Explain that in the account recorded in Acts 3:1–8, it is obvious that what this man received was greater than what he had asked for. However, in other cases it may not be as clear that what we are receiving is greater than what we asked for.

- How can remembering the truth written on the board help us when we receive an answer to prayer that differs from the answer we expected?

Invite students to ponder experiences in which the Lord’s response to their prayers was different from the answer they desired but turned out to be for their greater good. Ask a few students to share their experiences. You may also want to share an experience of your own.

Invite a student to read Acts 3:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the people reacted to this man’s healing.

- How did the people react to this man’s healing?

Acts 3:12–26

Peter testifies of Jesus Christ and preaches repentance

Invite the class to imagine that they had been among the people at the temple who witnessed the healing of the lame man. Point out that these people had often seen the lame man begging as they entered the temple gates, but after he was healed, they saw him leaping and walking.

- If you had been among the people at the temple, how do you think your view of Peter and John might have changed after witnessing this miracle?

Divide students into pairs. Invite each pair to read Acts 3:12–16 aloud together, looking for how Peter explained the healing of the lame man to the crowd. After sufficient time, ask:

- Did Peter take personal credit for healing the man?
- By what power did Peter say the man had been healed? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Jesus Christ’s servants can perform miracles through faith in His name.**)

Explain that Peter used this occasion to teach the people about Jesus Christ, who had recently been condemned to death by His own people but had overcome death through His Resurrection.

Invite a student to read Acts 3:17–21 aloud, including the Joseph Smith Translation changes for verses 17 (see footnote *a*) and 20 (see footnote *b*). Ask the class to follow along, looking for Peter’s invitation to the people.

- What did Peter invite the people to do?

To help students understand Peter’s message, point out that Peter was speaking to the people who had called for or consented to the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ (see Acts 3:14–15).

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith:



“[Peter] did not say to them, ‘Repent and be baptized, for the remission of your sins;’ but he said, ‘Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.’ [Acts 3:19.]

“... They could not be baptized for the remission of sins for they had shed innocent blood” (in *History of the Church*, 6:253).

Point out the phrase “when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ” (verses 19–20).

- What do you think this phrase refers to?

Allow students to use their own words

As students express the doctrines and principles they find in the scriptures, do not suggest that their answers are wrong if they differ from the wording in this manual. However, if a student’s statement is doctrinally incorrect, it is your responsibility to gently help him or her correct the statement. Doing so can provide an important learning experience while maintaining an atmosphere of love and respect.

Acts 3:19–21

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“This designated period, this *times of refreshing*, is to take place at the second coming of the Son of Man, in the day when the Lord sends Christ again to earth.

“ . . . It is the day when ‘the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.’ (Tenth Article of Faith.) It is the day of the ‘new earth’ that Isaiah saw (Isa. 65:17), the earth which will prevail when wickedness ceases, when the millennial era is ushered in” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1967, 43).

On the board, display the picture *The Second Coming* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 66; see also LDS.org). Label it by writing *The times of refreshing* on the board near the picture.

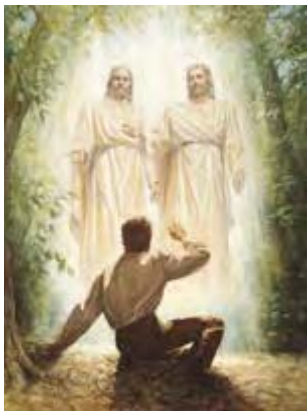


- How will the earth be refreshed at Jesus Christ’s Second Coming? (It will be cleansed of wickedness.)

Point out the phrase “times of restitution of all things” (verse 21).

- What do you think the “times of restitution of all things” refers to? (You may want to point out Acts 3:21, footnote *a* to help students understand that this refers to the Restoration of the gospel in the latter days. Jesus Christ would remain in heaven during the coming period of apostasy, but He would return to the earth to bring about the restitution or restoration of all things pertaining to the gospel. You may also want to point out that Peter used the phrase “times of restitution of all things” to describe instances when Jesus Christ would visit the earth before His Second Coming.)
- When has Jesus Christ visited the earth as part of the latter-day Restoration of the gospel? (Students might mention the Savior’s appearances in Joseph Smith’s First Vision [see Joseph Smith—History 1:17] and at the Kirtland Temple [see D&C 110:2–5].)

On the board, display the picture *The First Vision* (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 90; see also LDS.org). Label it by writing *The times of restitution of all things* on the board near the picture.



- According to verse 21, who in addition to Peter had spoken of the latter-day Restoration of the gospel? (Using their own words, students should identify the following doctrine: **Prophets in all ages have foretold the latter-day Restoration of the gospel.**)

Summarize Acts 3:22–26 by explaining that Peter testified that Moses “and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after” (verse 24) had spoken of Jesus Christ and warned of the consequences of rejecting Him (verse 23).

You may want to conclude by sharing your testimony that Jesus Christ has come to earth as part of the latter-day Restoration of the gospel and that He will return at His Second Coming to cleanse the earth of wickedness.

Scripture Mastery—Acts 3:19–21

To help students understand how to use Acts 3:19–21 in a missionary setting, present the following scenario: An investigator asks, “Where in the Bible does it say that the gospel would be restored in the last days?”

Divide students into pairs. Ask each pair to prepare an answer to this question using Acts 3:19–21 and at least one other Bible passage. You might encourage them to look under “Restoration of the Gospel” in the Topical Guide.

After sufficient time, invite a student to role-play as the investigator and one of the pairs of students to role-play as missionaries in front of the class. Ask the pair of students role-playing as missionaries to share their prepared answer with the student who is role-playing as the investigator.

LESSON 85

Acts 4–5

Introduction

After healing a lame man at the temple (see Acts 3), Peter and John were arrested. The Sanhedrin commanded them to stop teaching in the name of Jesus. However, the Apostles continued to preach and heal in Jesus's

name. They were arrested again and beaten for refusing to comply with the Jewish leaders' orders. Church members lived the law of consecration, but two of them died as a result of lying to Peter and to God.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 4:1–31

Members of the Sanhedrin command Peter and John to stop teaching in the name of Jesus

Ask students to ponder what they would do in the following situations:

1. A friend posts something untrue about the Church on social media.
2. A coach schedules a tournament that requires your team to play on Sunday.
3. Your friends ask your opinion about a social issue that is generally popular and supported but is contrary to the teachings of the Church.

After sufficient time, ask:

- What are some other circumstances in which we might need to share or defend our faith?
- What can be challenging about sharing or defending our faith?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Acts 4–5 that can guide them in these types of situations.

Invite students to summarize what they remember about the events and teachings recorded in Acts 3. If needed, remind them that after healing the lame man, Peter and John taught a group of people who had gathered around them at the temple.

Invite a student to read Acts 4:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Peter and John as they taught the people at the temple.


- What happened to Peter and John?

Summarize Acts 4:5–6 by explaining that Peter and John were arrested and taken before the Jewish governing council called the Sanhedrin (see Bible Dictionary, “Sanhedrin”). Remind students that many members of the Sanhedrin had been involved in bringing about the arrest and Crucifixion of the Savior.

Invite a student to read Acts 4:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the question the Jewish leaders asked Peter and John.

- What did the Jewish leaders ask Peter and John?
- What could happen to Peter and John if they indicated they were followers of Jesus Christ?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 4:8–21. Invite students to look for what Peter declared to the council.

 Instead of having students read Acts 4:8–21, consider showing the video “Peter and John Are Judged” (2:51) from *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos*. This video is available on LDS.org.

- According to Acts 4:10–12, what truths did Peter teach the council? (Students may identify several truths, but be sure to emphasize that **the name of Jesus Christ is the only name through which we can receive salvation.**)
- According to verse 13, why did the council marvel at Peter and John?

Invite students to review Acts 4:8 silently, looking for what influenced Peter and helped him speak with boldness to the council.

Encourage daily scripture study

Encourage students to set aside time every day for personal study of the New Testament. Help them account for their daily study by providing an appropriate tracking system (see the reading charts in the appendix of this manual). Give students regular opportunities to share what they are learning and feeling during their personal scripture study. Take care not to embarrass or discourage students who struggle with studying the scriptures on their own.

- How do you think being filled with the Holy Ghost influenced Peter's ability to teach the gospel with boldness?
- What principle can we learn from Peter's example as recorded in verses 8 and 13? (Students may use their own words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **As we are filled with the Holy Ghost, we can share the gospel with boldness.**)

Invite students to look for additional illustrations of this principle as they continue to study Acts 4–5.

- According to verse 18, what command did the council give to Peter and John?
- According to verses 19–20, how did Peter and John respond to the council's order?

Summarize Acts 4:23–28 by explaining that after Peter and John were released, they gathered with other believers and prayed with them.

Invite a student to read Acts 4:29–30 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the believers asked of God.

- What did the believers ask of God?

Invite a student to read Acts 4:31 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened after their prayer.

- What happened after the people prayed?
- Based on these verses, what can we do to invite the Holy Ghost to help us speak the words of God with boldness?

Refer to some of the situations mentioned at the beginning of the lesson.

- In what ways can we be bold in sharing the gospel in situations like these?
- How can we boldly share and defend the gospel with others while still being respectful and civil?
- When has the Holy Ghost helped you speak the word of God with boldness?

Acts 4:32–5:11

Church members live the law of consecration, but Ananias and Sapphira lie to Peter

Ask students to consider the following scenarios:

1. A youth group is planning to do baptisms for the dead at the temple. One member of the group knows that she needs to see the bishop for a recommend, but she also knows that she has committed some sins that have not been confessed.
2. A young man is preparing for a mission. He knows the bishop is going to ask questions about his worthiness to serve a mission. He is trying to figure out ways to answer those questions without having to tell the bishop about some of the mistakes he has made.

Invite students to look for a principle as they study Acts 4:32–5:11 that can help them understand the importance of being honest with God's servants.

Invite a student to read Acts 4:32–35 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Church members did with their possessions.

- What did Church members do with their possessions?
- According to verses 34–35, what was their process for sharing their physical possessions?

Invite a student to read Acts 5:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what a married couple named Ananias and Sapphira did with money they received from selling land.

- What did Ananias and Sapphira do that was so serious?

Invite a student to read Acts 5:3–4 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Peter said to Ananias.

- According to verse 4, whom had Ananias ultimately lied to?
- From Peter's response, what principle can we learn about lying to the Lord's servants? (Students may use their own words to identify the following principle: **If we lie to God's servants, it is the same as lying to Him.**)
- Why do you think that lying to God's servants is the same as lying to Him?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 5:5–11. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Ananias and Sapphira as a consequence of breaking their covenant and lying to Peter.

- What happened to Ananias and Sapphira?
- Although we or those we know may not experience such severe or immediate consequences for lying, what are some consequences we may experience if we lie to the Lord or break our covenants?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley. Ask students to listen for some of the consequences of dishonesty:

“In our time, those found in dishonesty do not die as did Ananias and Sapphira, but something within them dies. Conscience chokes, character withers, self-respect vanishes, integrity dies” (“We Believe in Being Honest,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1990, 4).

- According to President Hinckley, what are some consequences of lying? Refer to the scenarios presented at the beginning of this section of the lesson.
- What do the individuals in these scenarios need to know about what happens to us if we lie to a priesthood leader?
- What blessings come from being honest with the Lord’s servants?

Acts 5:12–42

The Apostles are put into prison for healing in the name of Jesus Christ

Ask students to imagine that they are living at the time of Peter and John and are reporters for a newspaper. Explain that they will be invited to study portions of Acts 5:12–32 and then write a headline summarizing what happened. (To provide context for these passages, remind students that the Sanhedrin had commanded Peter and John to stop speaking in the name of Jesus Christ.) Follow the instructions given with each block of verses.

1. Acts 5:12–16 (Read this passage as a class, and write a headline together.)
2. Acts 5:17–23 (Ask students to read this passage with a partner and write a headline. Invite some pairs to share their headlines with the class.)
3. Acts 5:24–32 (Ask students to read this passage individually and write a headline. Invite some students to share their headlines with the class.)


After students share their headlines, ask:

- According to verse 29, why did Peter and the other Apostles say they had continued to preach in Jesus’s name despite the command from the council?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we choose to obey God rather than men, then . . .*

- From what you have read in Acts 4–5, what are some ways we could complete this statement? (After students have responded, complete the statement on the board as follows: **If we choose to obey God rather than men, then He will be with us.**)
- In what ways was God with Peter and the other Apostles as they obeyed Him rather than the council? (God filled them with the Holy Ghost [see Acts 4:8, 31], enabled them to perform miracles [see Acts 5:12–16], and sent His angel to deliver them from prison [see Acts 5:17–20].)
- When have you or someone you know chosen to obey God rather than men? How did God show He was with you or this person?

Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 5:33–42. Invite the class to follow along, looking for additional examples of how the Lord was with Peter and the other Apostles.

 Instead of having students read Acts 5:33–42, you could review and summarize the content of Acts 5:12–42 by showing the video “Peter and John Continue Preaching the Gospel” (5:38). This video is available on LDS.org.

Point out that we learn in Acts 5:33 that the council sought to kill Peter and John.

- According to verses 41–42, how did the Apostles remain faithful to the Lord in the face of this threat? How was the Lord with them at this time?
- How can the truths we have identified in this lesson assist us as we live the gospel and share it with those around us?

Share your testimony of the truths taught today.

Home-Study Lesson

Acts 1–5 (Unit 17)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles your students learned as they studied Acts 1–5 (unit 17) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Acts 1:1–8)

Students began their study of the book of Acts by learning that Jesus Christ directs His Church by revealing His will to His Apostles through the Holy Ghost and that the Apostles are witnesses of Jesus Christ and testify of Him throughout the earth. Students then learned that through the power of the Holy Ghost, we can become witnesses of Jesus Christ as well. Material in this lesson also gave students an overview of the second half of the New Testament.

Day 2 (Acts 1:9–26)

As students studied the account of Jesus Christ's Ascension, they learned that at His Second Coming, the Savior will descend from heaven in glory. As they read about how the Apostles selected Judas's replacement, students learned that Apostles of Jesus Christ are called by God through revelation.

Day 3 (Acts 2)

As students studied the events on the day of Pentecost, they discovered the following truths: As we are filled with the Holy Ghost, He will help us teach and testify to others. As we receive the word of God by the power of the Holy Ghost, our hearts will change and we will be converted to Jesus Christ. When we have faith in Jesus Christ, repent, and are baptized, we are prepared to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Day 4 (Acts 3–5)

When Peter and John healed a lame man at the temple, students learned that Heavenly Father might not answer our prayers in the ways we want or expect Him to, but His answers are always for our greater good. Other principles learned in this lesson include the following: Jesus Christ's servants can perform miracles through faith in His name. Prophets in all ages have foretold the latter-day Restoration of the gospel. If we lie to God's servants, it is the same as lying to Him.

Introduction

This lesson can help students know how they can respond with boldness when they have opportunities to share or defend the gospel.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 4:1–31

Members of the Sanhedrin command Peter and John to stop teaching in the name of Jesus

Ask students to ponder what they would do in the following situations (consider writing these scenarios on the board before class):

1. A friend posts something untrue about the Church on social media.
2. A coach schedules a tournament that requires your team to play on Sunday.
3. Your friends ask your opinion about a social issue that is generally popular and supported but is contrary to the teachings of the Church.

After giving students enough time to ponder, ask:

- What are some other circumstances in which we might need to share or defend our faith?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Acts 4–5 that can guide them in these types of situations.

To help students understand the context of Acts 4, invite them to summarize what they remember about the events and teachings in Acts 3. (At the temple, Peter and John healed a man who was lame since birth and taught about Jesus.)


Summarize Acts 4:1–6 by explaining that Peter and John were arrested for these acts and taken before the Sanhedrin, which was the Jewish governing council. Remind students that many members of the Sanhedrin had earlier been involved in bringing about the arrest and Crucifixion of the Savior.

Invite a student to read Acts 4:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the question the Jewish leaders asked Peter and John.

- What did the Jewish leaders ask Peter and John?
- What could happen to Peter and John if they indicated they were followers of Jesus Christ?

Ask students to consider how they might have felt if they had been in Peter or John's position and what they would have said to the council.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 4:8–21. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter declared to the council.

 Instead of having students read Acts 4:8–21, consider showing the video "Peter and John Are Judged" (2:51) from

The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos. This video portrays events from Acts 4:8–21. It is available on LDS.org.

- According to Acts 4:13, why did the council marvel at Peter and John?

Invite students to review Acts 4:8 silently, looking for what influenced Peter and helped him speak with boldness to the council.

- How do you think being filled with the Holy Ghost influenced Peter's ability to teach the gospel with boldness?
- What principle can we learn from Peter's example as recorded in verses 8 and 13? (Students may use their own words, but make sure they identify a principle similar to the following: **As we are filled with the Holy Ghost, we can share the gospel with boldness.** Write this principle on the board.)
- According to Acts 4:18, what command did the council give to Peter and John?
- According to verses 19–20, how did Peter and John respond to the council's order?

Summarize Acts 4:23–30 by explaining that after Peter and John were released, they gathered with other believers and prayed with them.

Invite a student to read Acts 4:31 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened after their prayer.

- What happened after the people prayed?
- From what we learn in this verse, what can we do to invite the Holy Ghost to help us speak the words of God with boldness?

Refer to some of the situations mentioned at the beginning of this lesson.

- In what ways can we be bold in sharing the gospel in situations like these while still being respectful and civil? (See Alma 38:12; you may want to explain that to be bold in sharing the gospel means that we confidently share what we know to be true, but we do it with humility and respect for others who may think or feel differently.)
- When has the Holy Ghost helped you speak the word of God with boldness?
- How did you recognize that the Holy Ghost had helped you?

Acts 5:12–42

The Apostles are put into prison for healing in the name of Jesus Christ

Ask the students to imagine that they are living at the time of Peter and John and are reporters for the *Jerusalem Times*. Explain that they will be invited to study portions of Acts 5:12–32 and then write a headline summarizing what happened. (To provide context for these passages, remind students that the Sanhedrin had commanded Peter and John to stop speaking in the name of Jesus Christ.) Follow the instructions given with each block of verses.

1. Acts 5:12–16 (Read this passage as a class, and write a headline together.)

2. Acts 5:17–23 (Ask students to read this passage with a partner and write a headline. Invite some pairs to share their headlines with the class.)
3. Acts 5:24–32 (Ask students to read this passage individually and write a headline. Invite some students to share their headlines with the class.)


After students share their headlines, ask:

- According to Acts 5:29, why did Peter and the other Apostles say they had continued to preach in Jesus's name despite the command from the council?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we choose to obey God rather than men, then . . .*

- From what you have read in Acts 4–5, what are some ways we could complete this statement? (After students have responded, complete the statement on the board as follows: **If we choose to obey God rather than men, then He will be with us.**)
- In what ways was God with Peter and the other Apostles as they obeyed Him rather than the council? (God filled them with the Holy Ghost [see Acts 4:8, 31], enabled them to perform miracles [see Acts 5:12–16], and sent His angel to deliver them from prison [see Acts 5:17–20].)
- When have you or someone you know chosen to obey God rather than men? How did God show He was with you or this person?

Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 5:33–42. Invite the class to follow along, looking for additional examples of how the Lord was with Peter and the other Apostles.

 Instead of having students read Acts 5:33–42, you could review and summarize the content of Acts 5:12–42 by showing the video "Peter and John Continue Preaching the Gospel" (5:38). This video is available on LDS.org.

Point out that we learn in Acts 5:33 that the council sought to kill Peter and John.

- According to verses 41–42, how did the Apostles remain faithful to the Lord in the face of this threat? How was the Lord with them at this time?
- How can the truths we have identified in this lesson assist us as we strive to live the gospel and share it with those around us?

Share your testimony of the truths taught today, and invite students to apply these truths in their lives.

Next Unit (Acts 6–12)

Ask students how many people they can think of who have died as a martyr for the gospel's sake. Explain that as they study Acts 6–12 during the coming week, they will learn about two valiant martyrs for Jesus Christ: one was a Seventy, and another was an Apostle. Ask students to consider the following questions: Why is Peter's vision concerning Cornelius so important to the Church? What happened to Saul (also known as Paul) that changed his life? How did he go blind, and whom did the Lord direct to restore his sight?

LESSON 86

Acts 6–7

Introduction

The Apostles ordained seven disciples to assist in the Lord's work. Stephen, one of those selected, performed many miracles. Some Jews accused him of blasphemy and brought him before the Sanhedrin, where he was

transfigured. After chastising the Jews for rejecting the Savior, Stephen saw Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. He was then cast out of the city and stoned to death.

Using the curriculum

When you prepare a lesson, prayerfully review the curriculum in tandem with your study of the scripture block. As you do so, the Holy Ghost can help you personalize the lesson for the needs of your students. You might use all or part of the teaching suggestions for a scripture block, or you might adapt the suggested ideas to the needs of your class.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 6:1–8

Seven disciples are chosen to assist the Apostles in the work

Invite students to think of someone in their family, ward, or community who has a specific temporal challenge or need.

- How do you feel when you consider this person and his or her circumstances?
- How do you think Heavenly Father feels about these individuals?

Invite students to look as they study Acts 6:1–8 for the way the Lord has provided to meet the needs of His children.

Invite a student to read Acts 6:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the concern the Grecians brought to the Apostles' attention. The Grecians "were Greek-speaking Jewish-Christians," and the Hebrews "were Palestinian Jewish-Christians" (*New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 288).

- What concern did the Grecian Saints express?

Explain that at this time, the Church was growing rapidly and so were the temporal needs of many people, including widows. Because the Apostles were responsible for preaching the gospel to "all nations" (Matthew 28:19), they were unable to personally attend to every individual need of the Church members.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 6:3–6. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Apostles solved this problem. Invite students to report what they find.

- What qualities did those chosen to help with the growing needs of the Church need to have in order to be worthy of this calling? (You may want to suggest that students mark the phrases in verses 3 and 5 that describe these qualities.)
- How is this process similar to what the Lord does in His Church today to ensure members' needs are met? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board:
Worthy Church members are called to help minister to the needs of others.)

Invite several students to come to the board and write down callings in the Church. For several of the callings they listed, ask:

- Whose needs are ministered to by people who serve faithfully in this calling?
- Why do you think it is important that people who are called to help minister to others' needs have the qualities mentioned in verses 3 and 5?

Invite students to read Acts 6:7–8 silently. You may want to suggest that they mark positive outcomes that resulted from the calling of these seven disciples to minister to others. Ask students to report what they find.

Acts 6:9–7:53

Stephen is brought before the Sanhedrin and testifies that they have rejected the Messiah

Invite a few students to stand and demonstrate what it would look like if they were trying to resist the help of another person in the following situations, even though they need the help: doing homework, cooking a meal, solving a major problem in their lives.

- Why do we sometimes resist the help of others?
- What consequences can come from resisting the help of others?

Point out that one way Heavenly Father helps us is through the Holy Ghost. Invite students to look as they study Acts 6:9–7:53 for consequences of resisting the Holy Ghost.

Explain that as recorded in Acts 6:9, many people who did not believe in Jesus Christ contended with Stephen as he taught the gospel. Invite a student to read Acts 6:10–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why those who contended with Stephen were affected by him. You may need to explain that the word *suborned* in verse 11 means to bribe.

- How were the people who contended with Stephen affected by his teachings?
- What was Stephen accused of?

Summarize Acts 6:12–14 by explaining that Stephen was brought before the Jewish governing council, called the Sanhedrin.

Invite a student to read Acts 6:15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what was unusual about Stephen’s appearance as he stood before the council.

- What do you think it means that Stephen had the “face of an angel”? (verse 15). (Stephen was transfigured. This holy transfiguration was one way God showed the people that He approved of Stephen and his message. [See Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. (1965–73), 2:67.])

Summarize Acts 7:1–50 by explaining that in response to the accusations against him, Stephen recounted some of Israel’s history.

Invite a student to read Acts 7:35–39 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Stephen said about ancient Israel’s treatment of the prophet Moses.

- According to verse 35, how did the children of Israel respond to Moses when he came to deliver them from Egypt?
- How did they respond to Moses even after he had delivered them (see verse 39)?

Remind students that Jesus Christ was the prophet whom Moses prophesied of (see verse 37).

Invite a student to read Acts 7:51–53 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Stephen compared the Jewish leaders of his day to the ancient Israelites he described.

- According to verse 51, how were the Jewish leaders of Stephen’s day similar to the ancient Israelites he described? (They both resisted the Holy Ghost. Explain that “stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart” refers to the Jews’ sinful pride and wicked hearts.)
- According to verse 52, whom did the Jews of old reject and persecute as they resisted the Holy Ghost? (The prophets, including Moses.)
- Who did Stephen say the Jewish council had rejected? (The “Just One” [verse 52], meaning the Savior.)

Explain that Stephen was illustrating that just as ancient Israel had rejected the prophet Moses, the Jewish leaders in Stephen’s day rejected the Savior.

- What truth can we learn about resisting the Holy Ghost? (Students may use different words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **Resisting the Holy Ghost can lead to rejecting the Savior and His prophets.**)
- How can resisting the Holy Ghost lead us to reject the teachings of the Savior and His prophets? (The Holy Ghost testifies of Jesus Christ and witnesses of the truth of His words and the words of His prophets. Therefore, resisting the Holy Ghost will weaken someone’s testimony and his or her resolve to follow the Savior and His prophets.)

Invite students to explain how someone could be tempted to resist the Holy Ghost in the following circumstances: (1) selecting entertainment and media, (2) choosing whether to follow the prophets’ counsel on dating, and (3) deciding whether to apply the principles of repentance that Jesus Christ and His prophets have taught.

- What can we do to welcome rather than resist the influence of the Holy Ghost?

Invite students to consider how accepting the influence of the Holy Ghost has led them to accept the Savior and His prophets and apply their teachings.

Encourage students to ponder one thing they could do in the coming week to actively invite the influence of the Holy Ghost into their lives. Invite them to write this goal in their class notebooks or scripture study journals, and encourage them to fulfill that goal.

Acts 7:54–60

Stephen is stoned to death

Write the word *tribulation* on the board, and ask students what they think it means. After they respond, write the following definition next to the word: *a cause of great trouble or suffering.*

- Why should we expect tribulation as followers of Jesus Christ?

Encourage students to look as they study Acts 7:54–60 for a principle that can help us when we experience tribulation.

Explain that after Stephen rebuked the wicked Jewish leaders, they were “cut to the heart” (verse 54) and angry.

Invite a student to read Acts 7:55–56 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Stephen experienced during this moment of persecution.

- What influence filled Stephen?
- Who did Stephen see?

Display the picture *Stephen Sees Jesus on the Right Hand of God* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 63; see also LDS.org).

- What fundamental doctrine about the Godhead can we learn from the account of Stephen’s vision? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following doctrine: **Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost are three separate and distinct beings.** You may want to suggest that students write this doctrine in the margin of their scriptures next to Acts 7:55–56.)

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 7:57–60. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the people did to Stephen. Invite students to report what they find.

- What stands out to you about Stephen’s prayer?
- Why do you think Luke described Stephen’s tragic death with the phrase “he fell asleep”? (verse 60). (Point out that this phrasing might refer to a righteous soul’s rest from the troubles of mortality and the peace with which such a person transitions from this life to the next [see D&C 42:46].)

Invite students to reflect on what Stephen experienced before he was taken and killed (see Acts 7:55–56).

- How did God strengthen Stephen throughout his experiences with the Sanhedrin? (Stephen was filled with the Holy Ghost and saw the Savior standing on the right hand of God.)
- What principle can we learn from Stephen’s experience that can help us remain faithful to Jesus Christ during tribulations? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure they understand the following principle: **If we remain faithful to Jesus Christ during tribulations, He will be with us.**)
- In what ways can the Lord be with us as we face tribulations?
- Although Stephen lost his life, what did he gain?

Explain that Stephen is generally considered the first Christian martyr. In addition, he can be seen as a type of Christ, as both he and the Savior stood before a council to be tried, declared truths in the face of their enemies, gave their lives in a righteous cause, and even uttered similar expressions as they suffered death (see Luke 23:33–34, 46). You might want to point out that a young man named Saul—who later became the Apostle Paul—was present and a witness to the martyrdom of Stephen (see verse 58).

Testify of the truths taught throughout this lesson.



LESSON 87

Acts 8

Introduction

Persecution against the Church in Jerusalem resulted in Church members being scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Philip ministered in Samaria, where many people accepted the gospel of Jesus Christ. After Peter and John bestowed the gift of the Holy Ghost on the

new converts, a sorcerer named Simon attempted to purchase the priesthood. God later led Philip to an Ethiopian official whom Philip taught about Jesus Christ and baptized.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 8:1–25

Philip ministers in Samaria, where Simon the sorcerer attempts to purchase the priesthood

Display some money. Ask students to imagine they have received a large amount of money.

- What is something you would purchase with the money?

Point out that some people believe that money can buy anything. However, some of the most valuable things in life cannot be purchased. Invite students to look as they study Acts 8 for a gift from God that cannot be purchased.

Remind students that in Acts 7 we learn about the death of the disciple Stephen at the hands of persecutors. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 8:1–5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Church members did as a result of persecution against the Church in Jerusalem. You may want to explain that *haling* (Acts 8:3) means dragging or pulling.

- What did persecution lead Church members to do?

Direct students' attention to the name *Philip* in verse 5. Remind students that Philip was one of the seven disciples ordained to assist the Twelve Apostles in ministering to the needs of Church members (see Acts 6:5). Ask students to refer to the "Overview of the Acts of the Apostles" handout (see the appendix of this manual) and find the Savior's commission recorded in Acts 1:8.

- According to Acts 8:5, how did Philip begin to fulfill the Savior's commission?

Invite a student to read Acts 8:6–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Samaritans responded to Philip's preaching.

- How did these Samaritans respond to Philip's preaching?
- In addition to preaching the gospel, what other works did Philip perform?

Invite a student to read Acts 8:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the description of a Samaritan named Simon.

- What do we learn about Simon from these verses? (Explain that the "use of power gained from the assistance or control of evil spirits is called *sorcery*" [Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. (1965–73), 2:82].)
- What influence did Simon have on the people?

Invite a student to read Acts 8:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Simon responded to Philip's preaching. Ask students to report what they find.

- According to verse 13, how was Simon affected by the "miracles and signs" he saw?

Summarize Acts 8:14–16 by explaining that Peter and John came to Samaria after hearing that the people there had accepted the word of God. They prayed that the converted Samaritans would receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning

Each scripture-based lesson in seminary focuses on a scripture block rather than on a particular concept, theme, doctrine, or principle. These lessons incorporate the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning, helping students to understand the context and content of a scripture block; to identify, understand, and feel the truth and importance of gospel doctrines and principles; and to apply doctrines and principles.

Ask students to read Acts 8:17 silently, looking for what Peter and John did for the new Church members in Samaria.

- What can we learn from this account about how the gift of the Holy Ghost is given? (After students respond, write the following doctrine on the board: **The gift of the Holy Ghost is bestowed after baptism through the laying on of hands by authorized priesthood holders.**)

Invite a student to read Acts 8:18–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the offer Simon made to Peter.

- What offer did Simon make to Peter?

Show students the money you displayed at the beginning of the lesson. Invite them to consider how they would have responded to Simon if they had been in Peter’s position.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 8:20–24. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter taught Simon about receiving the priesthood.

- What did Peter teach Simon about the priesthood, as recorded in verse 20?
- When he offered the Apostles money in exchange for receiving the priesthood, what did Simon not understand about the priesthood? (Because the priesthood belongs to God, it can be bestowed only according to His will. God establishes the manner in which the priesthood may be obtained.)
- According to verses 21–23, why could Simon not yet receive the priesthood? In what ways do you think Simon’s heart was “not right in the sight of God”? (verse 21).
- What can we learn from this account about receiving the priesthood? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The priesthood is bestowed according to God’s will and standard of worthiness.** Write this truth on the board.)
- Why do you think it is important to know that the priesthood is bestowed upon individuals only according to God’s will and standard of worthiness?

Summarize Acts 8:25 by explaining that Peter and John preached the gospel in many Samaritan villages.

Acts 8:26–40

Philip teaches and baptizes an Ethiopian official

Ask students to think of situations in which they have needed or would need someone to guide them.

- What are some situations in which you could be a guide for someone else? (You might invite students to think of destinations or subjects they are knowledgeable about or talents they have developed.)

Invite students to look as they study the remainder of Acts 8 for an important way in which they can be a guide for others.

Invite a student to read Acts 8:26–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why Philip went to Gaza.

- Why did Philip go to Gaza?
- Who was also traveling in the area Philip was in? (An Ethiopian eunuch. Explain that a eunuch was an official in the court of a king or queen [see Bible Dictionary, “Eunuch”].)
- What was the Ethiopian official doing in his chariot? (Reading from Esaias, or the words of Isaiah.)

Place two chairs facing each other at the front of the room. Ask for two volunteers to act out the roles of the Ethiopian official and Philip in the account that follows. (You may want to assign these roles before class and invite these students to prepare to act out their parts.)

Ask the student playing the Ethiopian official to sit in one of the chairs and the student playing Philip to stand by the door. Invite a third student to perform the role of the narrator.

Ask these students to read aloud from Acts 8:29–39 and act out their respective parts. Ask the class to watch what took place between Philip and the Ethiopian official. As students read and act out their parts, do the following:

1. After the narrator reads verses 32–33, invite students to consider writing *Isaiah 53:7–8* as a cross-reference in their scriptures next to Acts 8:32–33.
2. After the narrator reads verse 35, ask the student performing the role of Philip to explain to the class what he or she would teach about the Savior in this situation. (You may want to invite the class to make suggestions as well.)
3. When the narrator reads verse 38, kindly ask the volunteers not to act out the performance of the baptism.

After the volunteers have finished this activity, thank them and invite them to return to their seats.

- According to verse 29, why did Philip go to the Ethiopian official’s chariot?
- According to verse 31, what did the official say he needed in order to understand the writings of Isaiah?
- According to verses 35–38, how was Philip a guide for the official?
- What principle can we learn from Philip’s experience about the results of heeding promptings from God? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **as we heed promptings from God, we can receive opportunities to help guide others to Jesus Christ.** Write this principle on the board.)

Provide students with copies of the following handout. Invite students to follow the instructions on the handout and think of ways they could help guide someone to Jesus Christ. Explain that they will have an opportunity to share with the class what they write.

Guiding Others to Jesus Christ

Select one of the following situations:

- A young man you are friends with belongs to another Christian church. One day during lunch, you feel prompted to talk with him about the Church.
- While walking home from school, you see a young woman who is crying. You recognize her as a member of your ward who has not attended any church meetings for several years. You feel prompted to talk to her. As you try to comfort her, she describes her challenges and asks, “Why can’t I just be happy?”
- The mother of a young man you are connected with on a social media site recently passed away. You feel prompted to respond to the following post he recently made: “Feeling alone right now. Wishing that someone understood.”

On the back of this piece of paper or in your class notebook or scripture study journal, write what you would say and do to help guide this person to Jesus Christ. In your description, include answers to the following questions:

- What truths of the gospel would you share to help guide this person to Jesus Christ?
- What is one scripture you might invite this person to study?
- What would you invite this person to do?

After sufficient time, divide students into pairs. Invite students to explain to their partners what they wrote and why they would take that approach. Then invite several students to explain to the entire class what they wrote. You might consider inviting students who selected one of the first two scenarios to role-play what they would say and do in these situations, with you playing the individual they are trying to help. (If you do so, give students a minute to prepare before inviting them to role-play the scenario with you.) Then ask the class the following questions:

- When and how have you helped guide someone to Jesus Christ?
- When and how has someone helped guide you to Jesus Christ?

Encourage students to heed promptings from God so they can be directed to individuals whom they can help guide to Jesus Christ. Invite students to ponder what they can do in the next few days to help guide someone they know to Jesus Christ. Encourage students to report back to the class what they experience.

Acts 9

Introduction

Jesus appeared to Saul as he traveled to Damascus, after which Saul was blind. After Ananias healed him, Saul was baptized and began preaching in Damascus. Three

years later, Saul went to Jerusalem, but when his life was threatened, the Apostles sent him to Tarsus. Peter performed miracles in Lydda and Joppa.

Help students understand context and content

One of the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning is to understand the context and content of the scriptures. Context includes the circumstances that surround or the background to a particular scriptural passage, event, or account. Content includes the people, events, sermons, and inspired explanations that make up the text. As you help students understand the context and content of the scriptures, they will be prepared to recognize the messages of the inspired authors.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 9:1–9

Jesus appears to Saul on the road to Damascus

Write on the board the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. (This statement is found in “The Best Is Yet to Be,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Jan. 2010, 25–26.)

“There is something in many of us that particularly fails to forgive and forget earlier mistakes in life—either our mistakes or the mistakes of others. . . .

“Let people repent. Let people grow. Believe that people can change and improve” (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland).

Invite a student to read aloud the statement on the board. Then ask the class:

- What are some situations in which it would be important to allow others to change and improve and to believe they can do so?
- What are some situations in which it would be important to believe that we can change and improve?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Acts 9 that we can learn from the experience of someone who changed and improved.

Explain that most of the text of Acts 9 focuses on the experiences of a man named Saul.

Invite a student to read aloud the following description of Saul:

Saul was born in the Greek city Tarsus (see Acts 21:39) and had Roman citizenship (see Acts 16:37). He was a Jew from the lineage of Benjamin (see Romans 11:1) and was educated in Jerusalem by Gamaliel (see Acts 22:3), a well-known Pharisee and respected teacher of Jewish law (see Acts 5:34). Saul became a Pharisee (see Acts 23:6), and he spoke a “Hebrew tongue” (probably Aramaic) and Greek (see Acts 21:37, 40). He was later known by his Latin name, Paul (see Acts 13:9). (See Bible Dictionary, “Paul.”)

Remind students that Saul was present at the stoning of Stephen (see Acts 7:58–59). Invite a student to read Acts 8:1–3 aloud and another student to read Acts 9:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Saul treated Jesus Christ’s followers.

- How did Saul treat Jesus Christ’s followers?
- According to Acts 9:1–2, why was Saul going to Damascus?

Invite a student to read Acts 9:3–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened as Saul traveled to Damascus.

- Who appeared to Saul?

Point out the phrase “kick against the pricks” in verse 5. Explain that a *prick* refers to a goad, or a sharp stick used to make animals move (if possible, show students a pointed stick). In this case, to “kick against the pricks” means to fight against God.

Invite students to consider marking Saul’s question recorded in verse 6.

- What does Saul’s question teach us about him? (He desired to submit to the Lord’s will.)

Summarize Acts 9:7–9 by explaining that those traveling with Saul saw the light but did not hear Jesus’s voice as He spoke to Saul (see Joseph Smith Translation, Acts 9:7 [in Acts 9:7, footnote a]; Acts 22:9). Following the vision, Saul was physically blind. He was led to Damascus, and he did not eat or drink for three days.

- Imagine being Saul. If you had aggressively persecuted Jesus Christ's disciples, what might you be thinking and feeling during this time?

Acts 9:10–22

Saul is healed by Ananias of Damascus, is baptized, and preaches about Jesus Christ

Invite a student to read Acts 9:10–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord directed Ananias, a Church member in Damascus, to do.

- What did the Lord direct Ananias to do?

Point out that Saul's original intent in going to Damascus was to arrest people like Ananias.

- If you were Ananias and knew Saul's reputation, what might you have thought after receiving this direction from the Lord?

Invite a student to read Acts 9:13–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord taught Ananias about Saul.

- How did the Lord's view of Saul differ from Ananias's view of Saul?
- According to verse 15, what had the Lord chosen Saul to be and to do? (You may want to point out that the phrase "chosen vessel" may refer to the fact that Saul was foreordained to his ministry.)
- According to verse 16, although Saul would be a chosen vessel unto the Lord, what would he experience?
- What truths can we learn from these verses about how the Lord sees us? (Students may identify a variety of truths, but be sure to emphasize that **the Lord sees us as we can become** and **the Lord sees our potential for assisting Him in His work**. Write these truths on the board.)

Invite students to ponder how their individual backgrounds, character traits, and abilities can be used to assist the Lord in His work. Ask them to record their thoughts in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

Invite a student to read Acts 9:17–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Ananias did after the Lord helped him understand Saul's potential and his future mission.

- What did Ananias do for Saul?
- According to verse 20, what did Saul do "straightway," or immediately, after being baptized and receiving strength?

Point out that Saul's repentance, baptism, and preaching demonstrated his faith in Jesus Christ and his submissiveness to the Lord's will.

Invite a student to read Acts 9:21–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the people reacted to Saul's preaching.

- How did the people react to Saul's preaching?
- Why were the people amazed as they listened to Saul?

Remind students that the question Saul asked Jesus recorded in Acts 9:6 demonstrated his humility and his desire to submit to the Lord's will.

- Like Saul, what must we do to change and to fulfill the potential the Lord sees in us? (Using students' words, write the following principle on the board: **If we submit to the Lord's will, then we can change and can fulfill the potential He sees in us.**)

Invite two volunteers to come to the front of the room. Give one student soft molding clay, and give the other student hardened molding clay. (If you do not have access to molding clay, invite students to imagine doing this activity, then ask them the questions that follow the activity.) Give the volunteers 30 seconds or so to create something of their choosing using their clay. If the student with the hardened clay says it is too difficult, encourage him or her to keep trying.

After sufficient time, invite the volunteers to display what they created. Ask the student who was given the hardened clay:

- Why was it difficult to sculpt something with your clay?

Thank the volunteers and invite them to return to their seats. Ask the class:

- How can the hardened clay be likened to someone who is not submissive to the Lord's will?
- How can the moldable clay be likened to someone who is submissive to the Lord's will?
- How has submitting to the Lord helped you or others to change and to fulfill the potential the Lord sees in you or in them?

Read aloud the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson:

"A [person] can ask no more important question in his [or her] life than that which Paul asked: '. . . Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' " ("Listen to a Prophet's Voice," *Ensign*, Jan. 1973, 57).

Invite students to ponder the question "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Invite them to record any promptings they receive. After sufficient time, read aloud the following statement by President Benson:

"A [person] can take no greater action than to pursue a course that will bring to him [or her] the answer to that question and then to carry out that answer" ("Listen to a Prophet's Voice," 57).

Encourage students to continue to seek an answer to this question and to act on any promptings they receive.

Acts 9:23–31

Saul's life is threatened in Jerusalem, and the Apostles send him to Tarsus

Point out that after Saul's conversion, he dwelt in Arabia and later returned to Damascus (see Galatians 1:17). Summarize Acts 9:23–26 by explaining that Jews in Damascus conspired to kill Saul, but Church members helped him escape the city. Three years after his conversion (see Galatians 1:18), Saul went to Jerusalem, where Church members were afraid to receive him because they did not believe he had become a disciple of Jesus Christ.

- Why do you think some Church members were reluctant to accept that Saul had become a disciple of Jesus Christ?

Summarize Acts 9:27–31 by explaining that Barnabas, a Church member (see Acts 4:36–37), brought Saul to the Apostles and told them of Saul's vision and of his bold preaching in Damascus. Church members then welcomed Saul into their fellowship. When Greek Jews in Jerusalem sought to kill Saul, Church leaders sent him to Tarsus. The Church experienced peace and growth in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria.

Acts 9:32–43

Peter performs miracles in Lydda and Joppa

Divide students into pairs. Ask one student in each pair to read Acts 9:32–35 and the other student to read Acts 9:36–42. Invite them to look for the miracles Peter performed and how people responded. Explain that *almsdeeds* (verse 36) is the practice of giving offerings to the poor.

After sufficient time, invite students to discuss in their pairs the miracles Peter performed and how the people responded. Then ask the class:

- According to verses 35 and 42, how did the people in Lydda and the people in Joppa respond to Peter's ministering?
- What can we learn from their responses about the possible effects of ministering to others? (Using students' words, write the following principle on the board: **By ministering to others, we can help people turn to the Lord and believe in Him.**)

Explain that giving priesthood blessings is one way to minister to others. To help students recognize additional ways we can minister to others, ask:

- According to verses 36 and 39, how did Tabitha minister to others?
- How could someone who is "full of good works" (verse 36) and who serves others help people turn to the Lord and believe in Him?
- When have someone else's good works helped you or others turn to the Lord and believe in Him?

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths taught in this lesson.

LESSON 89

Acts 10–11

Introduction

God revealed to Peter in a vision that the gospel should be preached to the Gentiles. Peter taught the gospel to Cornelius and his household and later settled contention

among Jewish Saints about the gospel being preached to the Gentiles. The Lord's work continued to move forward despite persecution.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 10

God reveals to Peter in a vision that the gospel should be preached to the Gentiles

Invite students to imagine that a friend asks: "I heard that in 1978 your church changed its position to allow all men to receive the priesthood regardless of race. If you believe your church is directed by God, and God is an unchangeable being, how is that possible?"

Ask students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how they would respond to this friend. (*Note:* Make sure students respond to the question of changing Church practice rather than speculating on possible reasons for the priesthood restriction. Also, do not speculate on why the priesthood restriction was in place, since these reasons have not been revealed [see Official Declaration 2].)

Invite students as they study Acts 10–11 to look for doctrines and principles that can help them answer questions about how the Lord leads, guides, changes, and directs His Church.

Explain that up to this point in New Testament times, the gospel had been preached, with a few exceptions, exclusively to Jews as directed by the Savior (see Matthew 10:5–6). However, the Savior also told His disciples that after the Holy Ghost came upon them they would preach the gospel "unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). In Acts 10 we read about a significant change in the way the Church operated that would facilitate this.

Invite a student to read Acts 10:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for details about a Gentile named Cornelius. (You may want to point out that Cornelius "feared God" [verse 2]. God-fearers were Gentiles who worshipped the Lord but were not proselytes, or converts to the Jewish faith, and therefore did not live the entire law of Moses.)

- What was Cornelius's profession? (He was a centurion in the Roman army, responsible for one hundred soldiers.)

Remind students that prior to this time, a Gentile could not join Christ's Church without first converting to Judaism, since the gospel was only taken to the Jews.

- Even though Cornelius could not join the Church as a Gentile, how did he show his faith in God?

Invite two students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 10:3–6. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Cornelius. (Explain that "the ninth hour of the day" [verse 3] was about 3:00 p.m.)

- According to verse 4, what did the angel tell Cornelius about his prayers and alms?
- What did the angel instruct Cornelius to do?

Summarize Acts 10:7–8 by explaining that Cornelius sent three men to Joppa to find Peter. (To help students understand where Caesarea is in relationship to Joppa, you may want to refer students to the map "The Holy Land in New Testament Times" [Bible Maps, no. 11].)

Explain that as these men traveled to Joppa, Peter had a remarkable vision while staying at the house of a man named Simon. Give each student a piece of paper. Invite students to read Acts 10:9–16 silently and to draw a picture of Peter's vision as it is described in these verses. After sufficient time, ask students to use their pictures to explain to a classmate what happened in Peter's vision. Following this activity, ask:

- In the vision, what was Peter commanded to eat?

- According to verse 14, what was Peter’s initial reaction to this commandment? (Explain that under the law of Moses, Jews were forbidden to eat animals that were designated as common or unclean [see Leviticus 11].)
- According to verse 15, what did the Lord say about the unclean animals He had commanded Peter to eat?

Invite a student to read Acts 10:17–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened while Peter was pondering the meaning of his vision.

- What phrase in verse 17 indicates that Peter did not initially understand the meaning of his vision?
- Who arrived as Peter was pondering his vision?
- What did the Spirit tell Peter to do?

Summarize Acts 10:21–24 by explaining that the three men told Peter about Cornelius’s vision. The next day, Peter and other disciples accompanied them to see Cornelius.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 10:25–28. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter did when he arrived at Cornelius’s house.

- According to verse 28, what did Peter say about interactions between Jews and Gentiles?
- What did Peter now understand?

Summarize Acts 10:29–33 by explaining that Cornelius told Peter about his vision. Cornelius had also gathered his family and friends so Peter could teach them.

Invite a student to read Acts 10:34–35 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter learned.

- How would you summarize what Peter learned?

Summarize Acts 10:36–43 by explaining that Peter taught Cornelius and his household about Jesus Christ and His good works, Crucifixion, and Resurrection. Peter testified that those who believe in Jesus Christ will receive a remission of their sins.

Invite a student to read Acts 10:44–48 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the effect Peter’s teachings had on these Gentiles. Explain that the phrase “they of the circumcision” (verse 45) refers to the Jewish disciples who had come with Peter from Joppa.

- According to verses 44–46, what effect did Peter’s teachings have on Cornelius’s household?
- Why were the Jews who were present for this occasion astonished?
- Through Peter’s experiences recorded in Acts 10, what did the Lord reveal to him about the Gentiles? (The gospel should be preached to the Gentiles, and they could be baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ.)

To help students identify doctrines we can learn from Acts 10, divide them into groups of two or three. Provide each group with a copy of the following handout, or write these questions on the board. Invite students to work with their groups to answer the questions.

Acts 10

- What truth can we learn from the account of Peter and Cornelius about how the Lord directs His Church?
 - What truth can we learn from the fact that the Lord revealed truth to Peter over time instead of all at once?
 - What truth can we learn from this account about what God may do with instructions He has given in the past?
-

After sufficient time, invite several students to come to the board to write the truths their groups identified. Make sure the following truths are reflected in what they write:

God directs His Church by revelation to His prophet, the senior Apostle.

We may receive revelation and understanding gradually as we obey the Lord.

God may change or add to instructions He has given in the past according to His wisdom and the needs of His children.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for how the third truth in the bolded list is reflected in Elder Christofferson’s statement.

“By this experience and revelation to Peter, the Lord modified the practice of the Church and revealed a more complete doctrinal understanding to His disciples. And so the preaching of the gospel expanded to encompass all mankind” (“The Doctrine of Christ,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 88).

Give students time to review what they wrote about how they would respond to their friend’s question. Encourage them to write additional insights they gained while studying Acts 10, and allow them to share these insights with the class.

You may need to point out that although God may modify practices of the Church and add to our doctrinal understanding through ongoing revelation (see Articles of Faith 1:9), His divine nature, attributes, covenants, doctrines, and plan never change. Knowing this can help us have faith in God and confidence that He will lead His Church according to His will and the needs of His children.

Acts 11:1–18

Peter settles contention among Jewish Saints about preaching the gospel to the Gentiles

- How do you think some of the Jewish members of the Church felt when they heard about Peter’s interaction with a Gentile? (Peter’s interaction with a Gentile was a major change from past practice, and some members had difficulty accepting this change.)

Invite a student to read Acts 11:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the disciples responded to what Peter had done.

- How did the disciples respond to what Peter had done?

Summarize Acts 11:4–15 by explaining that Peter described to the disciples the visions he and Cornelius had received. He told them Cornelius and his household had received the teachings of Jesus Christ and then had experienced the power of the Holy Ghost in the same way in which Peter and other disciples had.

Invite a student to read Acts 11:16–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Peter’s concluding remarks to the disciples.

- What do you think Peter meant when he said, “What was I, that I could withstand God?” (verse 17)? (Peter would not oppose God’s will of giving the Gentiles the opportunity to receive the gospel, repent, and be baptized.)

Invite students to read Acts 11:18 silently, looking for how the disciples responded to Peter’s explanation.

- How did the disciples respond once they learned that Peter had been led by God?
- What principle does this account teach about how we can sustain and follow those who preside over the Church? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure they understand that **when we know that those who preside over the Church are led by God, we can confidently sustain and follow them.** This principle has been confirmed in modern scripture, which records that God has revealed His will to those who hold the presiding priesthood keys [see D&C 28:2, 7; 42:11; 107:65–66].)
- How have you come to know that those who preside over the Church are led by God?
- What counsel from the prophets have you chosen to follow because you know the prophets are led by God?

Invite students to set a goal to gain a stronger testimony that those who preside over the Church are led by God.

Acts 11:19–30

The Lord’s work moves forward despite persecution

Summarize Acts 11:19–30 by explaining that because of persecution, several disciples were scattered throughout the region but faithfully preached the gospel of Jesus Christ wherever they went.

Give students opportunities to explain, share, and testify

Allowing students to teach each other gives them opportunities to explain doctrines and principles, share insights and experiences, and testify of divine truths. This can also deepen students’ understanding of doctrines and principles and enhance their ability to teach the gospel. As students explain, share, and testify, the Holy Ghost can strengthen their testimonies of the truths they express.

Acts 12

Introduction

Herod killed the Apostle James and then arrested and imprisoned Peter. The night before Peter was to be executed, an angel helped him escape from prison. Herod

was smitten by an angel from God, and the gospel continued to move forward.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 12:1–17

Herod kills James and arrests Peter, who miraculously escapes from prison

Display a compass or draw one on the board. Invite a student to explain how a compass works and what it is used for.

- Because a compass always points north, how can using a compass help us make correct decisions about where we should go?

Draw an X on the board somewhere near the compass (but not near the north compass point), and ask the class to imagine that the X represents a handheld magnet.

- How would this magnet influence the behavior of the compass needle? (The needle will point to the nearby magnet because it interferes with magnetic north.)
- How would this magnet affect your ability to make the right choice about what direction you should go?

Encourage students to look as they study Acts 12 for an influence that can interfere with our ability to make correct decisions.

To help students understand the context of Acts 12, explain that since the martyrdom of Stephen, the Christians in and around Jerusalem had experienced increasing persecution.

Invite a student to read Acts 12:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how King Herod Agrippa I contributed to this persecution. (Explain that a quaternion is equal to four soldiers).

- Who did Herod have killed with a sword?
- According to verse 3, who was pleased with James’s death?

Explain that the phrase “the Jews” in verse 3 refers to influential Jewish leaders in Jerusalem who encouraged the persecution of the Church of Jesus Christ. Herod sought to please these Jewish leaders (see Bible Dictionary, “Herod”). Near the X on the board write the following incomplete statement: *If we seek to please others rather than God, then . . .*

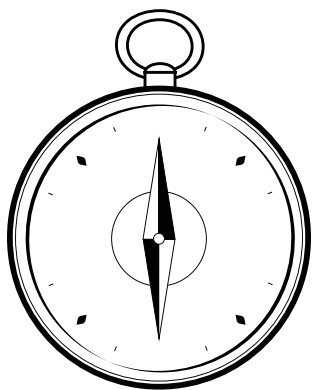
- What did Herod do after he saw that the murder of James pleased the Jewish leaders? (He planned to publicly put Peter to death.)

Point to the picture of the compass on the board, and ask:

- How did Herod’s desire to please others rather than God affect Herod’s direction in life?
- Based on what we can learn from Herod’s example, how would you complete the statement on the board? (After students respond, complete the statement on the board so that it conveys the following truth: **If we seek to please others rather than God, then we can be led further into sin.**)
- What are some other examples that demonstrate how seeking to please others rather than God can lead someone to sin?

Invite students to ponder ways they may be allowing their desire to please others to direct them away from their Father in Heaven.

Explain that students will be invited to act out the events of Acts 12:5–17. Invite several students to play the parts of Peter, two guards, the angel, Rhoda, and one or two disciples at the home of Mary, the mother of Mark. You or another student can act as the narrator.



Use a variety of teaching methods

Many effective teachers vary the ways they teach during the lesson and from day to day. Be willing to experiment with new methods or approaches. Also, be prepared to change methods during the lesson if students have lost interest or if what they are doing does not seem to be helping them reach the desired outcomes.

- Ask the narrator to read Acts 12:5–6 aloud, and invite the students whose roles are mentioned to act out what is read. To help students understand the content, pause after each group of verses is read and acted out, and then ask the associated questions.
- What were the Church members doing at this time?

Ask the narrator to read Acts 12:7–10 aloud while the designated students act out what is read.

- What restraints or barriers did Peter make it through during this escape?

Ask the narrator to read Acts 12:11–15 aloud while the designated students act out what is read.

- When did Peter realize what had happened?
- What happened when Peter knocked at the gate of Mary’s house?

Ask the narrator to read Acts 12:16–17 aloud, and invite the designated students to act out what is read. After these verses are read and acted out, invite the students to take their seats.

- According to verse 17, to whom did Peter give credit for his escape from prison? (Point out that the James referred to in verse 17 is one of Jesus’s brothers [see Matthew 13:55].)

Invite students to review Acts 12:5 and look for how this verse is related to what happened to Peter.

- What do you think the phrase “prayer was made without ceasing” (verse 5) suggests about the sincerity and fervency of the Church members’ prayers?
- What principle can we learn from this account about the effect our prayers can have on ourselves and others? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **Our sincere and fervent prayers invite God’s miracles and blessings into our lives and the lives of others.** Write this principle on the board.)
- What does it mean to pray sincerely and fervently?

Explain that this principle does not mean that if our prayers are sincere and fervent, we will automatically receive what we are praying for. Other contributing factors to receiving God’s miracles and blessings include God’s will and timing as well as individual agency.

Invite a student to read the following statement aloud. Ask students to listen for how our sincere and fervent prayers affect God’s will.

“Prayer is the act by which the will of the Father and the will of the child are brought into correspondence with each other. The object of prayer is not to change the will of God but to secure for ourselves and for others blessings that God is already willing to grant but that are made conditional on our asking for them. Blessings require some work or effort on our part before we can obtain them. Prayer is a form of work and is an appointed means for obtaining the highest of all blessings” (Bible Dictionary, “Prayer”).

- According to this statement, what is an important purpose of prayer?
- Why is it important to remember that the purpose of prayer is not to change the will of God?

Invite students to respond to the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- When has prayer invited God’s miracles and blessings into your life or into the lives of others for whom you have prayed?

After sufficient time, consider inviting a few students to share what they wrote. Following their comments, invite students to consider how they may be able to pray more sincerely and fervently in order to invite the blessings and miracles that God is willing to bestow upon them and those they pray for.

Acts 12:18–25

Herod is smitten by God, and the gospel continues to move forward

Summarize Acts 12:18–22 by explaining that the following day, Herod learned of Peter’s escape and executed the guards he felt were responsible for allowing Peter to escape. Later, Herod gave a speech to the people, who praised him for his speech.

Invite a student to read Acts 12:23–24 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Herod.

- What happened to Herod? Why?
- What happened to the missionary work of the Church despite the persecution that Church members faced?

Conclude by inviting students to review the truths they learned and ponder how they will apply those truths in their lives.

Commentary and Background Information

Acts 12:1–17. Peter and James put God first

Acts 12 shows that Peter and James put God first in their lives, regardless of the punishment they knew they might receive. Why is it so important to love God and place Him first in our lives? Elder Lynn G. Robbins of the Presidency of the Seventy related the following experience that helped him understand the importance of what direction we face in our lives:

“Which way do you face?” President Boyd K. Packer surprised me with this puzzling question while we were traveling together on my very first assignment as a new Seventy. Without an explanation to put the question in context, I was baffled. ‘A Seventy,’ he continued, ‘does not represent the people to the prophet but the prophet to the people. Never forget which way you face!’ It was a powerful lesson.

“Trying to please others before pleasing God is inverting the *first and second great commandments* (see Matthew 22:37–39). It is forgetting which way we face. And yet, we have all made that mistake because of the fear of men. In Isaiah the Lord warns us, ‘Fear ye not the reproach of men’ (Isaiah 51:7; see also 2 Nephi 8:7). In Lehi’s dream, this fear was triggered by the *finger of scorn* pointed from the great and spacious building, causing many to forget which way they faced and to leave the tree ‘ashamed’ (see 1 Nephi 8:25–28)” (“Which Way Do You Face?” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 9).

Acts 12:5. “Prayer was made without ceasing”

President Thomas S. Monson expressed his gratitude for those who pray for him and the leaders of the Church:

“I express my thanks to you for your kindnesses to me wherever I go. I thank you for your prayers in my behalf.

I have felt those prayers and am most grateful for them” (“As We Gather Once Again,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2012, 5).

“I love you; I pray for you. I would ask once again that you would remember me and all the General Authorities in your prayers. We are one with you in moving forward this marvelous work. I testify to you that we are all in this together and that every man, woman, and child has a part to play. May God give us the strength and the ability and the determination to play our part well” (“Until We Meet Again,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 109).

President Harold B. Lee gave the following insight regarding offering mighty prayer:

“You’ve got to desire it with all your soul! You’ve got to have all the intensity of which you are capable and a desire that this is the most prized thing in all the world for which you seek!” (*Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, ed. Clyde J. Williams [1996], 125).

Acts 12:21–23. The death of Herod Agrippa I

Herod Agrippa I was the nephew of Herod Antipus, who killed John the Baptist, and also “the grandson of Herod the Great. He was generally popular with the Pharisees because he was careful to observe Jewish customs. It may be for this reason—to be popular among the Jews—that he ordered the death of James (see Acts 12:1–2). Agrippa died at the age of 54, in A.D. 44, the same year James was martyred. Luke saw Agrippa’s sudden death as divine retribution, administered by an angel of the Lord” (*New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 302; see also Bible Dictionary, “Herod”).

Home-Study Lesson

Acts 6–12 (Unit 18)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Acts 6–12 (unit 18) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Acts 6–7)

Students learned that worthy Church members are called to help minister to the needs of others. While studying the words and martyrdom of Stephen, they discovered the following truths: Resisting the Holy Ghost can lead to rejecting the Savior and His prophets. Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost are three separate and distinct beings. If we remain faithful to Jesus Christ during tribulations, He will be with us.

Day 2 (Acts 8)

In their study of Acts 8, students learned the following doctrines and principles: The gift of the Holy Ghost is bestowed after baptism through the laying on of hands by authorized priesthood holders. The priesthood is bestowed according to God's will and standard of worthiness. As we heed promptings from God, we can receive opportunities to help guide others to Jesus Christ.

Day 3 (Acts 9)

In Acts 9, students learned that the Lord sees us as we can become and that He sees our potential for assisting Him in His work. They also learned the following principles: If we submit to the Lord's will, then we can change and can fulfill the potential He sees in us. By ministering to others, we can help people turn to the Lord and believe in Him.

Day 4 (Acts 10–12)

Students studied Peter's vision about preaching the gospel to the Gentiles and learned that when we know that those who preside over the Church are led by God, we can confidently sustain and follow them. They also learned the following truths: If we seek to please others rather than God, then we can be led further into sin. Our sincere and fervent prayers invite God's miracles and blessings into our lives and the lives of others.

Introduction

God revealed to Peter through a vision that the gospel should be preached to the Gentiles. Peter taught the gospel to Cornelius and his household and later settled contention among Jewish Saints about preaching the gospel to the Gentiles.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 10

God reveals to Peter in a vision that the gospel should be preached to the Gentiles

Invite students to imagine that a friend asks: "I heard that in 1978 your church changed its position to allow all men to receive the priesthood regardless of race. If you believe your church is directed by God, and God is an unchangeable being, how is that possible?"

Ask students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how they would respond to this friend. (*Note:* Make sure students answer the question of changing Church practice rather than speculating on possible reasons for the priesthood restriction. Also, during your discussion, do not speculate on why the priesthood restriction was in place, since these reasons have not been revealed [see Official Declaration 2].)

Invite students as they study Acts 10 to look for truths that can help them answer questions about how the Lord leads, guides, changes, and directs His Church.

Explain that up to this point in New Testament times, the gospel had been preached, with a few exceptions, exclusively to Jews as directed by the Savior (see Matthew 10:5–6). However, in Acts 10 we read about a significant change in the way the Church operated.

Invite students to summarize what they learned from their studies about a Gentile named Cornelius. (He was an officer in the Roman army. He and his household were believers and God-fearing people. As a Gentile, he could not join Christ's Church without first converting to Judaism.)

Summarize Acts 10:3–8 by explaining that as a result of Cornelius's faithfulness, an angel appeared to him and instructed him to send people to Joppa to find Peter. As Cornelius's servants traveled to Joppa, Peter had a remarkable vision while staying at the house of a man named Simon.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 10:9–16. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter saw in the vision. (For variety, you may want to give each student a piece of paper for a drawing activity. Invite students to read Acts 10:9–16 silently and to draw a picture of Peter's vision as it is described in these verses. After sufficient time, ask students to use their pictures to explain to a classmate what happened in Peter's vision.) Following either of these activities, ask:

- In the vision, what was Peter commanded to eat?

- According to verse 14, what was Peter's initial reaction to this commandment? (Explain that under the law of Moses, Jews were forbidden to eat animals that were designated as common or unclean [see Leviticus 11].)
- According to Acts 10:15, what did the Lord say about the unclean animals He had commanded Peter to eat?

Summarize Acts 10:17–28 by explaining that Peter did not initially understand the meaning of his vision. As he was pondering it, Cornelius's servants arrived and told Peter about Cornelius's vision. The next day, Peter and other disciples accompanied them to see Cornelius. Despite the fact that most Jews considered it unlawful to associate with or visit a Gentile, Peter entered Cornelius's house.

Invite a student to read Acts 10:28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the reason Peter gave for associating with or visiting a Gentile.

- What reason did Peter give for associating with or visiting a Gentile?

Summarize Acts 10:29–33 by explaining that Cornelius told Peter about his vision. Cornelius had also gathered his family and friends so Peter could teach them.

Invite a student to read Acts 10:34–35 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter learned.

- How would you summarize what Peter learned? (You may need to explain that while God does not favor people based on such distinctions as nationality or social position, He does judge all people by their works and blesses those who obey Him. You may also find the article "Race and the Church: All Are Alike unto God" [mormonnewsroom.org/article/race-church] helpful.)

Summarize Acts 10:36–43 by explaining that Peter taught Cornelius and his household about Jesus Christ and His good works, Crucifixion, and Resurrection. Peter testified that those who believe in Jesus Christ will receive a remission of their sins.

Invite a student to read Acts 10:44–48 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the effect Peter's teachings had on these Gentiles. Explain that the phrase "they of the circumcision" in verse 45 refers to the Jewish disciples who had come with Peter from Joppa.

- According to verses 44–46, what effect did Peter's teachings have on Cornelius's household? (You may need to explain that the phrase "the gift of the Holy Ghost" in verse 45 refers to the *power* of the Holy Ghost, which had come upon these Gentiles. This is different from the *gift* of the Holy Ghost, which we receive through the ordinance of confirmation after baptism [see Acts 8:14–17; *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 97].)
- Why were the Jews who were present for this occasion astonished?
- Through Peter's experiences recorded in Acts 10, what did the Lord reveal to him about the Gentiles?

To help students identify doctrines we can learn from Acts 10, divide them into groups of two or three. Provide each group with a copy of the following handout, or write these questions on the board. Invite students to work with their groups to answer the questions.

Acts 10

- What truth can we learn from the account of Peter and Cornelius about how the Lord directs His Church? (Remember that Peter was the President of the Church.)
- What truth can we learn from the fact that the Lord revealed truth to Peter over time instead of all at once?
- What truth can we learn from this account about what God may do with instructions He has given in the past?

After sufficient time, invite several students to come to the board to write the truths their groups identified. Make sure the following truths are reflected in what they write:

God directs His Church by revelation to His prophet, the senior Apostle.

We may receive revelation and understanding gradually as we obey the Lord.

God may change or add to instructions He has given in the past, according to His wisdom and the needs of His children.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for how the third truth they identified is reflected in Elder Christofferson's statement:

"By this experience and revelation to Peter, the Lord modified the practice of the Church and revealed a more complete doctrinal understanding to His disciples. And so the preaching of the gospel expanded to encompass all mankind" ("The Doctrine of Christ," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2012, 88).

Give students time to review what they wrote about how they would answer their friend's question about changing a Church practice. Encourage them to write additional insights they gained while studying Acts 10, and allow them to share these insights with the class.

You may need to point out that although God may modify practices of the Church and add to our doctrinal understanding through ongoing revelation (see Articles of Faith 1:9), His divine nature, attributes, covenants, doctrines, and plan never change. Knowing this can help us have faith in God and confidence that He will lead His Church according to His will and the needs of His children.

Conclude by inviting students to share their testimonies of the truths they learned.

Next Unit (Acts 13–19)

Invite students to look for answers to and consider the following questions during their study of Acts 13–19: What did Paul do to Elymas the sorcerer? How do you think you would react if you were believed to be a god? Why were Paul and Barnabas hailed as gods? How did they respond? What was the issue among Church members concerning circumcision, and why did the matter need to go before the Apostles? What was their decision? When Paul visited Athens he preached from Mars' Hill about the unknown god. What did he teach the people?

LESSON 91

Acts 13–14

Introduction

Paul (formerly called Saul) embarked on his first missionary journey, with Barnabas as his companion. They preached the gospel and established branches of the

Church amidst continued persecution. When the Jews refused to receive the word of God, Paul and Barnabas focused on preaching among the Gentiles.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 13:1–13

Paul and Barnabas embark on a missionary journey and rebuke a false prophet

Before class, prepare one sign that says “No opposition” and another sign that says “Constant opposition.” Post them on opposite walls of the classroom.

Ask students to imagine the space between the signs as a scale representing the level of opposition one encounters when trying to live the gospel. Invite students to stand between the signs in places that they think demonstrate the level of opposition experienced by Moses. Ask a few students to explain their choices of location. Repeat this exercise by asking students to stand somewhere on this scale of opposition for Joseph Smith and then for Nephi. Ask a few students to explain their choices for each one. Invite students to return to their seats.

Acknowledge that every disciple of Jesus Christ will encounter opposition at different times in his or her life. Ask students to think about where they would place themselves along the scale of opposition as they have tried to live the gospel. Encourage students to look for principles as they study Acts 13–14 that can help guide them when they encounter opposition in their efforts to live righteously.

Summarize Acts 13:1–6 by explaining that as certain prophets and teachers were gathered in Antioch in Syria, they received direction from the Holy Ghost that Saul (later known as Paul) and Barnabas should be called to preach the gospel together. After they were set apart, Saul and Barnabas traveled from Antioch to the island of Cyprus and preached in a synagogue in the city Salamis. From there they traveled to the other side of the island to the city Paphos. (You may want to invite students to locate Antioch and Cyprus on Bible Maps, no. 13, “The Missionary Journeys of the Apostle Paul.”)

Invite a student to read Acts 13:6–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened when Saul and Barnabas arrived in Paphos.

- According to verse 7, who wanted to hear the gospel from Saul and Barnabas? (Sergius Paulus, who was the Roman deputy of the country.)
- What opposition did the missionaries face in teaching the gospel to Sergius Paulus?

Explain that beginning in Acts 13:9, Saul is referred to as Paul. Invite a student to read Acts 13:9–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul dealt with opposition from the false prophet Elymas.

- What did Paul say about Elymas as recorded in verse 10? (Explain that Paul used harsh words because Elymas was attempting to keep another person from receiving salvation.)
- According to verse 11, what did Paul do to the false prophet through the power of God?
- According to verse 12, how did witnessing God’s power influence the deputy?
- What can we learn from this account about God’s power compared to the power of the devil? (Though students may use different words, make sure they identify the following truth: **The power of God is far greater than the power of the devil.** You may want to suggest that students write this truth in their scriptures next to Acts 13:9–12.)

Invite students to ponder how understanding that God’s power is vastly superior to the power of the devil could help us as we face opposition in our lives. Ask a few students to share their thoughts with the class.

Acts 13:14–43

Paul recounts the history of the Israelites and testifies that Jesus Christ came in fulfillment of God’s promises

Invite students to think of a mistake they have made that they wish they could go back and erase. Explain that sometimes the opposition we face occurs because of our own sinful choices. Encourage students to look for a principle as they study Acts 13:14–43 that can help them overcome this opposition.

Summarize Acts 13:14–37 by explaining that Paul and Barnabas left Cyprus and sailed to Pamphylia (in present-day Turkey), after which one of their companions, John Mark, decided to leave them and return home. Paul and Barnabas continued on to Antioch in Pisidia (not to be confused with Antioch in Syria, from which they began their mission). On the Sabbath there, Paul stood before the men at the synagogue and recounted events from Israelite history. Paul then testified of Jesus Christ as the promised Savior of Israel.

Invite students to read Acts 13:26–34 silently, looking for what Paul taught about Jesus Christ.

- What did Paul want those at the synagogue to understand about Jesus Christ?

Ask a student to read Acts 13:38–39 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what blessing Paul taught we can receive through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

- What blessing can we receive because of Jesus Christ and His Atonement? (Using students’ words, write the following truth on the board: **We can be forgiven of our sins and justified through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.**)

Explain that the word *justified*, as used in verse 39, means “to be pardoned [or forgiven] from punishment for sin and declared guiltless” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Justification, Justify,” scriptures.lds.org). When a person is justified through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, his or her relationship with God is again made right.

- How does the Atonement of Jesus Christ allow us to be justified from our sins?

To help students understand the doctrine, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“Jesus suffered and gave His life to atone for sin. The power of His Atonement can erase the effects of sin in us. When we repent, His atoning grace justifies and cleanses us (see 3 Nephi 27:16–20). It is as if we had not succumbed, as if we had not yielded to temptation” (“That They May Be One in Us,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2002, 71).

- What must we do to be forgiven of our sins and justified through the Atonement of Jesus Christ?
- Who are some people from the scriptures who were forgiven of their sins and justified through the Atonement of Jesus Christ? (Some examples could include Paul, Alma the Younger, and Enos.)

Invite students to sing the first two verses of “I Stand All Amazed” (*Hymns*, no. 193). Encourage them to look as they sing for how the author of the hymn expressed his gratitude for the Savior’s Atonement and forgiveness.

Invite students to answer the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals or on a piece of paper.

- What feelings do you have toward Jesus Christ when you think about how His Atonement makes it possible for you to be forgiven of your sins?

After sufficient time, invite a few students to share what they wrote. Encourage students to follow any promptings they may have received from the Holy Ghost to help them receive forgiveness and justification through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Summarize Acts 13:40–43 by explaining that following Paul’s sermon, many Gentiles asked Paul to teach again on the following Sabbath.

Acts 13:44–52

Paul and Barnabas preach boldly despite increased persecution

Explain that on the next Sabbath day, nearly the entire city came to hear Paul and Barnabas teach the word of God (see Acts 13:44).

Divide students into pairs and invite them to read Acts 13:44–52 together. Instruct one student in each pair to look for the attitudes and actions of the Jews and the other student to look for the attitudes and actions of the Gentiles as the people gathered to hear Paul and Barnabas. Encourage students to also read the Joseph Smith Translation in verse 48, footnote *a*. When students are finished reading, ask each pair of students to compare and contrast the actions and attitudes of the Jews with the actions and attitudes of the Gentiles.

- What blessings came to those who were willing to listen to Paul and his companions?

Acts 14

Paul and Barnabas perform miracles as they preach the gospel amidst continued persecution

Write the following question on the board: *Why does the Lord allow good people to experience difficult trials?*

Invite students to look for a principle as they study Acts 14 that can help them understand one way to answer this question.

Explain that Acts 14:1–21 describes some of the tribulations that Paul and Barnabas endured as they continued to preach. Invite a few students to read the following verses aloud, and ask the class to follow along, looking for the tribulations the missionaries faced.

1. Acts 14:1–2 (Unbelieving Jews stir up the Gentiles against Paul and Barnabas.)
2. Acts 14:8–18 (After Paul heals a crippled man, the people in Lystra think Paul and Barnabas are Greek gods and attempt to offer sacrifice to them.)
3. Acts 14:19–20 (Paul is stoned and revived.)

- What tribulations did Paul and Barnabas have to endure?
- What thoughts might you have had if you had been with Paul and Barnabas during these trials?

Invite a student to read Acts 14:22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about tribulation.

- What principle does Paul teach in this verse? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we faithfully pass through tribulation, we will be prepared to enter the celestial kingdom.**)
- In what ways do you think faithfully enduring tribulation can prepare us for the celestial kingdom?

Ask students to ponder blessings that have come to them or to people they know as they have faithfully passed through tribulation. Invite a few students to share their experiences. Remind students that they should not share experiences that are too sacred or private. Consider sharing your own personal experiences that can further illustrate this principle and testify of its truthfulness.

Encourage students to ponder the truths they identified during their study of Acts 13 and 14 and choose one that will help them most during trials. Provide a small note card or piece of paper for each student, and invite students to write on the card the principle they chose. Encourage students to post it somewhere they will see it often (a mirror, their school locker, and so on) to provide strength and encouragement when they face trials.

Help students identify doctrines and principles

One purpose of the scriptures is to teach doctrines and principles of the gospel. Identifying doctrines and principles found in the scriptures is one of the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning. Learning how to identify them takes thoughtful effort and practice. As doctrines and principles are identified, make sure they are clearly and simply stated to ensure these truths are clear in students' minds.

Acts 15

Introduction

Some Church members from Judea told Gentile converts in Antioch that they needed to be circumcised in order to be saved. Paul and Barnabas took the issue to the Apostles in Jerusalem. During an event called the Jerusalem conference (about A.D. 49–50), Peter testified that God would save faithful Jews and Gentiles, regard-

less of whether they had been circumcised. The Apostles sent letters to Church members explaining that circumcision was not necessary for salvation. Paul chose Silas as his missionary companion and embarked on his second mission.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 15:1–29

Through inspired counsel, Peter and the other Apostles determine that circumcision is no longer required by the Lord

Invite students to make a list on the board of several important decisions they need to make now and in the future.

- Whom do you talk to when you need to make important decisions? Why do you talk to them?
- Why is it wise to seek God’s help before making decisions?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Acts 15 that can guide them when they seek to know God’s will for them.

Explain that while Paul and Barnabas were visiting the Saints in Antioch, some Jews from Judea who had converted to Christianity made some claims about what Gentile converts needed to do to be saved.

Invite a student to read Acts 15:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what these men from Judea claimed Gentile converts needed to do to be saved.

- What did these men claim that Gentile converts needed to do to be saved?

Explain that as part of the covenant made with Abraham, God commanded that all males who entered into the covenant with Him be circumcised. “Circumcision was performed by cutting off the ‘flesh of the foreskin’ of male infants and adults alike” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Circumcision,” scriptures.lds.org). Circumcision was instituted as a token or reminder of the covenant the people made with God.

Invite a student to read Acts 15:2–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened after Paul and Barnabas heard these men claim that the Gentile converts needed to be circumcised.

- According to verse 2, what happened when these men said that Church converts needed to be circumcised?
- What did the Church members in Antioch determine should be done?

Invite a student to read Acts 15:4–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened when Paul and the others arrived in Jerusalem.

- After Paul and Barnabas related their experiences of sharing the gospel with the Gentiles, what did some of the converted Pharisees believe Gentile converts needed to do to be saved?
- According to verse 6, what did the Apostles and elders gather to do?

Write the following questions on the board or provide them to students on a handout:

Acts 15:7–11

1. Who stood up to speak?
2. What do you think Peter meant when he said that God “put no difference between us [the converted Jews] and them [the converted Gentiles]”?
3. What phrases in verses 8, 9, and 11 indicate that the Gentile converts did not need to be circumcised in order to be saved?

Divide the class into pairs. Invite students to read Acts 15:7–11 with their partners, looking for answers to the questions listed. Before they read, explain that the phrase “when there had been much disputing” in verse 7 means that the Apostles had vigorously debated the issue of circumcision.

After sufficient time, invite a few students to report their responses to the class. After students respond to the first question, remind them that Peter was the senior Apostle on the earth and was, therefore, authorized to speak for the Lord.

- What is one way we can know the will of the Lord? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **We can know the will of the Lord through His living prophets and apostles.** Write this truth on the board.)

- What are some ways the living Apostles help us know the revelations they have received?

Invite a student to read Acts 15:12–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the multitude responded to Peter’s declaration that circumcision was not necessary for salvation.

- How did the multitude respond to Peter’s declaration?
- What did Paul and Barnabas do to confirm Peter’s declaration that the Gentiles did not need to be circumcised?
- According to verse 15, whose words did James say Peter’s (Simeon’s) declaration agreed with?

You may want to explain that Peter presided at the conference, and it appears that James had a prominent role there as well. James was the half brother of Jesus Christ and the first bishop of the Church in Jerusalem. Summarize Acts 15:16–18 by explaining that James quoted Amos 9:11–12 to show that Peter’s declaration agreed with the words of prophets, as recorded in the scriptures.

- Based on what James taught, what is another way we can know the will of the Lord? (Students may use different words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **We can know the will of the Lord through studying the scriptures.** Write this truth on the board.)

Invite a student to read Acts 15:19–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what James counseled that Church leaders do. Explain that the word *sentence* in verse 19 means a proposal or recommendation (see Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 2:143).

- What did James counsel that Church leaders do for the Gentiles? (James recommended that Church leaders “trouble them not” [verse 19], or not make living the gospel harder for the converted Gentiles, and not require them to perform the rituals of the law of Moses before joining the Church. In saying this, James was supporting the decision given earlier by Peter.)
- According to verse 20, what parts of the law of Moses did James think the Gentile converts still needed to keep? (Prohibitions against committing sexual sin, against eating meats offered as sacrifices to idols, and against eating blood.)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 15:22–27. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the council’s decision.

- What did the Apostles decide to do? (Send an epistle to the Church members declaring that circumcision was not required for salvation.)
- Why do you think the Apostles decided to send Church leaders like Paul and Silas to deliver the epistle? (Students may have various responses, but one reason was to verify that the declaration came through the united decision of the Apostles. Point out that the

Help students understand the meaning of doctrines and principles

Once students identify principles and doctrines in the scriptures, take time to discuss these truths in a way that will help students better understand them. During these discussions, encourage students to examine the relationship between the identified truths and other gospel principles. They should also identify ways to apply these truths in their lives.

First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles follow these same practices in our day to provide inspired guidance to Church members.)

- What truth can we learn from this account about how Church leaders receive inspiration about difficult problems? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **By counseling together and seeking revelation from God, Church leaders receive inspiration about difficult problems.**)

To help students understand how this truth relates to the Church today, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“These same patterns are followed today in the restored Church of Jesus Christ. The President of the Church may announce or interpret doctrines based on revelation to him (see, for example, D&C 138). Doctrinal exposition may also come through the combined council of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (see, for example, Official Declaration 2). Council deliberations will often include a weighing of canonized scriptures, the teachings of Church leaders, and past practice. But in the end, just as in the New Testament Church, the objective is not simply consensus among council members but revelation from God. It is a process involving both reason and faith for obtaining the mind and will of the Lord” (“The Doctrine of Christ,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 88).

- Why do you think it is important for Church leaders to counsel together often when seeking revelation from God?

Invite a student to read Acts 15:28–29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Apostles and elders wrote in the epistle to the Church members.

- What did the Apostles and elders write in the epistle to the Church members?
- In verse 28, what does the phrase “to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things” mean? (The people did not need to obey any extra requirements that had come from people and not from God.)
- According to verse 28, how did the Apostles know God’s will regarding the requirements for the converted Gentiles?

Point out that the Holy Ghost inspired the Apostles as they counseled together. He also provided a confirming witness that their decision was correct.

- Based on how Church leaders knew the will of the Lord as recorded in verse 28, how can we know the will of the Lord? (Students may use different words, but make sure they understand that **we can know the will of the Lord through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.** Write this truth on the board.)

Invite students to look at the truths on the board.

- How can these truths help us when we need to make an important decision?
- According to these truths, what do we need to do in order to know the Lord’s will?
- When have you felt like you came to know the Lord’s will as you have followed these truths?

Encourage students to study the words of modern prophets and the scriptures. Explain that as they do so, they can come to know the Lord’s will through the Holy Ghost when making important decisions.

Acts 15:30–41

Paul and others deliver the Apostles’ epistle to the members in Antioch

Summarize Acts 15:30–41 by explaining that several Church leaders delivered the Apostles’ epistle to the members of the Church in Antioch. After preaching in Antioch, Paul asked Barnabas to go with him to visit all the places where they had preached the gospel. Barnabas wanted to take Mark with them, but Paul refused. After some contention between the two Church leaders, Barnabas decided to take Mark with him, so Paul chose Silas as a mission companion and set out on his second mission. Explain that it is not considered a sin to disagree with others. However, instead of becoming contentious, we should seek to find solutions to our disagreements together. (We learn in 2 Timothy 4:11 that the problem between Paul and Mark was later resolved.)

Conclude by testifying of the truths students identified in Acts 15.

LESSON 93

Acts 16

Introduction

The Holy Ghost guided Paul and his companions to preach the gospel in Macedonia (northern Greece). A woman named Lydia received their message and was baptized. After Paul cast an evil spirit out of a servant

girl, he and Silas were beaten and imprisoned. That night, they were miraculously freed from prison, after which they baptized the prison guard and his household.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 16:1–15

Paul and his companions preach the gospel in Macedonia

Write on the board the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson. (This statement is found in “The Spirit Giveth Life,” *Ensign*, June 1997, 5.)

“Never postpone a prompting” (President Thomas S. Monson).

- A *prompting* refers to feelings or impressions we receive from the Holy Ghost to say or do something. What might happen if someone postponed heeding a prompting?

Invite students to look for a principle as they study Acts 16 that can help them further understand the importance of heeding the Holy Ghost’s promptings.

Summarize Acts 16:1–5 by explaining that Paul, Silas, and a Gentile convert named Timothy (also known as Timothy) traveled to several branches of the Church to announce decisions Church leaders in Jerusalem had made that would affect the whole Church and strengthen Church members in the faith.

Invite a student to read Acts 16:6–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul and his companions (likely including Luke) knew where to go as they traveled.

- How did Paul and his companions know where not to go? How did they know where to go?
- What did Paul see in a vision?
- How did Paul and his companions respond to Paul’s vision?

Summarize Acts 16:11–13 by explaining that Paul and Silas traveled for many days until they came to Philippi, a city in Macedonia. (You may want to invite students to turn to Bible Maps, no. 13, “The Missionary Journey of the Apostle Paul,” and locate Philippi.) On the Sabbath day, they left the city to pray near a riverbank and began talking with the women gathered there.

Invite a student to read Acts 16:14–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how a woman named Lydia responded to Paul’s teachings. (You may want to explain that the phrase “a seller of purple” [verse 14] refers to the fact that Lydia sold purple dye, which was very expensive, and probably indicates that Lydia was a woman of wealth and influence.)

- How did Lydia respond to Paul’s teachings? (You may need to explain that *attended* means paid attention or gave heed to.)
- What phrases in Acts 16:14 indicate that Lydia was ready to receive the gospel?
- What principle can we learn from Paul’s experience about what can happen as we follow revelation? (Students may use different words, but make sure they understand that **as we follow revelation from God, we can be guided to those who are ready to receive the gospel.** Write this principle on the board.)

Point out that by following revelation we can also help others begin or continue the process of becoming ready to receive the gospel.

To help students further understand this principle, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for what we must do to be guided to those who are ready to receive the gospel.



“We must pray for the Lord’s help and directions so we can be instruments in His hands for one who is now ready—one He would have us help today. Then, we must be alert to hear and heed the promptings of His Spirit in how we proceed.

“Those promptings will come. We know from countless personal testimonies that in His own way and His own time the Lord is preparing persons to accept His gospel. Such persons are searching, and when we are seeking to identify them the Lord will answer their prayers through answering ours. He will prompt and guide those who desire and who sincerely seek guidance in how, where, when, and with whom to share His gospel” (“Sharing the Gospel,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 8).

- According to Elder Oaks, what must we do to be guided to those who are ready to receive the gospel?

Consider sharing an experience of your own regarding how heeding the Spirit’s promptings led you to someone who was ready to receive the gospel or regarding how another person’s heeding the Spirit’s promptings led him or her to find you when you were ready to receive the gospel. Ask a few students to share an experience that they or someone they know has had in which he or she was guided to someone who was ready to receive the gospel.

Invite students to ponder how, where, when, and with whom they can share the gospel. Encourage them to record any promptings they receive and to continue to pray for guidance.

Acts 16:16–40

Paul and Silas are imprisoned and then freed

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 16:16–19. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul did when he encountered a “damsel” (verse 16), or servant girl, who was possessed by an evil spirit. You may want to explain that *divination* is the process of foretelling or trying to foretell the future using superstitious means.

- What did Paul eventually do to the evil spirit that possessed the girl?
- What problem did the girl’s masters in the city experience after Paul cast the evil spirit out of the girl?

Summarize Acts 16:20–24 by explaining that the men who could no longer profit from the girl took Paul and Silas before the “magistrates” (verse 20), or local authorities, and claimed that Paul and Silas had taught the people that they should not follow Roman law. At the magistrates’ command, Paul and Silas were then beaten and imprisoned, and their feet were bound so that they could not walk.

To help students understand the content of Acts 16:25–36, divide students into pairs and provide each pair with a sheet of paper. Copy the following chart onto the board and invite each pair to copy the chart onto their paper.

Acts 16:25	Acts 16:26	Acts 16:27–28
Acts 16:29–30	Acts 16:31–32	Acts 16:33–34

Invite each pair to read aloud the verses on the chart and then to take turns drawing simple pictures to represent each of the six verse groupings (one student in the pair could draw pictures to represent three of the verse groupings, and the other student in the pair could draw pictures to represent the other three verse groupings). After sufficient time, invite students to display and briefly explain their pictures to another pair of students or to the entire class.

Small group assignments
 Dividing the class into small groups can allow more students to participate. Provide clear instructions regarding what students should do during the activity. Assigning a time limit can also help students stay on task. Lengthy group activities often result in groups finishing at different times and can lead to disorder. Help students stay on task and gain the most from the assignment by monitoring the activity as you move from group to group.

To help students deepen their understanding of Acts 16:25–36, ask the following questions:

- How did Paul and Silas answer the prison guard’s question about how he could be saved?
- What did the prison guard do to show his belief in Jesus Christ?
- What principle can we learn from Acts 16:31–33 about what we must do to receive salvation? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Salvation requires believing in Jesus Christ, and we manifest our belief in Him by being baptized.**)

Explain that *salvation* means “to be saved from both physical and spiritual death” (see Guide to the Scriptures, “Salvation,” scriptures.lds.org).

- How does being baptized demonstrate our faith in Jesus Christ?
- In addition to being baptized, what are other ways we can demonstrate our belief in Jesus Christ?

Summarize Acts 16:35–40 by explaining that the magistrates sent word to the prison guard to let Paul and Silas go. Paul refused to go because he knew his rights as a Roman citizen and knew that their treatment of him was unjust. It was unlawful to beat a Roman citizen without first holding a trial. When the magistrates found out that Paul and Silas were Romans, they were frightened because they knew that if their superiors discovered they had treated a Roman citizen as they did, they could be punished, even with death. The magistrates came to the prison, released Paul and Silas, and asked them to leave the city.

Conclude by testifying of the truths taught in Acts 16.

Scripture Mastery Review

Use the accompanying chart to review the scripture mastery passages students have studied so far this year. Read aloud the question or concern in the left column of the chart, and invite students to find the scripture mastery passage that could provide an answer (answers are provided in the right column of the chart). You may want to read aloud the questions or concerns in a random order. After students find a scripture, ask them how that scripture mastery passage could help someone with that concern.

I am afraid to live what I believe. I worry about what others will think of me.	Matthew 5:14–16
I feel overwhelmed by my trials and challenges.	Matthew 11:28–30
Why is the prophet able to receive revelation for the entire Church?	Matthew 16:15–19
I love Heavenly Father, but I am struggling to love a friend right now. Does God really expect me to love him or her too?	Matthew 22:36–39
I know that as a priesthood holder, I have the duty to serve a mission wherever the Lord calls me, but I worry about being far away from everyone I know and being lonely.	Matthew 28:19–20
How do we know that Jesus Christ really has been resurrected with a physical body of flesh and bones?	Luke 24:36–39
Is baptism really necessary in order to live with God?	John 3:5
Some people say it does not matter whether I choose to follow Jesus Christ or someone else. As long as I am a good person, I will go to heaven.	John 14:6
What is the best way for me to show the Lord that I love Him?	John 14:15
Why does knowing Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ matter?	John 17:3
What must I do to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost?	Acts 2:36–38
Did anyone who lived in biblical times know and prophesy that there would be a Restoration of the gospel in the latter days?	Acts 3:19–21

Acts 17

Introduction

After leaving Philippi, Paul and Silas taught the gospel in Thessalonica and Berea. Persecution from unbelievers in

these cities forced Paul to flee to Athens, where, on Mars' Hill, he taught the people about the true nature of God.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 17:1–15

Some of the Jews in Thessalonica try to stop Paul from preaching the gospel

Invite students to explain what advice they would give to the people in the following scenarios:

1. A young man who is a member of the Church listens to a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles speak about the importance of marriage and family in Heavenly Father's plan. Some of the young man's friends express their disagreement with the Apostle's teachings. The young man wants to know for himself whether the Apostle's teachings are true.
2. A young woman questions the importance of keeping the Sabbath day holy. Most of her friends spend Sundays shopping and sleeping and they don't bother going to church. Her mother explains the blessings that can come from honoring the Lord on Sunday, but the young woman still struggles to believe that keeping the Sabbath day holy is important.

Invite students to look for principles as they study Acts 17 that will help them know for themselves the truthfulness of the messages we receive from the Lord's servants.

Explain that Paul and Silas traveled to Thessalonica, where they taught in the Jewish synagogue. (You may want to invite students to locate Thessalonica on Bible Maps, no. 13, "The Missionary Journeys of the Apostle Paul.") Invite a student to read Acts 17:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul used in order to teach the Jews.

- What did Paul use in order to teach the Jews?

Explain that *alleging* (verse 3) means to show or declare. Paul used scriptural passages to declare or show that Jesus is the Christ.

Invite a student to read Acts 17:4–5 aloud, and ask the class to look for how the people of Thessalonica responded to Paul's teachings. You may want to explain that *consorted* means gathered with or joined and that *lewd* means evil.

- How did the people's responses to Paul's teachings differ?

Summarize Acts 17:6–9 by explaining that a mob of unbelievers tried to find Paul and Silas. When they could not find them, the mob went to the rulers of Thessalonica and claimed that Paul's teachings threatened Caesar's authority.

Invite a student to read Acts 17:10–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for where Paul and Silas escaped to. Invite students to report what they find.

- According to verse 12, how did the Jews in Berea respond to Paul's teachings?

Copy the following incomplete equation on the board:

_____ + _____ = *Belief*

- According to verse 11, what did the people do first that led to their belief in Paul's teachings? (After students respond, write the following statement on the board as the first part of the equation: *They received Paul's words with all readiness of mind.*)

To help students understand what it means to "[receive] the word with all readiness of mind," bring a ball to class and invite two students to come to the front of the class. Ask one of them to get ready to catch the ball, and instruct the other student to toss the ball

to the first student. Afterward, ask the class how they could tell that the first student was ready to catch the ball.

Next, invite the first student to demonstrate *not* being ready to catch the ball and to remain that way while the other student tosses the ball again. Ask the other student to toss the ball (being careful not to cause an injury). Ask the class how they could tell that the first student was not ready to catch the ball. Invite the two students to return to their seats.

Invite the class to demonstrate what it might look like to be ready to receive the words of God's servants. Then ask them to demonstrate what it might look like if someone is *not* ready to receive the words of God's servants. (For example, students might close their scriptures, talk with a neighbor, or become distracted by electronic devices.)

- Aside from his or her outward appearance, what might be happening in the heart and mind of someone who is ready to receive a gospel message?

Draw students' attention to the second blank in the equation on the board.

- According to verse 11, what else did the people do that led to their belief in Paul's teachings? (After students respond, write the following statement on the board as the second part of the equation: *They searched the scriptures daily to understand Paul's words.*)
- What principle can we learn from Acts 17:10–12 that can strengthen our belief in the words of God's servants? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we receive the words of God's servants with all readiness of mind and search the scriptures daily, then our belief in their words will be strengthened.**)

Review the scenarios described at the beginning of the lesson.

- How might this principle help the people in these scenarios?
- In what ways can daily scripture study influence our ability to believe truth?

Invite students to consider times when they witnessed the truthfulness of this principle. You might invite a few of them to share their experiences.

Encourage students to receive the words of prophets, leaders, teachers, and parents with "readiness of mind" and to read the scriptures daily.

Summarize Acts 17:13–15 by explaining that when the Jews in Thessalonica heard that Paul was preaching in Berea, they came to provoke the people of Berea. Paul again had to flee, so he traveled to Athens.

Acts 17:16–34

Paul preaches on Mars' Hill

Invite students to turn to Bible Photographs, no. 29, "Athens," in the Bible appendix. Point out that this photograph shows one of several temples in Athens that were used for worshipping false gods. Inside these temples were man-made statues of these gods. Outside were altars on which sacrifices to these false gods were offered.

Summarize Acts 17:16–21 by explaining that Paul was deeply concerned about the idolatry in Athens, and he taught in the synagogues and marketplaces there. Philosophers then invited Paul to explain his "new doctrine" (verse 19) to the judicial council, which met on Mars' Hill.

Invite a student to read Acts 17:22–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul noticed on one of the Athenian altars.

- What did Paul see on one of the Athenian altars?

Explain that verse 22 records that Paul complimented the Athenians by saying they were "too superstitious," meaning that they were "most religious" or "careful in divine things" (Acts 17:22, footnote *a*). The altar "to the unknown god" (verse 23) was the Athenians' attempt to appease an unknowable god or any god who was not known by name. They apparently did not want to offend or neglect any god.

Point out the last sentence of Acts 17:23, and then ask:

- Why did Paul make reference to this altar "to the unknown god"? (He used it to introduce the idea of the true God, Heavenly Father, the God they did not know.)

Divide students into pairs or small groups. Invite each group to search Acts 17:24–31 for as many truths as they can find about the God who was unknown to the people of Athens. While they are studying, list each verse number (24–31) on the board. After sufficient time, invite several students to come to the board to write a truth they found next to the number of the verse in which they found it. (To help students identify a truth in Acts 17:27, you may need to refer them to the Joseph Smith Translation in Acts 17:27, footnote *b*.)

You might also suggest that students mark each of the truths in their scriptures. Some of the truths they list on the board might include the following:

- Verse 24: **God created the world.**
- Verse 25: **God gives life to all things.**
- Verse 26: **God governs all life.**
- Verse 27: **If we are willing to seek God, we will find that He is not far from us.**
- Verse 28: **We are God’s offspring.**
- Verse 29: **We were created in God’s image.**
- Verse 30: **God commands everyone to repent.**
- Verse 31: **God will judge us; God will raise all people from the dead.**

Invite students to choose one truth on the board that is meaningful to them. Ask a few of them to share which truth they chose and why it is meaningful to them.

Point to the doctrine “We are God’s offspring.”

- What does it mean to be God’s “offspring”? (We are spirit children of Heavenly Father.)
- Why is it so important to understand this doctrine? (It can help us recognize our infinite value to Heavenly Father and our potential to become like Him.)
- What problems or confusion could arise by not understanding this doctrine?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for why we must remember to see ourselves first and foremost as children of God.



“Be careful how you characterize yourself. Don’t characterize or define yourself by some temporary quality. The only *single* quality that should characterize us is that we are a son or daughter of God. That fact transcends all other characteristics, including race, occupation, physical characteristics, honors, or even religious affiliation” (“How to Define Yourself,” *New Era*, June 2013, 48).

- Why is it important to remember that we are first and foremost children of God?
- Refer to the principle “If we are willing to seek God, we will find that He is not far from us.”
- In what ways can we seek to know and come closer to God?
 - How can understanding our relationship to God affect our desire to seek Him?
 - When have you felt Heavenly Father near you?

Summarize Acts 17:32–34 by explaining that the Athenians had mixed reactions to Paul’s mention “of the resurrection of the dead” (verse 32). Some of them mocked Paul, others wanted to hear more, and some people believed.

You may want to testify that students can come to know and understand God, even though He is unknown to many people. Invite students to write *To the Knowable God* on a piece of paper or a card and to list ways in which they will seek and develop a relationship with God. Encourage them to place this paper where it will remind them of their goals.

Deciding what to teach

As you decide which doctrines and principles to emphasize in a lesson, seek direction from the Holy Ghost, try to determine the intent of the inspired author, ponder which truths are basic doctrines and converting principles, and consider students’ needs.

Help students feel the truth and importance of doctrines and principles

After students identify and understand gospel doctrines and principles in the scriptures, they can feel the truth and importance of them through the Spirit. One way to help students do this is to encourage them to reflect on and share personal experiences related to the doctrine or principle.

LESSON 95

Acts 18–19

Introduction

Paul was rejected by many of the Jews in Corinth but had success there among the Gentiles. A righteous married couple, Aquila and Priscilla, helped Apollos understand

the way of God. Paul preached of the Holy Ghost, performed miracles, and avoided an unruly crowd in the theater at Ephesus.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 18:1–17

Paul preaches in Corinth

Read the following questions aloud, and invite students to write their answers in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What are some ways you have participated in the Lord’s work?
- What challenges have you experienced as you have tried to do the Lord’s work?

Ask a few students to share their responses. Invite students to look for a principle as they study Acts 18 that can help them as they try to do the work of the Lord.

Summarize Acts 18:1–4 by explaining that Paul left Athens and traveled to Corinth, where he taught in the synagogue about Jesus Christ. (You may want to invite students to open to Bible Maps, no. 13, “The Missionary Journeys of the Apostle Paul,” and find Athens and Corinth.)

Ask a student to read Acts 18:5–6 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for challenges Paul experienced as he taught Jews in Corinth about Jesus Christ.

- What challenges did Paul experience?
- What did Paul plan to do because the Jews in the synagogue rejected his message?

Invite a student to read Acts 18:7–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened that may have given encouragement to Paul.

- What happened that may have given encouragement to Paul?
- According to verse 10, what did the Lord promise Paul if he preached the gospel?
- What principle can we learn from these verses about what the Lord will do for those who worthily do His work? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we live worthily, the Lord will be with us as we do His work.**)
- Why is it important to know that the Lord will be with you as you do His work?

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:

“Now, some of you may be shy by nature or consider yourselves inadequate to respond affirmatively to a calling. Remember that this . . . is the Lord’s work, and when we are on the Lord’s errand, we are entitled to the Lord’s help. Remember that the Lord will shape the back to bear the burden placed upon it” (“To Learn, to Do, to Be,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 62).

- When has the Lord been with you as you did His work? How did you know He was with you?

Summarize Acts 18:11–17 by explaining that Paul continued to preach in Corinth for a year and a half (and likely wrote his epistles to the Thessalonians during this time). While he was in Corinth, certain Jews attempted to put Paul on trial for what he was teaching, but the legal deputy refused the case.

Acts 18:18–28***Aquila and Priscilla help Apollos understand the way of God***

Summarize Acts 18:18–23 by explaining that a husband and wife, Aquila and Priscilla, accompanied Paul to Ephesus. Leaving the couple in Ephesus, Paul traveled to the Jerusalem area and then north to Antioch. At Antioch, he concluded his second missionary journey, which lasted three years and covered about 3,000 miles (about 4,828 kilometers). After some time, he departed Antioch and began his third missionary journey, traveling to the branches he had previously established and strengthening the members.

Invite a student to read Acts 18:24–25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened in Ephesus after Paul left.

- What happened in Ephesus after Paul left?
- What did Apollos already understand about “the things of the Lord”? (verse 25).
- What knowledge did Apollos lack? (By “knowing only the baptism of John” [verse 25], Apollos lacked an understanding of the fulness of the Savior’s gospel.)

Invite a student to read Acts 18:26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Aquila and Priscilla did when they heard Apollos’s teaching.

- What did Aquila and Priscilla do when they heard Apollos’s teaching?
- What does it mean that they “expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly”? (verse 26). (Aquila and Priscilla taught Apollos more about Jesus Christ and His gospel, which added to Apollos’s knowledge and understanding.)

Invite a student to read Acts 18:27–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for evidence that Aquila and Priscilla helped Apollos understand the way of God more perfectly.

- What phrases in these verses indicate that Aquila and Priscilla helped Apollos understand the way of God more perfectly?

Acts 19:1–20***Paul bestows the gift of the Holy Ghost and performs miracles***

Explain that after Paul traveled to various places, he returned to Ephesus. Invite a student to read Acts 19:2–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul helped people in Ephesus to understand the way of God more perfectly.

- What doctrine did Paul help the disciples in Ephesus to understand more perfectly?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement published under the direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and ask the class to listen for why these people needed to be rebaptized:

“It seems . . . that some sectarian Jew had been baptizing like John [the Baptist], but had forgotten to inform them that there was one to follow by the name of Jesus Christ, to baptize with fire and the Holy Ghost:—which showed these converts that their first baptism was illegal, and when they heard this they were gladly baptized, and after hands were laid on them, they received the gifts, according to promise” (“Baptism,” editorial published in *Times and Seasons*, Sept. 1, 1842, 904; spelling modernized; Joseph Smith was the editor of the periodical).

- Why did some of the people at Ephesus need to be rebaptized?
- What truths about baptism can we learn from Acts 19:2–6? (Although students may use different words, help them identify the following truths: **Baptism must be performed by an authorized servant of God. In order for baptism to be complete, it must be accompanied by the reception of the Holy Ghost.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith:

“You might as well baptize a bag of sand as a man, if not done in view of the remission of sins and getting of the Holy Ghost. Baptism by water is but half a baptism, and is good for nothing without the other half—that is, the baptism of the Holy Ghost” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 95).

Summarize Acts 19:7–10 by explaining that Paul continued to preach in Ephesus for over two years.

Invite a student to read Acts 19:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what miracles occurred in Ephesus while Paul was there.

- What miracles did God perform through Paul?
- What truth can we learn from this account about what God does through His authorized servants? (Using their own words, students should identify a truth such as the following: **One way God manifests His power is through His authorized servants.**)

Invite a student to read Acts 19:13–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened when some Jews tried to cast out devils as Paul had done.

- What happened when the seven sons of the chief priest tried to cast out an evil spirit?
- Who did the evil spirit recognize? Who did the evil spirit not recognize?
- Why did the evil spirit not recognize the sons of Sceva? (Because they were not authorized to minister in the name of Jesus Christ.)

Invite a student to read Acts 19:17–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what many individuals did after learning about this event. Explain that “curious arts” (verse 19) refers to sorcery and other evil practices.

- What did many people do after this event to show that they had faith in Jesus Christ? (They confessed and forsook their evil practices by burning their books associated with those practices.)
- What principle can we learn from these verses about how to manifest our faith in Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **By confessing and forsaking evil practices, we manifest our faith in Jesus Christ.**)
- What sacrifices might we need to make in order to forsake a sin we have confessed?

Testify of the importance of manifesting our faith in Jesus Christ by not only confessing our sins but also forsaking anything that may lead us to return to those sins.

Invite students to ponder whether there is anything in their lives that the Lord would want them to forsake. Encourage them to act on any promptings they may have felt during this lesson.

Acts 19:21–41

Worshippers of the false goddess Diana speak against Paul and cause an uproar in the city

Summarize Acts 19:21–41 by explaining that part of the economy in Ephesus was driven by the worship of Diana, who was a false Roman goddess. Paul’s preaching against the worship of false gods caused craftsmen who made shrines and idols of Diana to turn the people against Paul. The people gathered in the city theater (which could hold up to 24,000 people) in confusion and uproar. Paul desired to speak to the crowd, but he was persuaded by some disciples and government leaders not to enter the theater. The town clerk eventually calmed the crowd, and they dispersed. Point out that Paul’s protection is an example of how God’s work will not be thwarted even in the face of wicked protests. (It was during this time in Ephesus [about A.D. 57] that Paul wrote 1 Corinthians.)

Conclude by testifying of the truths taught in this lesson.

Help students apply doctrines and principles

Give students opportunities to ponder their own situations and to consider specific ways they can apply a principle or doctrine. As students are given time to reflect and consider how to personalize a principle, the Spirit can direct them.

Home-Study Lesson

Acts 13–19 (Unit 19)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Acts 13–19 (unit 19) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Acts 13–14)

As students studied about Paul and Barnabus's interaction with a sorcerer, they learned that the power of God is far greater than the power of the devil. As Paul taught about the Savior and about tribulation, students identified the following principles: We can be forgiven of our sins and justified through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. As we faithfully pass through tribulation, we will be prepared to enter the celestial kingdom.

Day 2 (Acts 15)

As students studied how Church leaders made decisions together, they learned that we can know the will of the Lord through His living prophets and apostles, through studying the scriptures, and through inspiration from the Holy Ghost. They also learned that by counseling together and seeking revelation from God, Church leaders receive inspiration about difficult problems.

Day 3 (Acts 16–17)

From the account of Paul and Silas's mission, students learned the following truths: As we follow revelation given from God, we can be guided to those who are ready to receive the gospel. Salvation requires believing in Jesus Christ, and we manifest our belief in Him by being baptized. If we receive the words of God's servants with all readiness of mind and search the scriptures daily, then our belief in their words will be strengthened.

Day 4 (Acts 18–19)

Through the Lord's assurances to Paul when he felt frustrated with the people of Corinth, students learned that if we live worthily, the Lord will be with us as we do His work. As they studied about Paul's teaching and healing in Ephesus, students learned the following: To be valid, baptism must be performed by an authorized servant of God. In order for baptism to be complete, it must be accompanied by the reception of the Holy Ghost. One way God manifests His power is through His authorized servants. By confessing and forsaking evil practices, we manifest our faith in Jesus Christ.

Introduction

On Mars' Hill in Athens, Paul taught the people about the nature of God. This lesson can help students understand some of Heavenly Father's characteristics and their relationship with Him.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 17:16–34

Paul preaches on Mars' Hill

Invite students to turn to Bible Photographs, no. 29, "Athens," in the Bible appendix. Point out that this photograph shows one of several temples in Athens that were used for worshipping false gods. Inside the temples were man-made statues of these gods. Outside were altars on which sacrifices to these false gods were offered.

Explain that to protect Paul from a hostile group of Jews in Thessalonica, Church members sent him to Athens (see Acts 17:13–15). In Acts 17:16–21 we read that Paul was deeply concerned about the idolatry in Athens, and he taught in the synagogue and marketplace there. Philosophers then invited Paul to explain his "new doctrine" (Acts 17:19) to the judicial council, which met on Mars' Hill.

Invite a student to read Acts 17:22–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul noticed on one of the Athenian altars.

- What did Paul see on one of the Athenian altars?

Explain that Acts 17:22 records that Paul complimented the Athenians by saying they were "too superstitious," meaning that they were "most religious" or "careful in divine things" (Acts 17:22, footnote a). The altar "to the unknown god" (Acts 17:23) was the Athenians' attempt to appease an unknowable god or any god who was not known by name. They apparently did not want to offend or neglect any god.

Point out the last sentence of Acts 17:23, and then ask:

- Why did Paul make reference to this altar "to the unknown god"? (He used it to introduce the idea of the true God, Heavenly Father, the God they did not know.)

Divide students into pairs or small groups. Invite each group to search Acts 17:24–31 for as many truths as they can find about the God who was unknown to the people of Athens. While they are studying, list each verse number (24–31) on the board.

After sufficient time, invite several students to come to the board to write a truth they found next to the number of the verse in which they found it. (To help students identify a truth in Acts 17:27, you may need to refer them to the Joseph Smith Translation in Acts 17:27, footnote b.)

You might also suggest that students mark each of the truths in their scriptures. Some of the truths they list on the board might include the following:

Verse 24: **God created the world.**

Verse 25: **God gives life to all things.**

Verse 26: **God governs all life.**

Verse 27: **If we are willing to seek God, we will find that He is not far from us.**

Verse 28: **We are God's offspring.**

Verse 29: **We were created in God's image.**

Verse 30: **God commands everyone to repent.**

Verse 31: **God will judge us; God will raise all people from the dead.**

Invite students to choose one truth on the board that is meaningful to them. Ask a few of them to share which truth they chose and why it is meaningful to them.

Point to the truth in Acts 17:28, "We are God's offspring."

- What does it mean to be God's "offspring"? (We are spirit children of Heavenly Father.)
- Why is it so important to understand this doctrine? (It can help us recognize our infinite value to Heavenly Father and our potential to become like Him.)
- What problems or confusion could arise by not understanding this doctrine?

If possible, provide students with a copy of the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite a student to read it aloud. Ask the class to listen or look for why we must remember to see ourselves first and foremost as children of God.



"Be careful how you characterize yourself. Don't characterize or define yourself by some temporary quality. The only *single* quality that should characterize us is that we are a son or daughter of God. That fact transcends all other characteristics, including race, occupation, physical characteristics, honors, or even religious affiliation" ("How to Define Yourself," *New Era*, June 2013, 48).

- Why is it important to remember that we are first and foremost children of God?

Refer to the truth in Acts 17:27, "If we are willing to seek God, we will find that He is not far from us."

- In what ways can we seek to know and come closer to God?
- How does understanding our relationship to God affect our desire to seek Him?
- When have you felt Heavenly Father near you?

Summarize Acts 17:32–34 by explaining that the Athenians had mixed reactions to Paul's mention of "the resurrection of the dead" (Acts 17:32). Some of them mocked Paul, others wanted to hear more, and some people believed.

You may want to testify that students can come to know and understand God, even though He is unknown to many people. Invite students to write *To the Knowable God* on a piece of paper or a card and to list ways in which they will seek and develop a relationship with God. Encourage them to place this paper where it will remind them of their goals.

Next Unit (Acts 20–Romans 7)

Explain to students that in the next unit they will find answers to the questions "Who did Paul raise from the dead?" and "What were the circumstances surrounding this person's death?" Invite them to imagine being falsely arrested, shipwrecked on an island, and then bitten by a snake. Ask what they think they might learn from such trials. Ask students to watch for a king who said to Paul during a trial, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26:28). Encourage them, as they study the rest of the Acts of the Apostles, to watch for how challenges can help us come closer to the Savior. Tell them that they will also be reading part of a letter that the Apostle Paul wrote to Church members in Rome.

LESSON 96

Acts 20–22

Introduction

Paul preached the gospel in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey), and while he was in Miletus, a city near Ephesus, he warned of a future apostasy and encouraged priesthood leaders to edify Church members. He then traveled

to Jerusalem, where he was persecuted and arrested. While standing on the steps of the Antonia fortress (a garrison where Roman troops stayed), Paul shared his conversion story.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 20:1–21:40

Paul ministers in Asia Minor and travels to Jerusalem, where he is beaten and arrested

Ask students to think of a time when they had to leave their family, friends, or other people they care about for several days, weeks, or months.

- What kinds of feelings did you or those you were with have before you left?
- What did you say to each other before parting?

Explain that during Paul's third missionary journey, he spent time in Macedonia, Greece, and Asia Minor. During this journey, he felt impressed to return to Jerusalem. As he traveled, he stopped to preach and say good-bye to Church members along the way. The night before his departure from Troas, on the new Sabbath (Sunday), Paul and the disciples came together to partake of the sacrament (see Acts 20:7). Paul then spoke with the Saints long into the night.

Invite a student to read Acts 20:9–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to a young man named Eutychus after he fell asleep during Paul's sermon.

- What happened to Eutychus?
- What did Paul do to show love and concern for this young man?
- How did Paul's actions mirror the Savior's ministry?

Explain that as part of Paul's third missionary journey, Paul had spent about three years in Ephesus laboring among the people there. Summarize Acts 20:13–17 by explaining that on his way to Jerusalem, Paul paused in Miletus, just outside of Ephesus, and sent word for the Church leaders of Ephesus to meet with him.

Invite a student to read Acts 20:18–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul explained about his service.

- How did Paul describe his missionary service?
- What might Paul's statement that he "kept back nothing" (verse 20) from those he taught mean?
- According to verse 23, what was Paul willing to face as the Lord's servant?

Explain that Paul was particularly susceptible to danger in Jerusalem, where the Jewish leaders viewed him as a traitor because of his efforts to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- According to verse 22, why was Paul willing to go to Jerusalem?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 20:24–27. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul was prepared to do as a servant of the Lord.

- According to verse 24, what was Paul prepared to do as a servant of the Lord?
- What emotion did Paul say he felt in doing what the Lord directed?
- What can we learn from Paul's example of service? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **True servants of the Lord faithfully perform their duty, and in doing so they feel joy.**)

Ask questions that help students understand scripture content

Asking questions that help students analyze scripture passages can expand students' understanding of the scriptures. Such questions can help clarify the meanings of words or phrases and help students find greater meaning in the details of a storyline. Students will then be prepared to identify doctrines and principles.

- What does it mean to you to faithfully perform your duty?
- How can we apply this truth in our own lives?

Invite students to share a time when they or someone they know chose to serve the Lord with all their energy and strength and experienced great joy.

Remind students that Paul visited Church leaders in Ephesus for the last time before departing for Jerusalem.

- If you were in Paul’s position and you knew that you would not see the Church leaders of Ephesus again, what advice would you give them before you left?

Ask students to read Acts 20:28–31 silently, looking for Paul’s warnings to these Church leaders.

- What did Paul warn these leaders about?

Explain that Paul used wolves as a metaphor for unfaithful people who would deceive faithful Church members.

- What word do we use to describe the condition of those who turn away from the truth and seek to lead others away from the truth? (Apostasy. Explain that Paul was warning Church leaders of future apostasy within the Church.)

Invite a student to read Acts 20:36–38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Church leaders responded as Paul departed. Invite students to report what they find.

Summarize Acts 21:1–10 by explaining that Paul continued his journey toward Jerusalem and stopped in different regions to spend time with Church members along the way. When Paul stopped in a city called Tyre, some disciples—evidently concerned for Paul’s safety—advised Paul not to go to Jerusalem (see Acts 21:4).

In Caesarea, a prophet named Agabus prophesied concerning what would happen to Paul in Jerusalem. Invite a student to read Acts 21:11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Agabus prophesied. (You may want to explain that the word *girdle* refers to a belt.) Invite students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Acts 21:12–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul and his companions responded to the prophecy.

- How did Paul’s companions react to the prophecy?
- How did Paul react to the prophecy? What stands out to you about Paul’s response?
- What principle can we learn from Paul’s example about being true servants of the Lord? (Students may use different words, but be sure they identify the following truth: **True servants of the Lord are willing to do God’s will regardless of the personal cost.**)

Invite students to ponder the kinds of sacrifices we might be asked to make as servants of the Lord.

- When have you been willing to do God’s will regardless of the cost to you? Why were you willing to do that?

Invite a student to read aloud the following summary of Acts 21:17–40.

Paul arrived in Jerusalem and gave a report of his missionary labors to local Church leaders. Paul went to the temple, and when a group of Jews who knew Paul from his missionary journeys saw him, they proclaimed that Paul was a false teacher who taught against the law of Moses and unlawfully brought Gentiles into the temple. Because of this accusation, a mob removed Paul from the temple and began beating him. Roman soldiers intervened and carried him away to be tried. While on the stairs of the Antonia Fortress (see Bible Maps, no. 12, “Jerusalem at the Time of Jesus”), Paul asked the soldiers if he could speak to the people.

Acts 22:1–30

Paul tells of his conversion and testifies of Jesus Christ

Write the word *convert* on the board, and explain that *to convert* means to change. Ask students how water can be converted or changed so that it can be used for different purposes. (For example, water can be converted to ice.) Ask students to ponder the kind of change that conversion to the gospel entails.

Invite a student to read Acts 22:1–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul described himself as he spoke to the Jews from the stairs of the Antonia Fortress in Jerusalem.

- What was Paul like before he was converted and became a disciple of Jesus Christ?

Copy the following questions and scripture references on the board or provide them to students on a handout. Divide students into five groups and assign each group one of the questions. Ask students to silently read the scriptures that correspond with their assigned questions and then answer the questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

1. *How does Paul describe his initial vision? (Acts 22:6–9)*
2. *What was Paul instructed to do? (Acts 22:10–11)*
3. *Whom did Paul meet in Damascus, and what did Paul regain? (Acts 22:12–13)*
4. *What did Ananias prophesy about Paul? (Acts 22:14–15)*
5. *How did Paul show his faith in Jesus Christ? (Acts 9:18; 22:16)*

After sufficient time, invite students to report their answers. Invite a few students to summarize what they learned about Paul’s conversion process. (You may also want to explain that between the time of Paul’s initial vision and the time he served as a missionary, he spent three years in Arabia, which was likely a period of spiritual preparation and growth [see Galatians 1:11–18].) Then ask the following questions:

- In what ways do you think Paul changed as a result of his conversion?
- What happened that allowed these changes to take place?
- What can Paul’s conversion teach us about how we can become converted? (Students may use different words, but be sure they identify the following truth: **As we obey the words of Jesus Christ, we can become fully converted.**)
- How might this principle help someone who wants to be converted?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Sister Bonnie L. Oscarson, Young Women general president, in which she explained the difference between having a testimony of the gospel and being truly converted to it:



“True conversion is more than merely having a knowledge of gospel principles and implies even more than just having a testimony of those principles. It is possible to have a testimony of the gospel without living it. Being truly converted means we are acting upon what we believe. . . .

“ . . . Conversion comes as we act upon the righteous principles we learn in our homes and in the classroom. Conversion comes as we live pure and virtuous lives and enjoy the companionship of the Holy Ghost” (“Be Ye Converted,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 76, 78).

Read the following question aloud, or write it on the board: *How can I become truly converted to the gospel?* Invite students to record their answers in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

Summarize Acts 22:17–30 by explaining that Paul told his audience that after his conversion the Lord sent him away from Jerusalem to be a missionary among the Gentiles. The audience then proclaimed that Paul should be put to death. Paul was brought before the chief captain of the Roman army in Jerusalem, who decided that Paul should be scourged, or whipped, a punishment normally used to humiliate and obtain information from criminals. However, when the Roman officers learned that Paul was a Roman citizen, they decided not to scourge him because it was against Roman law to bind or scourge a Roman citizen who was “uncondemned” (verse 25). They instead brought him before the Jewish governing council, the Sanhedrin.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the principles taught in Acts 20–22.

LESSON 97

Acts 23–26

Introduction

Jewish leaders questioned Paul, and a band of Jews conspired to kill him. Paul was taken to Caesarea, where he defended himself against false charges before several

Roman leaders. He recounted his conversion and testified of Jesus Christ.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 23–25

Paul is persecuted, tried, and imprisoned

Before class, write the following on a piece of paper: *God’s commandments and blessings*. Use tape or string to mark off an area of the classroom, and place the paper on the floor within this designated area. When class begins, invite a student to stand in the area that represents God’s commandments and blessings.

- As we come closer to God by following His commandments and teachings, what are some of the blessings we can receive?

Invite the student to walk out of the area that represents God’s commandments and blessings.

- What are some influences of the world that might entice someone to turn away from and stop living according to the commandments and teachings of God?
- What can happen when people distance themselves from God?

Thank the student, and invite him or her to be seated. Ask students to ponder which direction they are currently facing and how close to or far away from Heavenly Father they feel. Invite students to look for truths as they study Acts 23–26 that will help them when they feel they have distanced themselves from God and His blessings.

Remind students that Paul was arrested outside the temple in Jerusalem and brought before Jewish leaders (see Acts 21:30–33; 22:23–30). Summarize Acts 23:1–10 by explaining that Paul was questioned by these Jewish leaders and imprisoned.

Invite a student to read Acts 23:11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened while Paul was in prison. Invite students to report what they find.

- What did the Lord tell Paul in prison?

Remind students of the promise recorded in Acts 18:9–10 that the Lord would be with Paul and protect him as he did the Lord’s work. Invite students to consider marking the phrase “the Lord stood by him” and writing Acts 18:9–10 as a cross-reference in the margin next to Acts 23:11.

Invite a student to read the following summary aloud:

In Acts 23:12–25:27 we learn that the Roman captain who had arrested Paul sent him to Caesarea to prevent a band of Jews from killing him. Paul declared his innocence before the Roman governor Felix. Although convinced of Paul’s innocence, Felix continued to keep Paul under house arrest for two years. Festus replaced Felix as the Roman governor of Judea. King Herod Agrippa, who ruled an area located northeast of the Sea of Galilee, visited Festus and desired to hear Paul’s case. Paul was brought before King Agrippa.

Acts 26

Paul recounts his conversion and testifies of Jesus Christ before King Agrippa

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 26:4–11. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul described his past to King Agrippa.

- How did Paul describe his past to King Agrippa?

Explain that Paul then recounted his vision of the Savior. Invite a student to read Acts 26:16–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the mission the Lord gave to Paul on the road to Damascus.

- What mission did the Lord give to Paul? (You may want to suggest that students mark phrases that describe the mission the Lord gave to Paul.)

Explain that in this context the word *inheritance* (verse 18) refers to entrance into the celestial kingdom of God.

- What can help someone turn away from darkness and the influence of Satan and turn toward the light and the commandments and blessings of God?

Invite a student to read Acts 26:19–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul said he had taught both Jews and Gentiles they must do to receive the blessings mentioned in verse 18. You might explain that the phrase “do works meet for repentance” in verse 20 can mean to live righteously in order to demonstrate you have truly repented.

- According to verse 20, what had Paul taught both Jews and Gentiles to do?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we repent and turn to God . . .*

- Based on what we learn in verse 18, how would you complete the statement on the board? (Summarize students’ responses by completing the statement on the board so it reads as follows: **If we repent and turn to God, we can overcome Satan’s power in our lives, receive forgiveness for our sins, and qualify for the celestial kingdom.**)

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (consider providing students with a copy of the statement):



“When we sin, we turn away from God. When we repent, we turn back toward God.

“The invitation to repent is rarely a voice of chastisement but rather a loving appeal to turn around and to ‘re-turn’ toward God [see Helaman 7:17]. It is the beckoning of a loving Father and His Only Begotten Son to be more than we are, to reach up to a higher way of life, to change, and to feel the happiness of keeping the commandments” (“Repent . . . That I May Heal You,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 40).

- According to Elder Andersen, what can we achieve as we repent and turn back toward Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ?

Invite students to look as they continue to study Acts 26 for what prevented Festus and King Agrippa from repenting, turning to God, and becoming converted to Jesus Christ. Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *To become converted to Jesus Christ . . .*

Divide students into pairs. Invite students to read Acts 26:24–28 with their partners. Ask them to identify and compare the ways in which Festus and King Agrippa each reacted to Paul’s teachings and testimony of the Savior. As students read and discuss with their partners, copy the following chart on the board (do not include the statements under each heading):

Reactions to Paul’s Teachings	
Festus	King Agrippa
Spoke in a loud voice Said Paul was beside himself Accused Paul of being mad	Almost persuaded to become a Christian

After sufficient time, invite several students to come to the board and write what they found (responses should be similar to the phrases in the chart above).

- What does Festus’s reaction reveal about his opinion of Paul’s teachings? (Add the word *Disbelief* to students’ responses under the heading “Festus.”)
- According to verse 27, what did Paul say he knew about King Agrippa? (Add *Believed the prophets* under the heading “King Agrippa.”)

Ask questions that help students identify doctrines and principles

As students develop their understanding of the context and content of the scriptures, they are better able to identify the principles and doctrines they contain. Analysis questions can help students draw conclusions and articulate clearly the principles or doctrines found in the text they are studying.

- What can we learn from Agrippa’s comment to Paul about Agrippa’s commitment to be a Christian (see verse 28)? (Add *Not willing to fully commit* under the heading “King Agrippa.”)

Invite a student to read Acts 26:29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul responded to King Agrippa’s comment that he was almost persuaded to be a Christian.

- What did Paul desire for the king and all those who had heard his teachings?
- What do you think prevented Festus from becoming converted to Jesus Christ?
- What do you think prevented King Agrippa from becoming converted?
- What can we learn from Festus and King Agrippa about what we must do to become converted to Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **To become converted to Jesus Christ, we must choose to believe in and be fully committed to living the gospel.**)

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following account by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:



“Two young brothers stood atop a small cliff that overlooked the pristine waters of a blue lake. This was a popular diving spot, and the brothers had often talked about making the jump—something they had seen others do.

“Although they both wanted to make the jump, neither one wanted to be first. The height of the cliff wasn’t that great, but to the two young boys, it seemed the distance increased whenever they started to lean forward—and their courage was fading fast.

“Finally, one brother put one foot at the edge of the cliff and moved decisively forward. At that moment his brother whispered, ‘Maybe we should wait until next summer.’

“The first brother’s momentum, however, was already pulling him forward. ‘Brother,’ he responded, ‘I’m committed!’

“He splashed into the water and surfaced quickly with a victorious shout. The second brother followed instantly. Afterward, they both laughed about the first boy’s final words before plunging into the water: ‘Brother, I’m committed.’

“Commitment is a little like diving into the water. Either you are committed or you are not. Either you are moving forward or you are standing still. There’s no halfway. . . .

“Those who are only sort of committed may expect to only sort of receive the blessings of testimony, joy, and peace. The windows of heaven might only be sort of open to them. . . .

“In some way, each of us stands at a decision point overlooking the water. It is my prayer that we will have faith, move forward, face our fears and doubts with courage, and say to ourselves, ‘I’m committed!’” (“Brother, I’m Committed,” *Ensign*, July 2011, 4, 5).

- How is committing to living the gospel like diving into the water?
- According to President Uchtdorf, why is it important to be fully committed rather than “sort of committed” to living the gospel?
- How has your commitment to living a commandment or principle of the gospel helped strengthen your conversion to Jesus Christ? (Consider sharing an example of your own.)

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a list of commandments or gospel principles that they feel they are fully committed to living. Ask them to consider any principles of the gospel that they feel “almost” but not “altogether” (Acts 26:29) committed to living. Invite students to write a goal regarding what they can do to increase their understanding of and commitment to one of these principles. Encourage students to pray for help as they strive to become converted to Jesus Christ by more fully living the gospel.

Summarize Acts 26:30–32 by explaining that Festus and King Agrippa found Paul innocent and would have freed him, but because Paul had appealed his case to Caesar they were required to send him to Rome.

Conclude by reviewing and testifying of the principles taught in Acts 23–26.

Acts 27–28

Introduction

While traveling to Rome as a prisoner, Paul was shipwrecked on an island. On the island, he was bitten by a snake but remained unharmed, and he healed many

who were sick. Paul was eventually taken to Rome, where he lived under house arrest for two years and taught and testified of Jesus Christ.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 27

Paul is shipwrecked as he journeys to Rome

Before class begins write the following statements on the board. (These statements are found in *For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 4, 11, 16.)

“Avoid going on frequent dates with the same person.”

“Do not attend, view, or participate in anything that is vulgar, immoral, violent, or pornographic in any way.”

“If your friends urge you to do things that are wrong, be the one to stand for the right, even if you stand alone.”

Invite a student to read aloud the statements written on the board.

- Why might some youth choose not to heed these statements of warning and counsel?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Acts 27 that will help strengthen their faith to heed the warnings and counsel of the Lord’s servants.

Remind students that Paul had been falsely charged with treason and imprisoned. Paul appealed his case to Caesar in Rome, which was his right as a Roman citizen. Summarize Acts 27:1–8 by explaining that Paul traveled with other prisoners by boat toward Rome, under the custody of a Roman centurion (a Roman military officer who commanded 50 to 100 men). After sailing for many days, they stopped at a harbor on the island of Crete. As they were leaving the harbor, Paul warned those on the ship that they should not continue their journey.

Invite a student to read Acts 27:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul knew would happen if he and the others on the ship continued their journey to Rome. You may want to explain that the word *fast* in this context means voluntarily abstaining from eating. In this case “the fast” probably referred to the Jewish holy day called the day of Atonement, which marked the beginning of the season during which it was generally regarded as unsafe to travel on the Mediterranean Sea because of violent storms.

- According to verse 10, what warning and prophecy did Paul give about what would happen if they continued their journey?

Invite a student to read Acts 27:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Roman centurion and others on the ship responded to Paul’s warning.

- Rather than heeding Paul’s warning, whom did the centurion trust instead?
- Why do you think it may have been easier for the centurion to believe the owner of the ship rather than Paul?
- According to verse 12, why did most people on the ship ignore Paul’s warning? (Explain that the word *haven* refers to a harbor and *commodious* means comfortable or convenient.)

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 27:13–21. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened as the ship continued toward Rome.

- What happened as the ship continued toward Rome?
- After seeing that the “south wind blew softly” (verse 13), what might the people on the ship have thought about Paul and the warning he gave?

- According to verse 20, what were the emotions of those on the ship during the tempest?
- As illustrated by Paul’s statement recorded in verse 21, what principle can we learn about what can happen if we ignore the warnings and counsel of the Lord’s servants? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we ignore the warnings and counsel of the Lord’s servants, then we put ourselves in danger.** Write this principle on the board. Explain that the danger may include forfeiting blessings that we otherwise would have received.)

Review with students the reasons the centurion and the other people on the ship ignored Paul’s warning and counsel (see Acts 27:11–12).

- How might people today make similar excuses for ignoring the warnings and counsel of the Lord’s servants?

Using *For the Strength of Youth* or recent conference addresses, give additional examples of prophets’ warnings and counsel that you feel are relevant to students.

- What dangers might people put themselves in by ignoring such warnings and counsel from the prophets?

Invite a student to read Acts 27:22–26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul told the people on the ship.

- If you were on the ship in the midst of the terrible storm, what words from Paul would comfort you?
- What did Paul prophesy would happen to the people and the ship?

Summarize Acts 27:27–30 by explaining that on the 14th night of the storm, the crew cast four anchors into the sea to prevent the ship from crashing into rocks. The crew then went to the front of the ship and acted as though they were about to cast more anchors. However, they were actually planning to abandon the ship and flee in a small boat because they feared the ship would sink.

Invite a student to read Acts 27:31–32 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the warning Paul gave the centurion and soldiers. Explain that the word *these* in verse 31 refers to the crew members who were trying to flee.

- What warning did Paul give the centurion and soldiers?
- How did the soldiers respond to Paul’s warning and counsel? (They heeded his warning and prevented the crew from escaping by cutting the small boat’s ropes and letting it drift away empty.)

Explain that the next morning Paul pleaded with the crew, who had been fasting, to eat (see Acts 27:33–34). He assured them again that none of them would die.

Invite a student to read Acts 27:35–36 aloud. Ask the class to follow along.

- How did the crew respond to Paul’s counsel?

Summarize Acts 27:37–41 by explaining that the ship crashed as it sailed toward the island of Malta. Invite students to read Acts 27:42–44 silently, looking for what happened to the people on the ship.

- What happened to the people on the ship?

Remind students of Paul’s prophecy recorded in Acts 27:22–26 that no one would die even though the ship would be lost.

- What principles can we learn from this account about what can happen if we heed the counsel and warnings of the Lord’s servants? (Students may identify principles such as the following: **If we heed the counsel and warnings of the Lord’s servants, then the Lord will fulfill His promises to us. If we heed the counsel and warnings of the Lord’s servants, then we can withstand the dangers that threaten us.** Write these principles on the board.)

To help students understand the principles they identified in Acts 27, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency:

“Every time in my life when I have chosen to delay following inspired counsel or decided that I was an exception, I came to know that I had put myself in harm’s way. Every time that I have listened to the counsel of prophets, felt it confirmed in prayer, and then followed it, I have found that I moved toward safety” (“Finding Safety in Counsel,” *Ensign*, May 1997, 25).

- How has heeding the warnings and inspired counsel of the Lord’s servants helped you withstand dangers that threaten your spiritual and physical safety? (Remind students that they can study the counsel of the Lord’s modern prophets in Church magazines as well as in *For the Strength of Youth*.)

Invite students to consider whether they are ignoring any warnings or counsel from the Lord’s servants or to think about ways they can better heed the warnings and counsel they have received. Invite students to write down a goal regarding how they will give better heed to that counsel.

Acts 28

Paul is taken to Rome, where he teaches and testifies of Jesus Christ

Show students a picture of a tornado or whirlwind (or draw one on the board).

Explain that Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles referred to life’s challenges and trials as “spiritual whirlwinds” (see “Spiritual Whirlwinds,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 18–21).

- What are some examples of trials and difficulties that can be likened to whirlwinds?

Invite students to look for a principle as they study Acts 28 that can help them faithfully endure the “spiritual whirlwinds” they face.

Explain that in Acts 28 we read about Paul’s experiences on the island, his continued journey to Rome, and his imprisonment in Rome.

Divide the class into three or more groups, depending on the size of your class. Assign each group one of the following scripture blocks: Acts 28:1–6; Acts 28:7–14; and Acts 28:16–24, giving the same block to multiple groups as needed. Invite each group to study their assigned scripture block and then do the following (write these instructions on the board):

1. Draw a picture or write a newspaper headline that summarizes the events described in your scripture block.
2. Show the class your picture or read your headline, and summarize the events described in your scripture block.

After sufficient time, invite each group to report to the class. (If there are more than three groups, invite the groups with repeated scripture blocks to share their picture or headline and any further insights they obtained from their reading of their assigned verses.)

- What trials did Paul experience as he traveled to and dwelt in Rome?

Invite a student to read Acts 28:30–31 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul was able to do in Rome despite being put under house arrest. Ask students to report what they find.

- What did Paul do that showed he remained faithful to God despite the trials he experienced?
- What good came from the trials Paul experienced while at sea, while shipwrecked, and while imprisoned in Rome? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we are faithful, God can help us turn trials into blessings for ourselves and others.**)
- What are examples of ways God can help people turn trials into blessings for themselves and others?
- When has God helped you or someone you know turn a trial into a blessing for yourself or for others? (Consider sharing an example of your own.)

Encourage students to follow Paul’s example and choose to remain faithful when they experience trials so that God can help them turn those trials into blessings for themselves and others.



Ask questions that help students understand doctrines and principles

After identifying doctrines and principles, students need to understand them before they can meaningfully apply them. Ask questions that will lead to a clearer understanding of the meaning of a particular doctrine or principle, encourage students to consider the doctrine or principle in a modern context, or invite students to explain their understanding of the doctrine or principle.

INTRODUCTION TO

The Epistle of Paul to the Romans

Why study this book?

The Epistle to the Romans is the longest of Paul's epistles and is regarded by many people as his greatest. This epistle contains his most complete explanation of the doctrine of justification by faith in Jesus Christ rather than by the performances of the law of Moses. It contains many teachings about the doctrines of salvation and the practical application of those doctrines to daily life. Through their study of this book, students can gain a greater appreciation of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and of the hope and peace that all people may find in Christ.

Who wrote this book?

The Apostle Paul is the author of the Epistle to the Romans (see Romans 1:1). In writing this epistle, Paul used the assistance of a scribe, Tertius, who wrote his own greeting to the Roman Saints near the conclusion of the epistle (see Romans 16:22).

When and where was it written?

Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans from Corinth near the end of his third missionary journey. Several clues suggest that Paul wrote this epistle during the three months he stayed in Corinth (see Acts 20:2–3; the term *Greece* in these verses refers to Corinth), possibly between A.D. 55 and 56. (See Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles.")

To whom was it written and why?

The Epistle to the Romans is addressed to members of the Church in Rome (see Romans 1:7). The origins of the Church in Rome are unknown but probably date to soon after the day of Pentecost, when Jews visiting from Rome heard Peter preach (see Acts 2:10). Though Paul had not yet been to Rome, he wrote greetings to specific Saints he knew either by prior acquaintance or through others who had lived in Rome, such as Priscilla and Aquila (see Acts 18:1–2, 18; Romans 16:1–16, 21).

There seem to be at least three main reasons why Paul sent the Epistle to the Romans:

(1) *To prepare for his future arrival in Rome.* For years Paul had wanted to

preach the gospel in Rome (see Acts 19:21; Romans 1:15; 15:23). He also hoped the Church in Rome would serve as a base from which he could serve a mission to Spain (see Romans 15:22–24, 28).

(2) *To clarify and defend his teachings.*

Paul faced repeated opposition from individuals who misunderstood or distorted his teachings about the law of Moses and faith in Christ (see Acts 13:45; 15:1–2; 21:27–28; Romans 3:8; 2 Peter 3:15–16). Paul evidently had reason to suspect that such misunderstandings had reached the Church members in Rome, so he wrote to alleviate any concerns before he arrived.

(3) *To promote unity between Jewish and Gentile members of the Church.* Not long before Paul wrote this epistle, Jewish Christians who had been expelled from Rome by the emperor Claudius (see Acts 18:2) began returning to Rome and to predominantly Gentile Christian congregations. This situation may have given rise to some of the tensions and problems between Jewish and Gentile Christians. As "the apostle of the Gentiles" (Romans 11:13), Paul sought to integrate Gentile converts into the Church; yet as a Jew (see Romans 11:1), Paul also felt a great desire for his own people to accept the gospel. Paul promoted Church unity by teaching how doctrines of the gospel apply to all Saints (see Romans 3:21–4:25; 11:13–36; 14:1–15:13).

What are some distinctive features of this book?

After an opening greeting, the epistle begins with a statement of its theme: "The gospel of Christ . . . is the power of God unto salvation" to all who "live by faith" in Jesus Christ (Romans 1:16–17).

Though the Epistle to the Romans has played an important role in Christian history, it has also unfortunately been "the source of more doctrinal misunderstanding, misinterpretation, and mischief than any other Biblical book," according to Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 2:211). Even among early Christians, Paul's writings were regarded as "hard to be understood," and his teachings were sometimes distorted and misrepresented (2 Peter 3:15–16).

Outline

Romans 1–3 Paul explains the doctrine of justification by faith in Jesus Christ. Paul defines the plight of sinfulness that faces all mankind and teaches that God's solution to this problem for all people is the Atonement of Jesus Christ. By faithfully accepting the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be justified (forgiven) and receive salvation.

Romans 4–8 Paul cites the example of Abraham to illustrate the doctrine of justification by faith. He expounds doctrines of salvation and teaches how those doctrines affect the lives of all who have faith in Christ.

Romans 9–16 Paul writes about Israel's elect status, present rejection of the gospel, and eventual salvation. Paul counsels Jewish and Gentile Church members to live the gospel so there will be peace and unity in the Church. He pleads for the Saints in Rome to continue to keep the commandments.

Romans 1–3

Introduction

Paul wrote a letter to the Saints in Rome, proclaiming that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation. He explained that none can be saved by their

own works; they must be saved by the grace of Jesus Christ, made available through His Atonement.

Suggestions for Teaching

Romans 1:1–17

Paul declares that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation

Read aloud the following statement by Elder Larry Echo Hawk of the Seventy. Explain that as a young man, Elder Echo Hawk had enlisted in the United States Marine Corps.



“I met my drill instructor, a battle-hardened veteran, when he kicked open the door to the barracks and entered while screaming words laced with profanity.

“After this terrifying introduction, he started at one end of the barracks and confronted each recruit with questions. Without exception, the drill instructor methodically found something about each recruit to ridicule with loud, vulgar language. Down the row he came, with each marine shouting back his

answer as commanded: ‘Yes’ or ‘No, Sergeant Instructor.’ . . . When it was my turn, I could tell he grabbed my duffel bag and emptied the contents onto my mattress behind me. He looked through my belongings, then walked back to face me. I braced myself for his attack. In his hand was my Book of Mormon” (“Come unto Me, OYe House of Israel,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 32).

- How would you feel if you were in Elder Echo Hawk’s situation?
- What do you think the drill instructor was going to do?
- Have you ever been in situations in which you worried your beliefs would be ridiculed? (Consider inviting a few students to share their experiences with the class.)

Invite students to look for truths as they study Romans 1 that can help them when they face ridicule or persecution for their beliefs and standards.

Briefly introduce the book of Romans by inviting a student to read aloud the following paragraph:

The book of Romans is an epistle that Paul wrote to the Saints in Rome near the end of his missionary journeys. He wrote the Roman Saints to prepare them for his arrival, to clarify and defend his teachings, and to promote unity between Jewish and Gentile members of the Church. Rome—the capital of the Roman Empire—was saturated with worldly philosophies and would have been a difficult place to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Summarize Romans 1:1–14 by explaining that Paul began his epistle by testifying of Jesus Christ and expressing his desire to visit the Saints in Rome.

Invite a student to read Romans 1:15–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught the Roman Saints about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- What did Paul say the gospel of Jesus Christ is? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **The gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation to all who exercise faith in Jesus Christ.** Write this truth on the board. You may want to suggest that students mark in their scriptures the words or phrases that teach this truth.)
- What does the gospel of Jesus Christ allow us to be saved from? (Physical and spiritual death.)
- Why must we exercise faith in Jesus Christ to receive the blessings of salvation through the gospel? (Jesus Christ performed the Atonement, which makes our salvation possible.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following explanation of what it means to believe in Jesus Christ and exercise faith in Him:

As used by Paul, the terms *belief* and *faith* mean not just mental agreement that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, but wholehearted acceptance of and trust in Him as the One who offered Himself in Atonement for our sins. This deep trust leads to a life of faithfulness, manifested by repenting of sins, being baptized, and trying to live as Jesus Christ taught (see Acts 16:30–33; Romans 6:1–11; 1 Corinthians 6:9–11). “Faith in Jesus Christ . . . is manifested in a life of obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel and service to Christ” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Salvation,” scriptures.lds.org).

- Because Paul knew that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe, how did he feel about preaching it? (He was not ashamed [see Romans 1:16].)
- How could having a testimony of the power of the gospel influence your desire to share the gospel with others? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **As we gain a testimony that the gospel of Jesus Christ has power to save us, then we will not be ashamed to share it with others.**)
- How can this principle help you when you face persecution or ridicule for your beliefs?

Invite a student to read aloud the next portion of Elder Echo Hawk’s story, and ask the class to listen for how he responded to the drill sergeant.



“I expected that he would yell at me; instead, he moved close to me and whispered, ‘Are you a Mormon?’

“As commanded, I yelled, ‘Yes, Sergeant Instructor.’

“Again I expected the worst. Instead, he paused and raised his hand that held my Book of Mormon and in a very quiet voice said, ‘Do you believe in this book?’

“Again I shouted, ‘Yes, Sergeant Instructor’ ” (“Come unto Me, O Ye House of Israel,” 32).

- How is Elder Echo Hawk’s response a good example of the principle taught in Romans 1:16?

Explain that rather than ridiculing Elder Echo Hawk, the drill instructor carefully laid down the Book of Mormon and continued down the line of recruits. Read aloud the remainder of Elder Echo Hawk’s statement:

“I have often wondered why that tough Marine Corps sergeant spared me that day. But I am grateful I was able to say without hesitation, ‘Yes, I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ and ‘Yes, I know the Book of Mormon is true.’ This testimony is a precious gift given to me through the Holy Ghost” (“Come unto Me, O Ye House of Israel,” 32).

- When have you (or someone you know) demonstrated that you are not ashamed to share the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Invite students to ponder how strong they feel their testimonies of the gospel of Jesus Christ are and what they can do to strengthen those testimonies. Encourage them to set a goal to do so.

Romans 1:18–3:23

Paul teaches that all mankind sin and fall short of the glory of God

Explain that in Paul’s day, some Gentile Christians sought to excuse immoral or sinful behavior by emphasizing God’s mercy and ignoring His perfect justice. Also, some Jewish Christians believed that observance of the law of Moses was necessary for their salvation. Paul sought to correct both of these misconceptions.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Romans 1:18–32. Ask the class to follow along, looking for sins Paul said were prevalent in his day. You may want to help students define words and phrases in verses 18–32 to help them understand the warnings Paul gave to the Roman Saints. For example, consider asking the following question:

- In verse 25, what do you think the phrase “worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator” means?

Point out that from Romans 1:18–32, we learn that **prophets and apostles teach us about behaviors and attitudes that are offensive to God.**

Explain that the phrases “change the natural use into that which is against nature” in verse 26 and “leaving the natural use of the woman” in verse 27 refer to homosexual behavior. You may want to explain that from the beginning, and consistently throughout the scriptures, the Lord has condemned violations of the law of chastity, including homosexual behavior.

Note: The topic of same-sex attraction requires great sensitivity. As your class discusses this issue, ensure that it is done with kindness, compassion, and civility.

To help students understand the Church’s position on homosexual behavior, read the following statements aloud:

“Homosexual and lesbian behavior is a serious sin. If you find yourself struggling with same-gender attraction or you are being persuaded to participate in inappropriate behavior, seek counsel from your parents and bishop. They will help you” (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 36).

“The Church’s doctrinal position is clear: Sexual activity should only occur between a man and a woman who are married. However, that should never be used as justification for unkindness. Jesus Christ, whom we follow, was clear in His condemnation of sexual immorality, but never cruel. His interest was always to lift the individual, never to tear down. . . .

“The Church distinguishes between same-sex attraction and behavior. While maintaining that feelings and inclinations toward the same sex are not inherently sinful, engaging in homosexual behavior is in conflict with the ‘doctrinal principle, based on sacred scripture . . . that marriage between a man and a woman is essential to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children’ [“First Presidency Statement on Same-Gender Marriage,” mormonnewsroom.org]” (“Same-Sex Attraction,” *Gospel Topics*, lds.org/topics).

- Why is it important for us to understand the teachings of the Lord’s prophets and apostles concerning homosexual behavior?
- How can we show kindness and compassion to those who experience same-sex attraction while still supporting the Church’s position on homosexual behavior?

Summarize Romans 2:1–3:8 by explaining that Paul taught that all people will be judged according to their works, and he showed that the Jews’ unrighteousness came from their living the law of Moses outwardly but not inwardly.

Invite a student to read Romans 3:9–12, 23 aloud, and ask the class to look for who Paul said is affected by sin.

- Who did Paul say is affected by sin? What effect do our sins have upon us? (After students have responded, write the following truth on the board: **All accountable people sin and are in need of God’s forgiveness.**)
- How does this truth help us better understand why we need Jesus Christ?

Romans 3:24–31

All mankind may be justified through faithful acceptance of Christ’s Atonement

Explain that in the remaining verses of Romans 3, Paul taught how Jesus Christ overcomes the problem we face—namely, that God cannot accept sin and that every accountable person commits sin. In order to understand these verses, students will need to understand the meaning of the following words: *justification* (being “pardoned from punishment for sin and declared guiltless” [Guide to the Scriptures, “Justification, Justify” scriptures.lds.org]), *propitiation* (atoning sacrifice and source of mercy), and *grace* (“divine means of help or strength, given through the bounteous mercy and love of Jesus Christ” [Bible Dictionary, “Grace”]). Consider writing the definitions of these words on the board before class or providing a handout with these terms to each student.

Ask a student to read Romans 3:24–26 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for how we can become worthy to be in God’s presence.

- According to Romans 3:24, how are we justified, or declared worthy to be in God’s presence?

Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation of Romans 3:24 changes the word *freely* to *only* (see footnote *a*). Explain that no matter how much good we do in this life, we cannot earn or merit salvation on our own because, as Paul taught, we all have sinned and therefore

Define difficult words and phrases

Defining difficult words and phrases can be an important step in understanding the content of the scriptures and identifying doctrines and principles. The words of the prophets, dictionaries, student manuals, footnotes, and scripture study helps can help students understand difficult words and phrases.

fall short of salvation (see Romans 3:23). It is only by God’s grace—His divine strength and enabling power—that we are saved (see also Moroni 10:32–33).

- According to verse 26, whom does God justify by grace? (Those who believe in Jesus.)

Remind students of how Paul used the terms *belief* and *faith* as discussed earlier in class.

- What principle do these verses teach about the result of faithfully accepting Jesus Christ’s Atonement? (Students may identify a principle such as the following: **Through faithful acceptance of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, all mankind may be justified and receive salvation.**)
- How can we demonstrate faithful acceptance of the Savior’s Atonement?

Invite students to ponder their need for the Savior Jesus Christ and what they can do to more faithfully accept His Atonement. Invite them to write their feelings in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Ask a few students to share their feelings about and testimonies of the Savior.

Summarize Romans 3:27–30 by explaining that Paul re-emphasized that an individual is justified by faith in Jesus Christ rather than by his or her observance of the law of Moses.

Commentary and Background Information

Romans 1:1. “The gospel of God”

The gospel of Jesus Christ is, in fact, the gospel of God, meaning the gospel of God the Father. It became known as “the gospel of Jesus Christ” as Christ became the chief advocate and proponent of the Father’s plan.

Romans 1:26–32. Homosexual behavior is a serious sin

For more information on the Church’s position concerning homosexual behavior and same-sex attraction, see “Same-Sex Attraction” on lds.org/topics.

Supplemental Teaching Idea

Understanding key terms in Paul’s epistle to the Romans

To help students understand several words Paul used that may not be familiar to them, consider providing students a handout with the following definitions as you begin your study of Romans (except where noted, all definitions are from the Guide to the Scriptures [scriptures.lds.org]):

Gospel: God’s plan of salvation, made possible through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. The gospel includes the eternal truths or laws, covenants, and ordinances needed for mankind to enter back into the presence of God.

Salvation: To be saved from both physical and spiritual death. In this sense, salvation in Paul’s language is the same as eternal life (see Alma 11:40–41; D&C 6:13; 14:7; Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* [1978], 129–30).

Justification, Justify: To be pardoned from punishment for sin and declared guiltless. A person is justified by the Savior’s grace through faith in him. This faith is shown by repentance and obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. Jesus Christ’s atonement enables

mankind to repent and be justified or pardoned from punishment they otherwise would receive.

Faith: Faith is trust, confidence in, and reliance upon the Lord Jesus Christ, which lead a person to obey Him. Faith must be centered in Jesus Christ in order for it to lead a person to salvation.

Propitiation: “An atoning sacrifice” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. [2003], “propitiation”). Source of mercy, appeasement.

Grace: “Grace is a gift from Heavenly Father given through His Son, Jesus Christ. The word grace, as used in the scriptures, refers primarily to enabling power and spiritual healing offered through the mercy and love of Jesus Christ” (“Grace,” Gospel Topics, lds.org/topics).

Works: A person’s actions, whether good or bad. Each person will be judged by his [or her] own works.

Law: The commandments or rules of God upon which all blessings and punishments are based both in heaven and on earth. Those who obey the laws of God receive the promised blessings. . . . The law of Moses [or simply “the law,” as used by Paul] was a preparatory law to bring men and women to Christ.

Romans 4–7

Introduction

Paul explained how Abraham had been justified through grace. Paul then described blessings that come

to those who are justified and taught that baptism symbolizes becoming dead to sin and alive in Christ.

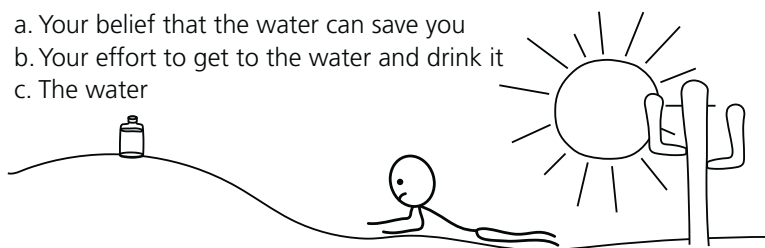
Suggestions for Teaching

Romans 4–5

Paul explains how Abraham was justified through grace

Copy the following picture and phrases on the board.

- Your belief that the water can save you
- Your effort to get to the water and drink it
- The water



Invite students to imagine that they are dying of thirst in a desert and that there is a bottle of water on top of a nearby hill.

- Which of the following will save you: (a) your belief that the water can save you, (b) your effort to get to the water and drink it, or (c) the water itself? (Do not say whether students' responses are correct.)

Explain that this scenario can help us understand Paul's teachings in Romans 4–7 concerning how faith, works, and grace relate to the doctrine of justification. (Remind students that Paul's teachings regarding justification were introduced in Romans 1–3.)

- According to Paul's teachings in Romans 1–3, what does it mean to be justified? (To be pardoned from the punishment for sin and declared guiltless or righteous.)

Provide context for Romans 4 by explaining that some of the Jewish Saints in Rome overemphasized the importance of their own efforts and of the law of Moses in being justified.

- How might some people today have a similar misunderstanding of justification?
- Which option written on the board could represent the idea that we can be saved by our works? (Write *Works* next to option B.)

Explain that Paul tried to correct the misunderstanding that existed in his day by reminding the Jews about the ancient patriarch Abraham, whom many Jews saw as being justified.

Invite a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, Romans 4:2–5 (in the Bible appendix). Ask the class to follow along, looking for why Abraham was judged as being righteous.

- What was Abraham *not* justified by? (The "law of works.")
- According to Paul's teachings recorded in Romans 1–3, why can we not be justified by the law of works? (Paul taught that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" [Romans 3:23]. To be justified by the law of works would require us to never sin.)

Explain that as recorded in Romans 4:6–8, Paul quoted King David to further illustrate that our works alone do not justify us or make us innocent.

To summarize Romans 4:9–15, invite a student to read the following paragraph aloud:

To discredit the idea that only those who had been circumcised and were keeping the law of Moses could receive the blessings of being faithful, Paul taught that Abraham had received the blessings of his faithfulness *before* he was circumcised and that circumcision was a *sign* of his faithfulness. Abraham continued being faithful after covenanting with God

and being circumcised. In this way, Abraham became the father of *all* the faithful, whether uncircumcised (Gentiles) or circumcised (Jews).

Invite a student to read aloud the Joseph Smith Translation in Romans 4:16, footnote *a*, and ask the class to follow along and look for a more complete explanation of how we are justified.

- How are we justified? (Students should identify a doctrine similar to the following: **We are justified by faith and works through grace.**)

Remind students that *grace* refers to the blessings, mercy, help, and strength available to us because of Jesus Christ’s Atonement.

- Which of the options written on the board could represent the Atonement and grace of Jesus Christ? Which option could represent our faith in Him? (After students respond, write *(Atonement and grace of Jesus Christ)* next to option C and *(Faith)* next to option A.)
- If we were in this situation, could we be saved by our belief and efforts if there were no water? (No.) How is the water in this scenario like the Atonement and grace of Jesus Christ?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:

“Salvation cannot be bought with the currency of obedience; it is purchased by the blood of the Son of God [see Acts 20:28]. . . .

“Grace is a gift of God, and our desire to be obedient to each of God’s commandments is the reaching out of our mortal hand to receive this sacred gift from our Heavenly Father” (“The Gift of Grace,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2015, 109, 110).

Point out that while the scenario portrayed on the board helps us understand how faith, works, and grace contribute to us being justified, it does not illustrate all the ways we can receive the Savior’s grace. Jesus Christ not only provides the life-saving water that represents His grace, which justifies us and cleanses us from sin; He also enables us to have the faith and strength we need to obtain the water, or access His grace. We can be blessed by this grace before, during, and after we exercise faith in Him and perform good works.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“The power of the Atonement makes repentance possible and . . . strengthens us to see, do, and become good in ways that we could never recognize or accomplish with our limited mortal capacity” (“Therefore They Hushed Their Fears,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2015, 47).

- How can the Savior’s grace help us exercise faith in Him and do good works?
- What are some works we can do to show our faith in Christ and be justified through His grace? (Repent and obey the commandments and receive the ordinances of the gospel.)

Invite students to divide into groups of two or three and to explain to each other how faith and righteous works help us receive the Savior’s grace so we can be justified. (Make sure students understand that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and in His power to save us will motivate us to receive necessary ordinances and to obey God’s commandments, which allows us to become justified through the Savior’s grace.)

Summarize Romans 5 by explaining that Paul taught of the peace that comes to those who access the grace of Christ by faith (see verses 1–2). He further explained that the grace available to us because of Jesus Christ’s Atonement is more than sufficient to overcome the effects of the Fall.

Romans 6–7

Paul teaches how to become free from sin and receive eternal life

Ask students how they would respond in the following scenario:

Your friend is planning to eventually serve a mission but is currently making choices that oppose the Lord’s standards. When you express concern about your friend’s behavior, he says, “It is not a big deal. Because of the Atonement, I can always repent before I go on my mission.”

Explain that some people knowingly break God’s commandments, planning to repent later, such as before they go to the temple or serve a mission. Invite students as they study Romans 6 to look for why this attitude denotes a grave misunderstanding of the doctrine of grace.

Divide students into pairs. Invite each partnership to read Romans 6:1–6, 11–12 aloud together and to discuss how Paul’s teachings could correct their friend’s thinking. After sufficient time, ask:

- How did Paul respond to the misconception that the Savior’s grace will automatically free us from our sins?
- What do you think it means to be “dead to sin” (verse 2) and be “buried with him by baptism into death” (verse 4)?
- According to these verses, what does baptism by immersion symbolize? (As students respond, help them identify the following doctrine: **Baptism by immersion can symbolize our death to sin and newness of spiritual life.**)

Explain that the new spiritual life we begin when we are baptized includes receiving a remission of our sins and committing to obey God’s commandments.

To prepare students to identify additional principles in Romans 6, display some money.

- Who pays for an employee’s wages? Why does an employer not pay for the wages of someone else’s employee?

Invite students to read Romans 6:13 silently, looking for the two “employers,” or masters, someone could yield to and serve. (You may need to explain that *yield* in this verse means to offer or give yourself to.) Ask students to report what they find.

Draw the following chart on the board:

Wages of sin	God’s wages

Invite students to read Romans 6:14–23 silently. Ask half of them to look for the “wages” (verse 23), or consequences, of sin and the other half to look for God’s wages. After sufficient time, ask a few students to come to the board to write on the chart what they found. (Under “Wages of sin” students should write *Death* [see verses 16, 21, 23], and under “God’s wages” they should write *Righteousness* [see verse 16], *Holiness* [see verses 19, 22], *Everlasting life* [see verse 22], and *Eternal life* [see verse 23].) Explain that death as a wage of sin refers to “separation from God and His influences” and means “to die as to things pertaining to righteousness” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Death, Spiritual,” scriptures.lds.org).

- What principle can we learn from Romans 6:16 about the consequences of yielding to sin? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we yield to sin, then we will become servants of sin.**)
- How does yielding to a sin make us a servant to that sin?

Invite students to ponder instances when someone’s yielding to sin led to a loss of freedom.

Refer to the list under “God’s wages.”

- What are the benefits of serving righteousness rather than sin?
- What principle can we learn from Paul’s teachings about how to become free from sin and receive the gift of eternal life? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we yield ourselves to God, we can become free from sin and receive the gift of eternal life.**)
- In what ways can we yield ourselves to God?
- In what ways have you experienced freedom from sin by yielding yourself to God?

Testify of the importance of yielding ourselves to God. Invite students to write down a goal regarding how they will better yield themselves to God.

Summarize Romans 7 by explaining that Paul used the metaphor of marriage to teach that Church members had been freed from the law of Moses and joined to Christ. He also wrote about the struggle between the “flesh” (verse 18), or physical appetites, and “the inward man” (verse 22), or spirituality.

Conclude by testifying of the truths taught in this lesson.

Ask questions that invite feelings and testimonies

After students understand a doctrine or principle, you can ask questions that lead students to reflect on spiritual experiences related to that doctrine or principle and to feel more deeply the truthfulness and significance of that gospel truth in their lives. Many times, those feelings engender a stronger desire in students to live a gospel principle more faithfully.

Home-Study Lesson

Acts 20–Romans 7 (Unit 20)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Acts 20–Romans 7 (unit 20) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Acts 20–22)

From the missionary journeys of Paul, students learned that true servants of the Lord faithfully perform their duty, and in doing so they feel joy. They also learned that true servants of the Lord are willing to do God's will regardless of the personal cost. From Paul's account of his conversion, students learned that as we obey the words of Jesus Christ, we can become fully converted.

Day 2 (Acts 23–28)

As students studied Paul's testimony before King Agrippa, they learned that if we repent and turn to God, we can overcome Satan's power in our lives, receive forgiveness for our sins, and qualify for the celestial kingdom. They also identified the truth that to become converted to Jesus Christ, we must choose to believe in and be fully committed to living the gospel. From the account of Paul's journey to Rome, students learned that if we are faithful, God can help us turn trials into blessings for ourselves and others.

Day 3 (Romans 1–3)

In Paul's epistle to the Saints in Rome, students learned the following truths: As we gain a testimony that the gospel of Jesus Christ has power to save us, then we will not be ashamed to share it with others. All accountable people sin and are in need of God's forgiveness. Through faithful acceptance of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, all mankind may be justified and receive salvation.

Day 4 (Romans 4–7)

From Paul's teachings to the Roman Saints, students learned that we are justified by faith and works through grace. They also studied the following truths: Baptism by immersion can symbolize our death to sin and newness of spiritual life. If we yield to sin, then we will become servants of sin. If we yield ourselves to God, we can become free from sin and receive the gift of eternal life.

Introduction

As a prisoner, Paul was taken to Rome by sea during the winter months. Before departing, Paul warned that the journey would result in "hurt and much damage" (Acts 27:10). During a storm, Paul prophesied that although the ship would be destroyed, the people on the ship would survive. Paul's prophecy was fulfilled.

Suggestions for Teaching

Acts 27

Paul is shipwrecked as he is taken to Rome

Before class begins, write the following statements on the board. (These statements are found in *For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 4, 11, 16.)

"Avoid going on frequent dates with the same person."

"Do not attend, view, or participate in anything that is vulgar, immoral, violent, or pornographic in any way."

"If your friends urge you to do things that are wrong, be the one to stand for the right, even if you stand alone."

Invite a student to read aloud the statements written on the board.

- Why might some youth choose not to heed these warnings and counsel?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Acts 27 that will help strengthen their faith to heed the warnings and counsel of the Lord's servants.

Remind students that Paul had been falsely charged with treason and imprisoned. He appealed his case to Caesar in Rome, which was his right as a Roman citizen. Summarize Acts 27:1–8 by explaining that Paul traveled with other prisoners by boat toward Rome, under the custody of a Roman guard. After sailing for many days, they stopped at a harbor on the island of Crete. As they were leaving the harbor, Paul warned those on the ship that they should not continue their journey.

Invite a student to read Acts 27:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul warned would happen if he and the others on the ship continued their journey to Rome. You may want to explain that the word *fast* as used in verse 9 refers to voluntarily abstaining from eating. In this case "the fast" probably referred to the Jewish holy day called the Day of Atonement, which marked the beginning of the season during which it was generally regarded as unsafe to travel on the Mediterranean Sea because of violent storms. The Day of Atonement usually took place in late September or early October. Also explain that the word *lading* in verse 10 refers to the ship's cargo.

- According to Acts 27:10, what did Paul warn and prophesy would happen if they continued their journey?

Invite a student to read Acts 27:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Roman centurion and others on the ship responded to Paul's warning.

- Why do you think it may have been easier for the centurion to believe the owner of the ship rather than Paul?
- According to verse 12, why did most of the people on the ship ignore Paul's warning? (You may need to explain that the word *haven* refers to a harbor and *commodious* means comfortable or convenient.)

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Acts 27:13–21. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened as the ship continued toward Rome.

- What happened as the ship continued toward Rome?
- According to verse 20, how did those on the ship during the tempest feel about their situation?
- What principle can we learn from verse 21 about what can happen if we ignore the warnings and counsel of the Lord's servants? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we ignore the warnings and counsel of the Lord's servants, then we put ourselves in danger.** Write this principle on the board. Explain that the danger may include forfeiting blessings that we otherwise would have received.)

Review with students the reasons the centurion and the other people on the ship ignored Paul's warning and counsel (see Acts 27:11–12).

- How might people today make similar excuses for ignoring the warnings and counsel of the Lord's servants?

Using *For the Strength of Youth* or recent conference addresses, give additional examples of prophets' warning and counsel that you feel are relevant to students in your class.

- What dangers might individuals put themselves in by ignoring such warnings and counsel from the prophets?

Invite a student to read Acts 27:22–26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul told the people on the ship.

- If you were on the ship in the midst of the terrible storm, what words from Paul would comfort you?
- What did Paul prophesy would happen to the ship?

Summarize Acts 27:27–30 by explaining that on the 14th night of the storm, the crew cast four anchors into the sea to prevent the ship from crashing into rocks. The crew then went to the front of the ship and acted as though they were about to cast more anchors. However, they were actually planning to abandon the ship and flee in a small boat because they feared the ship would sink.

Invite a student to read Acts 27:31–32 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the warning Paul gave the centurion

and soldiers. Explain that the word *these* in verse 31 refers to the crew members who were trying to flee.

- What warning did Paul give the centurion and soldiers?
- How did the soldiers respond to Paul's warning and counsel? (They heeded his warning and prevented the crew from escaping by cutting the small boat's ropes and letting it drift away empty.)

Summarize Acts 27:33–44 by explaining that Paul suggested that everyone on board the ship eat some food to build their strength. Later that day the ship crashed as it sailed toward land, but all the people escaped safely. Remind students of Paul's prophecy recorded in Acts 27:22–26 that no one would die even though the ship would be lost.

- What principles can we learn from this account about what can happen if we heed the counsel and warnings of the Lord's servants? (Students may identify principles similar to the following: **If we heed the counsel and warnings of the Lord's servants, then the Lord will fulfill His promises to us. If we heed the counsel and warnings of the Lord's servants, then we can withstand the dangers that threaten us.** Write these principles on the board.)

To help students understand the principles they identified in Acts 27, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency:



"Every time in my life when I have chosen to delay following inspired counsel or decided that I was an exception, I came to know that I had put myself in harm's way. Every time that I have listened to the counsel of prophets, felt it confirmed in prayer, and then followed it, I have found that I moved toward safety" ("Finding Safety in Counsel," *Ensign*, May 1997, 25).

- How has heeding the warnings and counsel of the Lord's servants helped you withstand dangers that threaten your spiritual and physical safety?

Invite students to consider whether they are ignoring any warnings or counsel from the Lord's servants or to think about ways they can better heed the warnings and counsel they have received. Invite them to write down a goal regarding how they will give better heed to that counsel.

Next Unit (Romans 8–1 Corinthians 6)

Explain to students that as they study Romans 8–16 and 1 Corinthians 1–6 during the next week, they will learn about wise counsel the Apostle Paul gave to the Church members in Rome and Corinth to help them draw closer to God in a wicked and troublesome world. Ask them to look for answers to the following questions: Why are our physical bodies like a temple? How should Church members resolve differences with each other?

LESSON 101

Romans 8–11

Introduction

Paul taught about blessings of being spiritually reborn and submitting to Heavenly Father's will. He also taught

about Israel's rejection of God's covenant and about spreading the gospel among the Gentiles.

Suggestions for Teaching

Romans 8

Paul describes blessings of being spiritually reborn

Begin the lesson by asking the following questions:

- What is an inheritance?
- If you could inherit anyone's possessions, whose possessions would you choose and why?
- Who typically inherits someone's possessions?

Ask students to consider the blessings someone could receive as an heir of all Heavenly Father possesses. Invite students to look as they study Romans 8:1–18 for what we must do to inherit all that Heavenly Father has.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Romans 8:1, 5–7, 13. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about walking “after the flesh,” or yielding to the tendency to sin, and following “after the Spirit” (verse 5).

- What does it mean to be “carnally minded”? (verse 6). (To be focused on satisfying the passions and lusts of the physical body.)
- What does it mean to be “spiritually minded”? (verse 6).

Explain that to “mortify the deeds of the body” (verse 13) means to put to death or subdue the weaknesses, temptations, and sins related to our mortal bodies (see verse 13, footnote *b*; Mosiah 3:19).

- What principle can we learn from verse 13 about what can help us overcome the tendency of the natural man to sin? (Help students identify the following principle: **If we follow the influence of the Spirit, we can overcome the tendency of the natural man to sin.** Write this principle on the board.)

Invite a student to read Romans 8:14–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul refers to those who follow the Spirit.

- How does Paul refer to those who follow the Spirit? (Explain that the word *sons* in this context means both sons and daughters [see D&C 25:1].)

Point out the phrase “Spirit of adoption” (verse 15). Explain that “our spirit” (verse 16), meaning our spirit bodies, was created by Heavenly Father, making every person literally a spirit child of Heavenly Father. However, it is by making covenants with God through ordinances and then keeping those covenants that people are spiritually reborn, or adopted, as His sons and daughters in the gospel covenant. The companionship of the Holy Ghost indicates that such people are not only God's spirit children by virtue of creation, but they are also His covenant children.

Invite a student to read Romans 8:17–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what God's covenant children can become.

- What can God's covenant children become? (Write the following principle on the board, leaving a blank in place of the word *faithful*: **If we are faithful covenant children of God, we can become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ of all Heavenly Father has.**)
- What is a joint-heir? (Someone who receives an equal inheritance with other heirs.)
- According to verse 17, what must God's covenant children do to become joint-heirs with Christ?

Explain that to “suffer with [Jesus Christ]” (verse 17) does not mean that we suffer what the Savior did as part of His atoning sacrifice. Rather, like the Savior, we are to deny ourselves of all ungodliness, keep the commandments, and faithfully endure opposition (see Matthew 16:24; Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 16:26 [in the Bible appendix]). Add the word *faithful* to complete the principle on the board. Draw a three-column chart on the board. Label the first column *Requirements*, the middle column *Opposition*, and the third column *Inheritance*. List students’ responses to the following questions in the appropriate columns.

- What are some things we are required to do to be considered God’s faithful covenant children?
- What are examples of opposition we might experience as we strive to live as faithful covenant children of God?
- What blessings can we inherit from Heavenly Father if we strive to live as His faithful covenant children? (One possible answer is that we can become like Heavenly Father [see Romans 8:17, footnote *a*].)

Ask students to ponder the lists on the board.

- After reading Paul’s teachings in verse 18, how do you think the requirements of being joint-heirs with Christ compare with the blessings? Why?

Explain that in Romans 8:19–30, we read that Paul taught that the Spirit helps us in our weakness and helps us know what to pray for. We also read that Jesus Christ was called in the premortal existence to be the Savior of God’s children (see Joseph Smith Translation, Romans 8:29–30 [in the Bible appendix]).

Note: In Romans 8:29–30, the word *predestinate* means foreordain or call. Students will study some of Paul’s teachings on foreordination in the lesson on Ephesians 1.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Romans 8:28, 31–39. Ask the class to follow along, looking for truths Paul taught about God’s love as related to the opposition, challenges, and tribulations of mortality. Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation of Romans 8:31 replaces the phrase “be against” with “prevail” (see verse 31, footnote *a*).

- What truths can we learn from these verses? (Students may identify a variety of truths, including the following: **If we love God, all things will work together for our good. Through Jesus Christ we can overcome all the challenges and tribulations of mortality. Nothing can separate us from God’s love, which is manifest in the Atonement of Jesus Christ.**)
- How can Jesus Christ and His teachings help us overcome the challenges and tribulations of mortality?
- Considering the challenges and tribulations of mortality you have experienced, which statements in these verses stand out to you? Why?
- How have you experienced God’s love amidst your challenges and tribulations?

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they feel prompted to do so that, through Jesus Christ, they can overcome their challenges and tribulations. Encourage them to apply what they wrote.

Romans 9–11

Paul teaches about Israel’s rejection of God’s covenant and bringing the gospel to the Gentiles

Ask students to ponder how they would respond in the following scenarios:

1. You accompany your bishop to visit a young man whose family is active in the Church, but he is not. When your bishop kindly tries to help the young man understand the consequences of not living the gospel, the young man says, “Don’t worry. I’ve been baptized, and my parents are active. God won’t withhold any blessings from me.”
2. You recently befriended a young woman of another faith. She asks about the standards you live by. After you describe some of the Lord’s standards, she says, “I don’t understand why you do all that. All you have to do to be saved is believe in Jesus Christ.”

Invite students to look for truths as they study Romans 9–11 that can help them understand what is required to receive the blessings of the gospel.

Ask questions and make invitations that encourage application

Ultimately, the aim of gospel teaching is to help students apply the doctrines and principles found in the scriptures, become converted, and receive the blessings promised to those who are faithful and obedient to God. Questions that encourage application can play a vital role in helping students see how they can apply these principles in their lives.

Invite a student to read the following explanation about Paul’s teachings in Romans 9–11:

As recorded in Romans 9–11, Paul used the terms *Israel* and *Israelites* instead of *Jews* in discussing choices many Jews had made. God’s covenant children are sometimes referred to as the house of Israel. In Old Testament times, God chose the descendants of Jacob, or Israel, to be part of His covenant with Abraham (see Romans 9:4–5), which included great blessings such as the gospel, priesthood authority, eternal life, eternal posterity, a land of inheritance, and the responsibility of blessing the world with the gospel.

Invite a student to read Romans 9:6, 8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about members of the house of Israel.

- What do you think Paul meant by “they are not all Israel, which are of Israel”? (verse 6). (Many Jews falsely trusted that their lineage through Abraham guaranteed them the blessings of the covenant.)

Explain that in Romans 9:25–30, we read that Paul taught that Gentiles who joined the Church could receive all the blessings of the covenant and become righteous by exercising faith in Jesus Christ.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Romans 9:31–33; 10:1–4. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how some Israelites in Paul’s day sought to become righteous before God. Explain that “the law of righteousness” (Romans 9:31) refers to the law of Moses; the “stumblingstone” (Romans 9:32, 33) is Jesus Christ; and “the righteousness of God” (Romans 10:3) refers to Jesus Christ and His gospel.

- According to Romans 9:31–33, how had some Israelites sought to become righteous before God? (By strictly performing the works of the law of Moses.)
- According to Romans 10:3–4, what had these Israelites rejected? (Jesus Christ and the righteousness made possible through Him.)

Explain that as recorded in Romans 10:8–13, Paul expounded on how “the righteousness which is of faith” (Romans 9:30) can be obtained. Invite several students to take turns reading Romans 10:8–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how to obtain this state of righteousness.

- What must someone do to obtain the righteousness that comes from faith?

Explain that the Greek word translated as *confess* in verse 9 denotes an open acknowledgment of acceptance, or covenant, and the Greek word translated as *believe* denotes a trusting commitment. This deep trust in the Savior leads people to openly acknowledge their acceptance of Him in ways He has appointed. These ordained ways include obedience to God’s commandments, repentance, and receiving saving ordinances such as baptism and confirmation.

- According to Paul’s teachings, what must we do if we desire to receive the blessings of God’s covenants, including salvation? (Help students identify the following principle: **If we accept and obey Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can receive the blessings of God’s covenants and be saved.** Write this principle on the board.)

Point out that some people have used Romans 10:9, 13 to claim that all we must do to be saved is verbally confess our belief in Jesus Christ. Remind students of the scenarios presented earlier in the lesson.

- How could the truths in this lesson help you respond in these scenarios?

Summarize the remainder of Romans 10–11 by explaining that Paul taught that hearing the word of God is essential to developing faith in Christ. He used an analogy of grafting branches from a wild olive tree into a tame olive tree to represent the adoption of Gentiles into the house of Israel (see also Jacob 5:3–14). He also taught that the gospel will again be offered to the Jews.

Conclude by testifying of the truths discussed in this lesson.

Romans 12–16

Introduction

Paul taught Church members in Rome to present their bodies as living sacrifices to God and to obey God’s commandments. Paul also taught the Saints how to

promote peace when differences arose because of personal preference. When concluding this epistle, Paul warned of those who seek to deceive.

Emphasize the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning

As you teach, emphasize the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning, such as understanding the context and content of the scriptures; identifying, understanding, and feeling the truth and importance of doctrines and principles; and applying doctrines and principles. These fundamentals are not methods to use but are outcomes to achieve. They establish a pattern to follow to instill the gospel within students’ minds and hearts.

Suggestions for Teaching

Romans 12–13

Paul teaches the Saints to present their bodies as living sacrifices to God and to obey God’s commandments

Bring to class two containers of different shapes and a cup of water. Display the water and one container.

- If I pour the water into this container, how will the shape of the water change? (It will conform to the shape of the container.)

Pour the water into the container. Then pour the water into the second container and point out how the water again conforms to the shape of the container.

Explain that in this demonstration the water represents people and the containers represent different worldly beliefs and practices.

- What dangers can come from continually conforming to worldly beliefs and practices?

Invite a student to read Romans 12:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul exhorted Church members in Rome to do.

- What did Paul exhort these Church members to do?

Explain that in entreating Church members to give their bodies as “a living sacrifice” (verse 1), Paul was drawing a parallel to the Old Testament practice of sacrificing animals. These animals were dedicated offerings to God.

- What do you think Paul meant when he wrote “present your bodies a living sacrifice . . . unto God”? (verse 1). (Church members are to dedicate themselves completely to God by giving up sinful desires.)
- Based on Paul’s exhortation in verses 1–2, what does God expect of us? (Help students identify the following truth: **God expects us to dedicate our lives to Him and refrain from conforming to the world.** Write this truth on the board.)

Explain that throughout Romans 12–13, Paul taught Church members many principles that would help them dedicate their lives to God and refrain from conforming to the world. To help students explore some of these principles, divide students into groups of three. Provide each student with a full sheet of paper that includes the following instructions at the top. (Before class, circle one of the three scripture references on each paper. Make sure that each student in each group receives a paper with a different scripture reference circled.)

Romans 12:9–16	Romans 12:17–21	Romans 13:8–13
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1. Read the scripture passage circled at the top of this paper.
2. Select one of Paul’s teachings in the verses you read, and write it in the space below. Also write how living this teaching can help us dedicate our lives to God and refrain from conforming to the world. (If you are not the first person to receive this paper, either add your thoughts to what previous writers have written below or write about another teaching in the circled verses.)

Explain to students that they will have three minutes to complete the activity as instructed on their paper. At the end of the three minutes, invite them to pass their paper to another student in their group. Repeat this activity so that each student reads and comments on all three scripture passages. Be sure that students receive their original paper back.

Give students time to review the comments on their papers. Invite several students to report something they learned about how we can dedicate our lives to God and refrain from conforming to the world.

Invite a student to read Romans 13:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Paul counseled the Saints to do.

- What do you think Paul meant by the phrase “put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ”?
- How can the teachings we have studied in Romans 12–13 help us become like Jesus Christ? (After students respond, revise the truth previously written on the board so it reads as follows: **If we dedicate our lives to God and refrain from conforming to the world, we can become more like Jesus Christ.**)
- How is the Savior an example of dedicating one’s life to God and refraining from conforming to the world?
- How can we refrain from conforming to the world’s standards? (You might want to give some specific examples such as Sabbath day observance, dress styles, or perhaps views on cultural or social issues that run counter to gospel principles.)

Ask students to think about someone they know who strives to dedicate his or her life to God and refrain from conforming to the world.

- Whom did you think of? Why?
- In what ways has this person become more like the Savior?

Invite students to write in their scripture study journals or class notebooks one way they can dedicate their lives to God and refrain from conforming to the world. Encourage students to apply what they wrote.

Romans 14:1–15:3

Paul counsels Church members to avoid conflicts in matters of personal preference

Ask students to raise their hands if they would answer yes to any of the following questions. You might change some of these questions so that they better reflect the culture in which you live. If you do so, select examples that are matters of personal choice, not matters of obedience to clearly defined commandments. The answer to all these questions should be yes.

- Is it acceptable for a Latter-day Saint to (1) follow a vegetarian diet? (2) eat chocolate? (3) wear shorts in public? (4) use technology on the Sabbath? (5) participate in holiday celebrations that are rooted in other religious or cultural traditions?

Explain that while some behaviors are clearly required or forbidden by commandments from the Lord, others are left to the preference or discretion of individual Church members. These matters can include some choices in areas like entertainment, clothing, diet, Sabbath day observance, and parental rules for children. The Lord has provided standards and commandments to guide our choices in some of these matters, such as wearing shorts that are modest, but some decisions are left to personal discretion. Members may sometimes base decisions in such areas on inspiration for their specific situations or needs.

Invite students as they study Romans 14:1–15:3 to look for truths Paul teaches about how we should handle matters of personal preference in the Church.

Summarize Romans 14:1–5 by explaining that one matter of personal preference that Church members in Paul’s day faced regarded a person’s diet. Some people observed no dietary restrictions. Others abstained from meat and ate only vegetables as a continuation of dietary laws under the law of Moses, even though these restrictions were no longer required (see verse 2, footnote *a*). In addition, some Church members chose to continue to observe Jewish customs, practices, and holidays.

- What problems do you think could have arisen within the Church as members made different personal decisions in these matters?

Invite students to read Romans 14:3 silently, looking for what the personal preferences in diet may have led some Church members to do.

- What problems were Church members experiencing? (Some Church members were despising and judging other members whose choices differed from theirs.)
- Why do you think this would have happened?

Write the following scripture reference on the board: *Romans 14:10–13, 15, 21*. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from these verses. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught Church members to refrain from doing in this matter of personal preference. Direct the student who will read verse 15 to also read the excerpt of the Joseph Smith Translation of Romans 14:15 (in Romans 14:15, footnote *a*).

- Based on what Paul taught in verse 13, what truth can we learn about what we should refrain from doing in matters not addressed by specific commandments? (Students' answers should reflect the following truth: **In matters not addressed by specific commandments, we are to refrain from judging others' choices.**)
- Why is it a problem when Church members look down on or condemn other Church members who make different choices in matters where no commandment requires or forbids a certain behavior?

Point out the phrase “put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall” in verse 13. Explain that this refers to influencing someone else to spiritually stumble or fall in their efforts to believe in Jesus Christ and live His gospel.

- How might Church members eating certain foods influence others to spiritually stumble or fall?
- What did Paul counsel Church members to do if their personal choice of diet could spiritually harm someone else? (Paul counseled the Saints to be considerate of the effect of their personal practices on others and be willing to forgo actions that could influence others to stumble spiritually.)
- What truth can we learn from Paul's instruction regarding our actions in matters not addressed by specific commandments? (Help students identify the following truth: **In matters not addressed by specific commandments, we are to be considerate of how our choices affect others.** *Note*: A similar truth will be discussed in greater depth in 1 Corinthians 8.)

Invite a student to read Romans 14:19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Paul encouraged Church members to pursue.

- How can following Paul's counsel regarding matters of personal preference influence the peace and edification Church members experience together?

Remind students of the matters of personal preference listed earlier. Ask students to describe how Church members could follow the counsel of Paul in matters such as these.

Romans 15:4–16:27

Paul concludes his epistle to the Romans

Explain that as Paul moved toward the conclusion of his epistle, he provided additional counsel to Church members in Rome. Invite a student to read Romans 15:4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about why the scriptures were written.

- What truth can we learn from verse 4 about why the scriptures were written? (Students' answers should reflect the following truth: **The scriptures were written to teach us and to give us hope.**)

Explain that Paul then illustrated this truth by quoting several Old Testament scriptures to reassure the Saints that missionary work among the Gentiles was in accordance with God's plan (see Romans 15:9–12).

Summarize the remainder of Romans 15–16 by explaining that Paul concluded his epistle by describing his efforts to preach the gospel. He also warned about those who cause divisions, teach false doctrines, and seek to deceive others (see Romans 16:17–18).

Conclude by testifying of the truths discussed in this lesson.

The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians

Why study this book?

Members of the early Church who lived in Corinth struggled with many problems that exist in the world today, such as disunity, false teachings, and immorality. In 1 Corinthians we learn that Paul taught these Saints how to promote unity in the Church, how to learn the things of God, the role of the physical body as a temple for the Holy Ghost, the nature of spiritual gifts, the importance of taking the sacrament worthily, and the reality of the Resurrection. Through their study of Paul's teachings recorded in 1 Corinthians, students can learn doctrines and principles that will help them live righteously in spite of the wickedness that surrounds them.

Who wrote this book?

The opening verse of the First Epistle to the Corinthians indicates that it was sent by the Apostle Paul and a disciple named Sosthenes, who may have served as Paul's scribe (see 1 Corinthians 1:1). While the details of Sosthenes's role are unknown, it is clear that Paul was the author of the epistle's content (see 1 Corinthians 16:21–24).

When and where was it written?

Paul wrote the epistle known as 1 Corinthians near the conclusion of his three-year visit to Ephesus (during his third mission), which likely ended sometime between A.D. 55 and 56 (see Acts 19:10; 20:31; Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles").

To whom was it written and why?

This epistle was written to Church members in the city of Corinth. Paul had preached the gospel in Corinth for nearly two years (see Acts 18:1–18) and organized a branch of the Church there (see Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles"). Later, while Paul was preaching in Ephesus during his third missionary journey, he received communication from Church members in Corinth. He wrote a response to the branch (see 1 Corinthians 5:9), but unfortunately this epistle was lost and

is therefore not found in our scriptures. Later, Paul received another report from Church members in Corinth concerning problems in the Church there (see 1 Corinthians 1:11), which he responded to by writing another epistle, which became known as 1 Corinthians. Hence, 1 Corinthians is actually Paul's second letter to members in Corinth.

In Paul's day, Corinth was the capital of the Roman province Achaia, which covered most of ancient Greece south of Macedonia. As a wealthy trade center, Corinth attracted people from throughout the Roman Empire, making it one of the most diverse cities in the area. Idol worship dominated Corinthian religious culture, and there were numerous temples and shrines throughout the city. At the time of Paul's ministry, the Corinthians had a reputation for being grossly immoral. For instance, ritual prostitution was reportedly practiced at the temple of Aphrodite.

Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians makes it clear that Church members lacked unity and that some pagan beliefs and practices had begun to influence their observance of gospel principles and ordinances (see 1 Corinthians 1:11; 6:1–8; 10:20–22; 11:18–22). Paul wrote to Church members in Corinth to help them with their questions and problems and to strengthen the converts who struggled with abandoning their past beliefs and practices.

What are some distinctive features of this book?

The New Testament contains more counsel and teachings from Paul to the Church members in Corinth than to any other branch. In fact, Paul's two epistles to the Corinthians make up one-fourth of all of Paul's existing writings.

In 1 Corinthians we learn that Paul explained that Jesus Christ had fulfilled the law of Moses. Paul emphasized the importance of "the keeping of the commandments of God" (1 Corinthians 7:19) "under the law of Christ" (1 Corinthians 9:21) in order to receive the blessing of salvation through the gospel.

Outline

1 Corinthians 1–11 Paul warns against divisions within the Church and emphasizes the importance of unity among Church members. He warns members against sexual immorality, teaches that the body is a temple for the Holy Spirit, and encourages self-discipline. He addresses specific questions regarding marriage and missionary service, as well as the ordinance of the sacrament and whether or not it is permissible to eat sacrificial meats that have been offered to pagan idols.

1 Corinthians 12–14 Paul teaches that we are to seek the gifts of the Spirit. He reminds the Corinthian Saints of the importance of apostles, prophets, and teachers and the care members should have for one another. He highlights the importance of charity above all other spiritual gifts.

1 Corinthians 15–16 Paul testifies that he stands among many others who are witnesses of the resurrected Christ. He teaches that everyone will be resurrected and that baptism for the dead affirms the truth of the future Resurrection. Paul explains that resurrected bodies will vary in degrees of glory and that Jesus Christ's victory over the grave removes the sting of death. Paul organizes a collection for the poor Saints in Jerusalem.

1 Corinthians 1–2

Introduction

After learning about problems Church members in Corinth were experiencing, Paul wrote to these members and exhorted them to eliminate contention and become

united. He also explained that God calls the weak and humble to preach His gospel and that the things of God can only be known and understood through the Spirit.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Corinthians 1:1–16

Paul writes to the Saints in Corinth and exhorts them to eliminate contention and be united

Show the class a picture of a family, a sports team, and a group of friends (or write *family, sports team, group of friends* on the board).

- What might cause divisions and contention in each of these groups?
- How can such divisions and contention affect a family, team, or group of friends?
- How can such divisions and contention among Church members affect the Church?

Invite students to look as they study 1 Corinthians 1 for a truth about divisions and contention that Paul taught the Saints in Corinth.

Invite students to turn to Bible Maps, no. 13, “The Missionary Journeys of the Apostle Paul,” located in the Bible appendix, and find Corinth on the map.

Ask a student to read the following paragraph aloud:

During his second missionary journey, Paul traveled to a city called Corinth, where he preached the gospel. Many people were baptized at that time (see Acts 18:1–18). Later, while Paul was preaching in Ephesus, he learned that problems had arisen among Church members in Corinth because some of the converts were reverting to their past beliefs and practices of idol worship. Paul wrote to the Church members in Corinth to strengthen them and remind them of their commitment to serve the Lord.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 1:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul addressed the Church members in Corinth.

- How did Paul address the Church members in Corinth?
- According to verse 1, what position did Paul hold in the Church?

Summarize 1 Corinthians 1:3–9 by explaining that Paul told the Saints in Corinth that he thanked God on their behalf for the grace they had received through Jesus Christ, which had blessed them in every way. Point out that as Paul addressed the Saints he used language indicating that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are separate beings (see verse 3).

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 1:10–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul exhorted the Corinthian Saints to do.

- According to 1 Corinthians 1:10, what does the Lord expect us to do as Church members? (Using their own words, students should identify a principle similar to the following: **The Lord expects us as Saints to be united and to eliminate divisions and contention.**)
- What can we do as Church members to eliminate divisions and contention in our families? In our wards? (Write students’ responses on the board.)
- What blessings can we receive from being united and eliminating contention?
- When have you been blessed as a result of being united in a class, quorum, or ward or branch?

Refer students to the responses written on the board, and encourage them to select one way they can eliminate divisions and contention and to set a goal to implement it.

Summarize 1 Corinthians 1:12–16 by explaining that the Saints in Corinth were dividing into groups based on who baptized them. Contention developed because they believed their status in the Church was determined by the importance of the person who baptized them.

1 Corinthians 1:17–31

Paul teaches that God calls on the weak to preach His gospel

Explain that during the time of Paul, many Greeks lived in Corinth. These Greeks placed a high value on philosophical ideas and worldly wisdom.

- Why might someone who values worldly philosophies find it difficult to accept the gospel? (You may want to read 2 Nephi 9:28.)

Invite students to look for a truth as they study 1 Corinthians 1:17–31 that can help them understand the fallibility of the world’s wisdom.

Divide the class into four groups. Assign one of the following scripture references to each group: 1 Corinthians 1:17–18; 1 Corinthians 1:19–20; 1 Corinthians 1:21–22; and 1 Corinthians 1:23–24. Invite students to read these verses in their groups, looking for what Paul said about the world’s wisdom versus God’s wisdom. Explain that the phrase “for Christ sent me not to baptize” in verse 17 suggests that Paul was not sent to build a reputation based on the number of converts he could get. You may also want to explain that the phrases “wisdom of the wise” in verse 19 and “wisdom of this world” in verse 20 refer to the flawed philosophical traditions of the day.

After sufficient time, invite a student from each group to summarize for the class what Paul taught the Corinthian Saints about wisdom. After all of the groups have reported, ask:

- Why do you think nonbelievers considered the message of Jesus Christ’s Atonement to be foolish?

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 1:25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about human wisdom compared to God’s wisdom. Explain that Paul used the phrases “the foolishness of God is wiser than men” and “the weakness of God is stronger than men” to convey God’s ultimate wisdom and power. God is not foolish, nor does He have any weaknesses.

- What truth did Paul teach about human wisdom compared to God’s wisdom? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **God’s wisdom is greater than human wisdom.**)
- In what ways might understanding this truth affect how someone looks for solutions to his or her problems?

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 1:26–27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom God chooses to preach His gospel.

- Whom does God choose to preach His gospel?
- Why do you think God chooses those whom the world considers foolish and weak to preach His gospel?

1 Corinthians 2

Paul explains how we learn the things of God

Invite a student to read aloud the following account by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“I sat on a plane next to a professed atheist who pressed his disbelief in God so urgently that I bore my testimony to him. ‘You are wrong,’ I said, ‘there is a God. I *know* He lives!’

“He protested, ‘You don’t *know*. Nobody *knows* that! You can’t *know* it!’ When I would not yield, the atheist, who was an attorney, asked perhaps the ultimate question on the subject of testimony. ‘All right,’ he said in a sneering, condescending way, ‘you say you know. Tell me *how* you know.’

“When I attempted to answer, even though I held advanced academic degrees, I was helpless to communicate. . . .

“When I used the words *Spirit* and *witness*, the atheist responded, ‘I don’t know what you are talking about.’ The words *prayer*, *discernment*, and *faith*, were equally meaningless to him. ‘You see,’ he said, ‘you don’t really know. If you did, you would be able to tell me *how you know*.’

“I . . . was at a loss as to what to do” (“The Candle of the Lord,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1983, 51).

- What would you have said to the atheist?

Invite students to look for a truth as they study 1 Corinthians 2 that will help them know why this man could not understand President Packer and why they can be confident in their knowledge of spiritual matters.

Summarize 1 Corinthians 2:1–8 by explaining that Paul told the Saints in Corinth that he did not use the world’s wisdom to convince them of the gospel. He taught them by the Spirit so they would have faith in God. Paul also told them that unbelievers cannot understand the mysteries of God.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Corinthians 2:9–16. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why Paul said some people can know and understand the “deep things of God” (verse 10), while others cannot.

- According to verses 9–10, why could Paul and other faithful people understand the things of God?
- According to verse 14, why are some people unable to understand the things of God?
- What truth can we learn from these verses about how we can know and understand the things of God? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **We can only know and understand the things of God through His Spirit.**)

Refer to President Packer’s account, and explain that President Packer felt inspired to ask the man sitting next to him on the plane what salt tastes like. Invite a student to read aloud the rest of President Packer’s account:



“After several attempts, of course, he could not do it. He could not convey, in words alone, so ordinary an experience as tasting salt. I bore testimony to him once again and said, ‘I know there is a God. You ridiculed that testimony and said that if I *did* know, I would be able to tell you exactly *how* I know. My friend, spiritually speaking, I have tasted salt. I am no more able to convey to you in words how this knowledge has come than you are to tell me what salt tastes like. But I say to you again, there is a God! He does live! And just because you don’t know, don’t try to tell me that I don’t know, for I do!’

“As we parted, I heard him mutter, ‘I don’t need your religion for a crutch! I don’t need it.’ “From that experience forward, I have never been embarrassed or ashamed that I could not explain in words alone everything I know spiritually” (“The Candle of the Lord,” 52).

Write the words *Things of God* on the board and ask students what they would consider to be things of God that can only be known and understood through His Spirit. Write their responses on the board.

- Why is it important for us to believe that we can only know and understand the things of God through His Spirit?

Refer students to the list on the board, and invite them to share an experience in which they came to know and understand through the Spirit one of these things of God. Consider sharing an experience of your own.

Encourage students to consider what they can do to seek the Spirit’s help as they strive to know and understand the things of God.

Conclude by testifying of the truths taught in this lesson.

Invite students to share

Sharing insights and relevant experiences clarifies students’ understanding of gospel doctrines and principles. As students share such experiences, the Holy Ghost often leads them to a deeper understanding and testimony of the very things they are expressing. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, their words and experiences can also have significant impact on the hearts and minds of their peers.

1 Corinthians 3–4

Introduction

Paul explained to the Corinthian Saints the roles of missionaries in building up God's kingdom. He taught that their congregations were places where the Spirit could dwell and exhorted them not to think that some

people are better than others. (*Note:* The doctrine that our physical bodies are like temples will be covered in the lesson on 1 Corinthians 6.)

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Corinthians 3

Paul explains the roles of missionaries and Church members in building up God's kingdom

Invite students to imagine that a friend signs up to take an advanced math class, like calculus, but has not taken the prerequisite courses, like basic algebra.

- How successful do you think your friend will be in the advanced math class? Why?
- Why is it necessary to understand the basic ideas of a subject before you can master the more advanced concepts?

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 3:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the analogy Paul used to show the Saints in Corinth that they were not yet ready for more advanced gospel truths. Explain that the phrase “but as unto carnal” in verse 1 refers to the natural man, or “a person who chooses to be influenced by the passions, desires, appetites, and senses of the flesh rather than by the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Such a person can comprehend physical things but not spiritual things” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Natural Man,” scriptures.lds.org).

Write the words *milk* and *meat* on the board.

- Which of these foods would you feed to a baby? Why?
- What does the phrase “babes in Christ” in verse 1 suggest about the spiritual maturity of the Corinthian Saints?

To help students understand that the Saints were not yet ready to receive greater truths, remind them that the Saints in Corinth were not unified and that some of them included pagan (ungodly) beliefs and practices in their observance of the gospel. Explain that Paul used several metaphors to teach these Saints the importance of being unified, to correct false beliefs and practices, and to strengthen their faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Divide students into groups of three. Assign each person in the group one of the following teaching outlines. Provide each student with a handout of his or her assigned teaching outline, and allow students a few minutes to read it. After sufficient time, invite each student to use the outline to teach the other two members of the group. (If it is not possible to have groups of three, you could divide students into pairs and assign two teaching outlines to one of the students in each pair.)

Student 1

Invite your group to imagine that they attended a sacrament meeting in which a returned missionary talked about his mission. During his talk, he related that he had baptized several people. A week later, another returned missionary talked in sacrament meeting about her mission and related that she had taught many people who were eventually baptized after she had been transferred to other areas.

- How would you respond if someone said the missionary who baptized several people on his mission was more successful than the missionary whose investigators were not baptized until after she had left the area?

Write the words *planted* and *watered* on a piece of paper, and show it to your group. Explain that Paul compared missionaries to people who plant seeds and water crops.

Oversee group work

During small group discussions and assignments, students can become distracted from the purpose of the activity, start discussing personal matters, or become casual in their efforts to learn. Remain actively involved by moving from group to group and monitoring the activity so that you can help students stay on task and gain the most from the assignment.

Remind your group that the Saints in Corinth had begun dividing into groups based on who had baptized them. They believed their status in the Church was based on the importance of the person who baptized them. (See 1 Corinthians 1:10–16.)

Take turns with the members of your group reading aloud from 1 Corinthians 3:4–9. Ask the group to follow along, looking for what Paul said about the missionaries who had taught and baptized the people in Corinth.

- According to verse 5, what did Paul say he and Apollos were? (Point out verse 5, footnote *a*, and explain that *ministers* means servants.)
- According to verses 6–7, what did Paul say about missionaries who plant the seeds of the gospel and missionaries who help those seeds grow?

If necessary, point out the phrases “neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth” in verse 7, and explain that Paul used these phrases to teach that neither of these roles is more important than God’s role.

- What does the phrase “God that giveth the increase” (verse 7) mean? (It is God, through the Holy Ghost, who causes the changes in people’s hearts that lead to conversion, not those who teach and baptize.)
- What truth can we learn from 1 Corinthians 3:6–7 about our role and God’s role in helping others become converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ? (After your group responds, invite them to write the following truth in their scriptures next to 1 Corinthians 3:6–7: **While we can help others learn about the gospel of Jesus Christ, it is through the power of the Holy Ghost that people are converted.**)

Clarify that in order for people to receive the Holy Ghost and be converted, they must do their part by exercising faith and following God’s commandments.

- How do you think knowing this truth might have helped the Corinthian Saints become more united?

Ask your group how this truth could help them respond in the scenario about the two returned missionaries.

- Why is it important for us to understand that it is the Holy Ghost, not our own power, that converts?

Student 2

Write the word *foundation* on a piece of paper, and show it to your group.

- Why is the foundation an important part of a building?
- What might happen if there is a problem with the foundation?

Invite a member of your group to read 1 Corinthians 3:10 aloud, and ask the rest of your group to look for what Paul said about his missionary labors among the Corinthians.

- What did Paul say he did while laboring as a missionary in Corinth?
- What do you think Paul meant when he said “another buildeth thereon”?

Invite another member of your group to read 1 Corinthians 3:11 aloud, and ask the rest of your group to look for what foundation Paul laid for the Saints in Corinth.

- What foundation did Paul lay while he taught in Corinth?
- According to verse 11, who needs to be the foundation of our lives? (Make sure your group identifies the following truth: **Jesus Christ is the foundation upon which we must build.** Consider inviting your group to mark this truth in verse 11.)
- How can building upon the foundation of Jesus Christ help us endure temptations and trials? (See also Helaman 5:12.)
- How can we ensure our lives are built on the foundation of Jesus Christ?

Invite a member of your group to share about someone he or she knows whose life reflects being built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. Ask this student to explain how building upon Christ has blessed this person.

Invite each group member to set a goal that will help him or her build on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

Student 3

Write the word *temple* on a piece of paper, and show it to your group. Explain that Paul often referred to the temple figuratively. As recorded in 1 Corinthians 3:16–17, he used the word *temple* to refer to the congregations of the Church.

Invite a member of your group to read 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 aloud. Ask the group to follow along, looking for what Paul said the Church members in Corinth needed to understand. Explain that *ye* (verse 16) refers to the congregations of the Church and that the phrase “if any man defile the temple of God” (verse 17) refers to anyone who tries to destroy God’s people.

- According to verse 16, what did Paul want the members of the Church to understand about their congregations?

Although 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 likely refers to the body of the Church as a congregation, these verses can also be applied to our physical bodies.

- How might 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 also apply to our physical bodies? What are the consequences of defiling our bodies?

Summarize 1 Corinthians 3:18–23 by explaining to your group that Paul taught the Saints that true wisdom is found in Jesus Christ and worldly wisdom is “foolishness with God” (verse 19).

After sufficient time, invite a few students to report what they learned in their groups and what they will do as a result of what they learned.

1 Corinthians 4

Paul tells the Saints in Corinth not to think that some people are better than others

Explain that based on Paul’s counsel recorded in 1 Corinthians 4:1–3, it appears that some members of the Church in Corinth had judged Paul’s performance as a missionary and Church leader. They may have questioned his judgment or thought someone else might have done a better job.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 4:3–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul responded to their judgments.

- How did Paul respond to their judgments?
- Why was Paul not concerned about the judgment of others?
- What truth can we learn from verse 5 about how the Lord will judge us? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify a truth similar to the following: **The Lord will judge us fairly because He knows all things, including the thoughts and intents of our hearts.**)
- How can believing this truth help someone who is judged unfairly?

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 4:6–7 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Paul taught the Saints about their relationship with other Church members, including Church leaders.

- According to verse 6, what did Paul tell the Saints not to do when they observed differences in missionaries and Church leaders? (They should not “be puffed up” in pride and think that some people are better than others.)
- Based on Paul’s questions recorded in verse 7, who gave people different talents and abilities?
- How can Paul’s counsel help us as we think about our Church leaders and teachers?

Summarize 1 Corinthians 4:8–21 by explaining that Paul told the Saints in Corinth that the Apostles of Jesus Christ are called to suffer because of the wickedness of the world. The world judges the Apostles and other Church leaders to be “fools” (verse 10) for seeking to follow Christ.

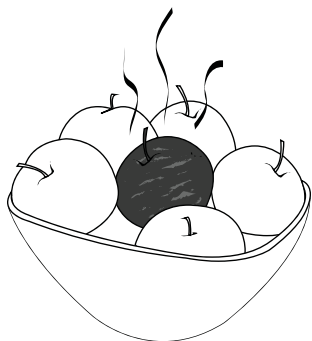
Conclude by testifying of the truths taught in this lesson.

1 Corinthians 5–6

Introduction

The Apostle Paul cautioned the Saints against allowing wicked people to influence them. He warned the Saints

to avoid the immoral philosophies and practices prevalent in Corinth.



Suggestions for Teaching

1 Corinthians 5

Paul cautions the Saints against keeping company with those who willfully choose to sin

On the board, draw a simple picture of a bowl of fresh fruit with one rotten piece of fruit in it. Alternatively, you could display a rotten piece of fruit.

- What would happen if you allowed a rotten piece of fruit to remain in a bowl with other fresh fruit?
- What could the rotten piece of fruit represent in our lives? (Influences that could harm us.)

Invite students to look for truths as they study 1 Corinthians 5 that can help them better respond to harmful influences in their lives.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 5:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a wicked practice among the Corinthian Saints.

- What wicked practice existed among the Corinthian Saints? (Explain that fornication refers to any sexual relations outside of marriage. One of the Church members in Corinth had engaged in sexual sin with his stepmother.)
- According to verse 2, what did Paul counsel Church leaders to do with this person? (Explain that the phrase “taken away from among you” in verse 2 means the sinner was to be excommunicated from the Church.)

Point out that Church leaders carefully consider many factors before excommunication or any other form of Church discipline takes place. In addition to considering how serious the transgression is, Church leaders consider the various purposes for Church discipline: to help a person repent, to protect those who would be negatively affected by a person’s actions or the spreading of that person’s beliefs, and to protect the integrity of the Church’s teachings (see “Church Discipline,” mormonnewsroom.org/articles/church-discipline).

Invite students to read 1 Corinthians 5:6–7 aloud, and ask the class to look for the analogy Paul used to explain why this individual needed to be removed from the Church.

- What did Paul compare unrepentant sinners to? (Explain that leaven, or yeast, eventually causes bread to spoil or become moldy.)
- How much leaven is needed to affect an entire lump of dough?
- What does the lump of dough represent? (The Church of Jesus Christ.)
- How would you summarize the meaning of this analogy as a principle? (Using their own words, students should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we choose to closely associate with those who embrace sin, we can be influenced by their wickedness.** Write this truth on the board.)

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 5:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for counsel Paul gave the Corinthian Saints.

- What did Paul instruct the Corinthian Saints to avoid?

To help students further understand Paul’s counsel not to keep company with fornicators or others who embrace sin, provide students with a copy of the following statement by Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask a student to read it aloud:

“Do not company with fornicators—not because you are too good for them but, as [C. S.] Lewis wrote, because you are not good enough. Remember that bad situations can wear

down even good people” (“The Stern but Sweet Seventh Commandment,” *New Era*, June 1979, 42).

- How might closely associating with those who embrace sin weaken our ability to make righteous choices?
- What are some examples of bad situations that can wear down good people?
- What can we do without compromising our standards to help individuals who have embraced sin? (We can pray for them, show kindness and respect for them as children of God, and set a righteous example of keeping the commandments.)

Invite students to prayerfully consider what they can do to influence others in a positive way without compromising their standards.

Summarize 1 Corinthians 5:12–13 by explaining that Paul taught that the Church has a responsibility to call members to repentance and in some cases to “put away from among [the Church]” (verse 13) those who commit serious transgressions.

1 Corinthians 6

Paul teaches the Saints about unity and the law of chastity

Draw another simple picture on the board of a bowl of rotten fruit with one fresh piece of fruit in it. Invite students to consider if they have ever wondered how to avoid sin when it is all around them. Point out that this was a challenge the Corinthian Saints faced.

As students study 1 Corinthians 6, invite them to look for truths Paul taught that can help them live righteously despite being surrounded by wicked influences.

Summarize 1 Corinthians 6:1–8 by explaining that Paul counseled the Corinthian Saints to righteously resolve disputes among themselves rather than immediately resorting to civil courts.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 6:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for sinful practices in Corinth that Paul taught Church members to avoid.

- What types of sinful behaviors did Paul teach Church members to avoid?
- According to verse 11, what did Paul remind these Saints about themselves? (Many converts from Corinth had participated in these sinful behaviors before joining the Church, but they had repented and been cleansed from their sins.)

Explain that ancient Corinth had a reputation for immorality, and many Corinthians promoted the idea that our bodies were made for pleasure. Summarize the Joseph Smith Translation of 1 Corinthians 6:12 by explaining that Paul taught against the philosophy that there is no right or wrong.

- How were the ideas and practices in Corinth similar to trends we see in the world today?

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 6:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about the purpose of our bodies.

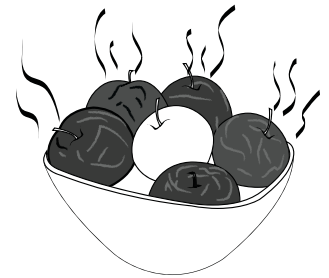
- What did Paul teach about our bodies? (While many of the Corinthians apparently believed that the body was made simply for physical pleasures, Paul corrected that view by teaching that our bodies were created to accomplish the Lord’s purposes.)

Summarize 1 Corinthians 6:14–17 by explaining that those who join the Church become one with Christ as spiritual “members” of His body. Paul also explained that sexual immorality is incompatible with a spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 6:18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught the Corinthian Saints to do. (You may want to point out that the Joseph Smith Translation of 1 Corinthians 6:18 changes the phrase “without the body” to “against the body of Christ.”)

- What did Paul teach the Corinthian Saints to do?
- What truth did Paul teach about those who commit fornication? (You may want to suggest that students mark the words in verse 18 that teach the following truth: **Those who commit fornication sin against their own bodies.**)

Explain that Paul next taught why fornication, or sexual immorality, is a sin “against [the person’s] own body.”



1 Corinthians

6:19–20 is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 6:19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul compared our bodies to.

- What did Paul compare our bodies to?

Display a picture of a temple.

- What is the difference between a temple and any other building?
- How would you summarize the truth Paul taught in verse 19? (Students may use other words but should identify the following doctrine: **Our bodies are temples of God in which the Spirit can dwell.**)
- How can understanding that our bodies are temples influence how we treat our bodies and the bodies of others?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for additional insights about how understanding this truth can influence how we treat our bodies.



“Acknowledging these truths [from 1 Corinthians 6:19–20] . . . , we would certainly not deface our body, as with tattoos; or debilitate it, as with drugs; or defile it, as with fornication, adultery, or immodesty. . . . As our body is the instrument of our spirit, it is vital that we care for it as best we can. We should consecrate its powers to serve and further the work of Christ” (“Reflections on a Consecrated Life,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 17).

- What do you think Paul meant by the phrase “ye are not your own” in verse 19?

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 6:20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why our bodies are not our own.

- What phrase indicates why our bodies are not our own? (Explain that “bought with a price” means to be redeemed or bought back through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.)
- How would you summarize a truth from verses 19–20? (After students respond, consider inviting them to write the following truth in their scriptures near verses 19–20: **Because we have been bought with a price through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, our bodies are not our own.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“Please, never say: ‘Who does it hurt? Why not a little freedom? I can transgress now and repent later.’ Please don’t be so foolish and so cruel. You cannot with impunity ‘crucify Christ afresh’ [see Hebrews 6:6]. ‘Flee fornication’ [1 Corinthians 6:18], Paul cries, and flee ‘*anything like unto it*’ [D&C 59:6; emphasis added], the Doctrine and Covenants adds. Why? Well, for one reason because of the incalculable suffering in both body and spirit endured by the Savior of the world so that we *could* flee [see especially Doctrine and Covenants 19:15–20]. We owe Him something for that. Indeed, we owe Him everything for that” (“Personal Purity,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 76).

- How should remembering that our bodies are not our own influence the choices we make regarding our bodies?

Refer students to the picture on the board of the fresh piece of fruit surrounded by rotten fruit.

- How can understanding these truths about our bodies help us remain pure when we are surrounded by wickedness?

Testify of the truths you have discussed. Invite students to ponder the impressions or promptings they may have received during the lesson and to act on those promptings.

Scripture Mastery—1 Corinthians 6:19–20

Invite students to write a brief talk based on 1 Corinthians 6:19–20. Encourage them to include the following: (1) the background information related to this passage (background information can be found on the scripture mastery card), (2) the principles that it teaches, and (3) a personal experience that illustrates the truth that this passage teaches. You could invite a few students to present their talks to the class. Encourage students to consider opportunities they may have to present their talks at home or at Church.

Home-Study Lesson

Romans 8–1 Corinthians 6 (Unit 21)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Romans 8–16 and 1 Corinthians 1–6 (unit 21) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Romans 8–11)

From Paul's teachings to the Roman Saints about being spiritually or carnally minded, students learned that if we follow the influence of the Spirit, we can overcome the tendency of the natural man to sin. Students also identified the following truths: If we are faithful covenant children of God, we can become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ of all Heavenly Father has. If we love God, all things will work together for our good. Through Jesus Christ we can overcome all of the challenges and tribulations of mortality. If we accept and obey Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can receive the blessings of God's covenants and be saved.

Day 2 (Romans 12–16)

In Romans 12–13, students discovered that God expects us to dedicate our lives to Him and refrain from conforming to the world, and if we do so, we can become more like Jesus Christ. In Romans 14–15, students learned that in matters not addressed by specific commandments, we are to refrain from judging others' choices and be considerate of how our choices affect others. Students also learned that the scriptures were written to teach us and to give us hope.

Day 3 (1 Corinthians 1–2)

In a letter to the Corinthian Saints, Paul addressed some concerns and questions. From his writings, students learned that the Lord expects us as Saints to be united and to eliminate divisions and contention and that we can only know and understand the things of God through His Spirit.

Day 4 (1 Corinthians 3–6)

In this lesson students continued to study Paul's letter to the Corinthian Saints. From Paul's words, students learned the following truths: While we can help others learn about the gospel of Jesus Christ, it is through the power of the Holy Ghost that people are converted. The Lord will judge us fairly because He knows all things, including the thoughts and intents of our hearts. If we choose to closely associate with those who embrace sin, we can be influenced by their wickedness.

Introduction

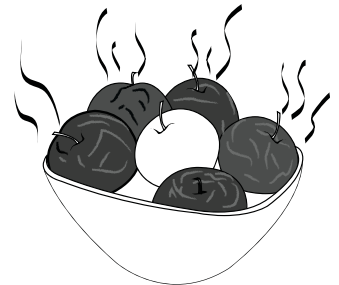
This lesson can help students understand how to avoid sin when it is all around them. Additionally, they will learn why it is important to keep their bodies pure.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Corinthians 6

Paul teaches the Saints about unity and the law of chastity

Draw a picture on the board of a bowl of rotten fruit with one fresh piece of fruit in it. Invite students to consider if they have ever wondered how to avoid sin when it is all around them.



As students study 1 Corinthians 6, invite them to look for truths the Apostle Paul taught that could help them live righteously despite being surrounded by wicked influences.

Summarize 1 Corinthians 6:1–8 by explaining that Paul counseled the Corinthian Saints to righteously resolve disputes among themselves rather than immediately resorting to civil courts.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 6:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for sinful practices in Corinth that Paul taught Church members to avoid.

- What types of sinful behaviors did Paul teach Church members to avoid?
- According to 1 Corinthians 6:11, what did Paul remind these Saints about themselves? (Many converts from Corinth had participated in these sinful behaviors before joining the Church, but they had repented and been cleansed from their sins.)

Explain that ancient Corinth had a reputation for immorality, and many Corinthians promoted the idea that our bodies were made for pleasure. Summarize the Joseph Smith Translation of 1 Corinthians 6:12 by explaining that Paul taught against the philosophy that there is no right or wrong.

- How were the ideas and practices in Corinth similar to trends we see in the world today?

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 6:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about the purpose of our bodies. (You may want to explain that the word *meat* means food.)

- What did Paul teach about our bodies? (While many of the Corinthians apparently believed that the body was made simply for physical pleasures, Paul corrected that view by teaching that our bodies were created to accomplish the Lord's purposes.)

Summarize 1 Corinthians 6:14–17 by explaining that those who join the Church become one with Christ as spiritual “members” of His body. Paul also explained that sexual immorality is incompatible with a spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 6:18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught the Corinthian Saints to do. (You may want to point out that the Joseph Smith Translation of 1 Corinthians 6:18 changes the phrase “without the body” to “against the body of Christ.”)

- What did Paul teach the Corinthian Saints to do?
- What truth did Paul teach about those who commit fornication? (You may want to suggest that students mark the words in verse 18 that teach the following truth: **Those who commit fornication sin against their own bodies.**)

Explain that Paul next taught why fornication, or sexual immorality, is a sin “against [the person's] own body.”

Remind students that 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 is a scripture mastery passage. Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 6:19 aloud. Ask the class follow along, looking for what Paul compared our bodies to.

- What did Paul compare our bodies to?

Display a picture of a temple.

- What is the difference between a temple and any other building?
- How would you summarize the truth Paul taught in verse 19? (Students may use other words but should identify the following doctrine: **Our bodies are temples of God in which the Spirit can dwell.**)
- How should understanding that our bodies are temples influence how we treat our bodies and the bodies of others?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for additional insights about how understanding that our bodies are temples of God should influence how we treat them.



“Acknowledging these truths [from 1 Corinthians 6:19–20] . . . , we would certainly not deface our body, as with tattoos; or debilitate it, as with drugs; or defile it, as with fornication, adultery, or immodesty. . . . As our body is the instrument of our spirit, it is vital that we care for it as best we can. We should consecrate its powers to serve and further the work of Christ” (“Reflections on a Consecrated Life,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 17).

- What do you think Paul meant by the phrase “ye are not your own” in 1 Corinthians 6:19?

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 6:20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why our bodies are not our own.

- What phrase indicates why our bodies are not our own? (Explain that “bought with a price” means to be redeemed or bought back through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.)
- How would you summarize a truth from verses 19–20? (After students respond, help them identify the following truth: **Because we have been bought with a price through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, our bodies are not our own.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“Please, never say: ‘Who does it hurt? Why not a little freedom? I can transgress now and repent later.’ Please don’t be so foolish and so cruel. You cannot with impunity ‘crucify Christ afresh’ [see Hebrews 6:6]. ‘Flee fornication’ [1 Corinthians 6:18], Paul cries, and flee ‘anything like unto it’

[D&C 59:6, emphasis added], the Doctrine and Covenants adds. Why? Well, for one reason because of the incalculable suffering in both body and spirit endured by the Savior of the world so that we *could* flee [see especially Doctrine and Covenants 19:15–20]. We owe Him something for that. Indeed, we owe Him everything for that” (“Personal Purity,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 76).

- How should remembering that our bodies are not our own influence the choices we make regarding our bodies?

Refer students to the picture on the board of the fresh piece of fruit surrounded by rotten fruit.

- How can understanding these truths about our bodies help us remain pure when we are surrounded by wickedness?

Testify of the truths you have discussed. Invite students to ponder the impressions or promptings they may have received during the lesson and to act on those promptings.

Next Unit (1 Corinthians 7–14)

Explain to the students that each of them has been given at least one spiritual gift from Heavenly Father. Invite them to study the next unit looking for what some of the spiritual gifts are that Heavenly Father gives His children. Tell them that the Apostle Paul taught that even if he gave all of his substance to feed the poor and also gave his body to be burned, if he did not have one particular spiritual gift, he would be nothing. Invite students to think about what gifts they have been given.

1 Corinthians 7–8

Introduction

Paul instructed both married and single Church members in Corinth about marriage and missionary work. Responding to a question about eating meat offered to idols, Paul taught the Saints to consider the effect

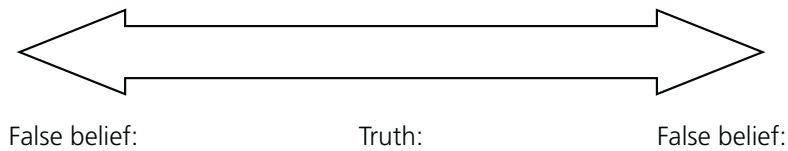
of their personal practices on others and be willing to forgo some actions if those actions might cause another to stumble spiritually.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Corinthians 7

Paul counsels married and single Church members about marriage

Copy the following diagram on the board:



To help students understand the context of 1 Corinthians 7, remind them that, like us, Church members in Corinth lived in a society with confusing and conflicting ideas about marriage and physical or sexual intimacy.

- Based on what you recall from your study of 1 Corinthians 5–6, what were some false beliefs about sexual relations that were prevalent in Corinth?

After students respond, write the following on the left side of the diagram under “False Belief:” *It is acceptable to participate in physical intimacy with anyone.*

Explain that Church members in Corinth had written to the Apostle Paul asking for guidance concerning the Lord’s standard of sexual purity.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 7:1 aloud, and ask the class to look for a question the Corinthian Saints asked Paul.

- What did the Corinthian Saints ask Paul?

Explain that the phrase “it is good for a man not to touch a woman” in verse 1 indicates that the Corinthian Saints had questions about when and if physical intimacy was appropriate. Some may have questioned whether even married people should participate in physical intimacy. Write the following on the right side of the diagram under “False Belief:” *It is never acceptable to participate in physical intimacy, not even in marriage.*

Point out that both of the false beliefs written on the diagram represent extreme views that vary from God’s standard for physical intimacy.

Ask a student to read 1 Corinthians 7:2–3 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught the Corinthians about physical intimacy. (You may need to help students understand that *fornication* refers to sexual relations outside of marriage and *due benevolence* refers to the love and intimacy expressed between husband and wife.)

Invite a student to read the following statement found in *For the Strength of Youth*:

“Physical intimacy between husband and wife is beautiful and sacred. It is ordained of God for the creation of children and for the expression of love between husband and wife. God has commanded that sexual intimacy be reserved for marriage” (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 35).

Help students fulfill their role in the learning process

Spiritual learning requires effort and the exercise of agency by the learner. For many students, putting forth such effort to learn from the scriptures may seem unfamiliar and somewhat difficult. However, you can help them understand, accept, and fulfill their role in gospel learning. As students actively fulfill their role in gospel learning, they open their hearts to the influence of the Holy Ghost.

- What can we learn about physical intimacy from what we have just read? (After students respond, write the following truth on the diagram under “Truth:” **Physical intimacy between husband and wife is ordained of God.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for why intimacy in marriage is ordained of God.



“The power of procreation is not an incidental part of the plan; it is the plan of happiness; it is the key to happiness.

“The desire to mate in humankind is constant and very strong. Our happiness in mortal life, our joy and exaltation are dependent upon how we respond to these persistent, compelling physical desires” (“The Plan of Happiness,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 26).

- What are the purposes of physical intimacy between husband and wife?
- Why is procreation—the ability to create mortal life—so important in Heavenly Father’s plan?

Summarize 1 Corinthians 7:4–24 by explaining that Paul taught that spouses should not generally withhold marital affection from each other, that widowed and divorced members of the Church were permitted to remarry if they chose, and that Church members should “abide with God” whatever their circumstances. Paul also discouraged divorce.

To help students identify another truth from Paul’s writings in 1 Corinthians 7, divide students into groups of two or three, and provide each group with a copy of the following handout:

1 Corinthians 7:12–17

There were Church members in Corinth whose spouses were not Christians.

- What difficulties might spouses of different faiths experience?

Read aloud Paul’s counsel to these part-member families in 1 Corinthians 7:12–17, looking for truths Paul taught that could help part-member families today.

In the following space, summarize what Paul taught about the effect faithful members of the Church can have on their families: _____

- What examples have you seen in which a member of the Church has had a positive effect on family members who were either not members of the Church or not active in the Church?

After sufficient time, ask students to report the truth they identified in 1 Corinthians 7:12–17. Students’ answers may vary, but they should express a truth similar to the following: **Faithful followers of Jesus Christ have a sanctifying effect on their families.**

You may want to invite a few students to share examples of Church members who have had a positive effect on family members who were not members of the Church or who were not active in the Church.

Summarize 1 Corinthians 7:25–40 by explaining that Paul gave his opinion concerning single members who were “called unto the ministry” (Joseph Smith Translation, 1 Corinthians 7:29 [in the Bible appendix]) and explained that their circumstances allowed them to serve the Lord “without distraction” (verse 35), or without temporal concerns related to providing for a family. However, he did not forbid them to marry.

1 Corinthians 8

Paul answers a question about eating meat offered to idols

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“I spent my career in the department store business. Because I was part of a management team, it was important for me to interact socially with local business organizations. The meetings with most of these organizations always started with a cocktail hour [during

which alcoholic drinks are traditionally served]. It was a time to mix and get acquainted with the men who belonged to the organization. I have always felt uncomfortable in these social hours. At first I started asking for a lemon-lime soda. I soon discovered that lemon-lime soda looks like many of the other drinks. I could not build the impression I was a nondrinker with a clear soda in my hands" ("The Tradition of a Balanced, Righteous Life," *Ensign*, Aug. 2011, 48–49).

- What could have happened if Elder Perry had continued to drink clear soda during the cocktail hours?
- What are other situations in which our example could negatively influence others even though we may not be doing anything wrong?

Explain that Church members in Corinth wondered if it was acceptable for them to eat food that had been offered to idols, or pagan gods.

Point out that Paul acknowledged that Church members might think this was acceptable because they knew that pagan gods didn't really exist (see 1 Corinthians 8:4–6).

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 8:1, and ask the class to look for what Paul taught the Corinthian Saints.

- Although the people knew that idols were not real, what did Paul say was more important than what they knew? (Charity, or unselfish love for others.)
- According to this verse, what could result from knowledge? (Becoming puffed up, or arrogant.) What could result from charity? (Edification, or strengthening oneself or others.)

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 8:7–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for when the Corinthian Saints should not eat meat that might have been offered to idols. (You may need to help students understand that *weak* in these verses may refer to weakness in understanding and that *liberty* [verse 9] refers to Church members' freedom to partake of meat that may have been offered to idols.)

- According to verse 9, under what condition did Paul say they should not eat meat offered to idols? (If it would be a stumbling block for someone with a weak testimony or without the knowledge of the gospel.)
- What example did Paul give in verse 10 about one way eating meat offered to idols might be a stumbling block? (If a Church member who was weaker in faith saw another member eat at a dining hall connected to a local pagan temple, the member of weaker faith may also believe that nothing was wrong with idol worship.)

Ask a student to read 1 Corinthians 8:11–13 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for Paul's answer to the question of eating food offered to idols.

- According to verse 13, what did Paul say his own course of action would be in this situation? Why? (Help students understand that *offend* in this verse means to stumble spiritually, sin, or lose faith.)
- What principle can we learn from these verses about how we can avoid leading others to stumble spiritually? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **We can show charity for others by avoiding actions that could lead them to stumble spiritually.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the remainder of Elder Perry's account. Ask the class to listen for how Elder Perry applied this principle:



"I decided I had to have a drink that would clearly mark me as a nondrinker. I went to the bartender and requested a glass of milk. The bartender had never had such a request. He went into the kitchen and found a glass of milk for me. Now I had a drink that looked very different from the alcoholic beverages the others were drinking. . . .

"Milk became my drink of choice at the cocktail hours. It soon became common knowledge I was a Mormon. The respect I received really surprised me, as did an interesting event that started to occur. Others soon joined me in a pure milk cocktail!" ("The Tradition of a Balanced, Righteous Life," 49).

- What are other examples of how we might show charity for others by avoiding actions that could cause them to stumble spiritually?

Testify of the truths students discovered today, and encourage students to seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost as they strive to live according to these truths.

Use stories to help students understand principles

Stories can help students understand gospel principles that have been identified within a scripture block. By illustrating a gospel principle in a modern context, stories can also help students understand how a gospel principle relates to their lives as well as help them feel a desire to apply it.

1 Corinthians 9–10

Introduction

Paul addressed concerns from the Corinthian Saints about the use of Church resources to provide for his temporal needs. He explained that the purpose of his

preaching was to bring salvation to the children of God. He exhorted them to avoid sinning as well as offending others in their religious beliefs.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Corinthians 9

Paul preaches the gospel so that he and his listeners can be saved

Bring an alarm clock to class and keep it hidden from students. Set it to go off shortly after you begin teaching.

To begin the lesson, invite students to imagine what eternal life will be like. Ask them to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals why eternal life is something that they desire. You could invite a few students to read to the class what they wrote.

Near the end of this activity, the alarm clock should go off. When that happens ask a student to find it and turn it off.

- How did you feel when you heard that sound?

Ask students to think if they have ever struggled to wake up to an alarm clock and missed something important as a result. Invite a few students to share.

Explain that just as failing to wake up to an alarm clock can result in us missing or even failing to achieve important things, failing to “wake up” in life and change certain behaviors can cause us to fall short of achieving the most important thing of all, eternal life.

Invite students to look for a principle as they study 1 Corinthians 9 that can help them know how to ensure that they achieve eternal life.

Invite a student to read aloud the following summary of 1 Corinthians 9:1–21:

Paul responded to various questions from the Corinthian Saints. He wrote that although he would be fully justified in being supported in temporal concerns by Church members, he had not depended on them for his living expenses. Paul explained that by adapting to different circumstances without compromising the standards of the gospel, he had been able to help Jews, Gentiles, and anyone else who was weak in the gospel to accept the gospel.

Ask a student to read 1 Corinthians 9:17 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for how Paul preached the gospel. You may want to explain that the statement “dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me” refers to Paul fulfilling his commission or duty to preach the gospel.

- How did Paul preach the gospel?

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 9:22–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why Paul preached the gospel willingly.

- Why did Paul preach the gospel willingly?

Invite a student who regularly engages in an extensive training program (perhaps a musician or an athlete) to come to the front of the class. Ask the student the following questions:

- What is your training program like?
- Has there ever been a time when you practiced or trained for a specific event or goal? How did working toward a specific goal motivate you?

Thank the student, and ask him or her to be seated.

Ask a student to read 1 Corinthians 9:24–25 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for the athletic contest Paul used to teach the Corinthian Saints.

Summarizing

Summarizing allows you to move quickly through portions of the scripture block. By summarizing segments of the scripture block rather than omitting them, you help students keep the story line and context clear in their minds and provide a foundation for discovering and understanding principles or doctrines that will arise later in the block. Summarizing also helps preserve the integrity and flow of the inspired author’s message.

- What athletic contest did Paul refer to?
- What quality or characteristic did Paul say runners needed in order to be successful? (Explain that being “temperate in all things” means exercising self-mastery.)
- What is the incorruptible crown Paul referred to that will endure forever? (Eternal life.)
- What principle can we learn from verse 25 concerning what we must do to obtain eternal life? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **To obtain eternal life, we must learn to exercise self-mastery in all things.** Write this principle on the board. Be sure students also understand that while self-mastery is necessary, eternal life ultimately comes only “through the merits, and mercy, and grace” of Jesus Christ [2 Nephi 2:8] rather than through our self-mastery alone.)
- Why do you think exercising self-mastery is necessary in order to obtain eternal life?

Ask a student to read 1 Corinthians 9:26–27 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for how Paul described his own efforts to exercise self-mastery.

- According to verse 26, how did Paul describe his efforts to obtain eternal life? (Confidently and without a wasted effort.)
- According to verse 27, what do you think Paul meant when he wrote, “I keep under my body and bring it unto subjection”?

To help students understand what Paul meant, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Brigham Young:



“You cannot inherit eternal life, unless your appetites are brought in subjection to the spirit that lives within you, that spirit which our Father in Heaven gave. I mean the Father of your spirits, of those spirits which he has put into these tabernacles. The tabernacles must be brought in subjection to the spirit perfectly, or your bodies cannot be raised to inherit eternal life. . . . Seek diligently, until you bring all into subjection to the law of Christ. . . .

“. . . If the spirit yields to the body, [the spirit] becomes corrupt; but if the body yields to the spirit [the body] becomes pure and holy” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* [1997], 204–5).

- What are some things we can do to help our bodies to yield to our spirits?

1 Corinthians 10

Paul cautions the Corinthian Saints to avoid sin and offending others

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President James E. Faust of the First Presidency:

“One of the great myths in life is when [individuals] think they are invincible. Too many think that they are [made] of steel, strong enough to withstand any temptation. They delude themselves into thinking, ‘It cannot happen to me’” (“It Can’t Happen to Me,” *Ensign*, May 2002, 46).

- In what situations might people allow themselves to be exposed to temptation, thinking they are strong enough to withstand it? (List students’ responses on the board.)

Explain that Paul referred to examples from Israelite history to warn the Corinthian Saints about temptation and sin. Ask a student to read 1 Corinthians 10:1–5 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for some things the children of Israel experienced during the time of Moses that should have made them spiritually strong.

- What were some things the children of Israel experienced that should have made them spiritually strong? (You may want to point out that Paul identified the “spiritual Rock,” or Jehovah, as Christ [see also Deuteronomy 32:3–4].)
- According to verse 5, how did God feel about the behavior of many of these ancient Israelites?

Ask several students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Corinthians 10:6–11. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Paul wanted the Corinthian Saints to learn from the example of the ancient Israelites.

- What was Paul’s purpose for sharing the example of the ancient Israelites? (Paul wanted to warn the Corinthians Saints so they would avoid repeating the sins of the ancient Israelites.)

Invite the class to stand and read 1 Corinthians 10:12 aloud, in unison.

- In your own words, how would you summarize Paul’s message in verse 12?

Invite the class to be seated. Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 10:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about temptation.

- What did Paul teach about temptation?
- If God will not allow us to be tempted above our ability to resist, why did the ancient Israelites give in to temptation?

Write the following incomplete sentence on the board: *God will provide a way for us to escape temptation, but we must . . .*

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 10:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught the Corinthian Saints to do.

- What did Paul teach the Corinthian Saints to do?
- What does verse 14 teach us about our role in escaping temptation? (After students respond, complete the truth on the board so that it reads: **God will provide a way for us to escape temptation, but we must choose to separate ourselves from the temptation.**)

You may want to suggest that students write *Alma 13:28* in their scriptures near 1 Corinthians 10:13–14. Ask a student to read Alma 13:28 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what we can do to separate ourselves from temptation.

- According to Alma 13:28, what can we do that can help us separate ourselves from temptation?
- How can humbling ourselves and watching and praying continually help us separate ourselves from temptation?

Hold up a copy of the *For the Strength of Youth* booklet, and ask students to explain how living according to the standards listed in this booklet helps us separate ourselves from temptation.

Explain that students may not always be able to avoid temptation. Because of this, we need to decide now how we will act in the face of temptation. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball:



“Right decisions are easiest to make when we make them well in advance, having ultimate objectives in mind; this saves a lot of anguish [during moments of decision], when we’re tired and sorely tempted. . . .

“Develop discipline of self so that, more and more, you do not have to decide and redecide what you will do when you are confronted with the same temptation time and time again. You only need to decide some things *once!* . . .

“The time to quit evil ways is before they start. The secret of the good life is in protection and prevention. Those who yield to evil are usually those who have placed themselves in a vulnerable position” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* [2006], 108–9).

Share your testimony of the principles students identified today. Ask students to consider which temptations they struggle with the most. Invite them to ponder the following questions:

- What changes could you make to avoid temptation before you are ever faced with it?
- Are you willing to make these changes?

Invite students to create a plan that they will follow to escape temptation. Encourage them to seek help from the Lord through prayer as they work to accomplish their plan.

Summarize 1 Corinthians 10:15–33 by explaining that Paul counseled the Corinthian Saints to respect the religious practices of others without compromising their own and repeated again that he was preaching in order to help many to be saved.

LESSON 108

1 Corinthians 11

Introduction

Paul addressed disputes among the Corinthian Saints regarding religious customs. He emphasized that men and women have eternal and divine roles and are essential

to one another in the Lord's plan. He also taught Church members about proper preparation for partaking of the sacrament.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Corinthians 11:1–16

Paul addresses disputes about customs in his day

Display a picture of a married couple (such as Young Couple Going to the Temple, *Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 120; see also LDS.org). Read aloud the following statements that reflect how some individuals might feel about marriage:

1. "Being successful in my career is everything to me. I don't want to divide my attention between my career goals and my marriage."
2. "I don't want to commit to a long-term relationship. I worry about making a decision that I will later regret."
3. "Marriage would tie me down. I wouldn't be able to do whatever I wanted."
4. "I know that marriage is the most important decision I will ever make, and I look forward to it."

Invite students to ponder how they feel about marriage. Ask them to look for a truth as they study 1 Corinthians 11:1–16 that can help them and others understand the importance of marriage.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 11:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about a husband's responsibilities. You might explain that in this verse the word translated as "man" can also be translated as "husband" and the word translated as "woman" can also be translated as "wife."

- What is the role of a husband? (You may need to explain that the phrase "the head of the woman is the man" means that the husband has the sacred responsibility of presiding in the home. To *preside* means to righteously lead and guide others in spiritual and temporal matters.)
- Who is to preside over and guide the husband as he presides in his family?

Summarize 1 Corinthians 11:4–16 by explaining that Paul addressed questions about customs for men and women when they prayed and prophesied during their worship services.

Help students understand that readers of the New Testament sometimes misunderstand Paul's teachings to mean that the man's role is more important than the woman's role or that the man is superior to or of more worth than the woman. Read aloud the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"Men and women are equal in God's eyes and in the eyes of the Church, but equal does not mean they are the same. The responsibilities and divine gifts of men and women differ in their nature but not in their importance or influence. Our Church doctrine places women equal to and yet different from men. God does not regard either gender as better or more important than the other" ("Men and Women in the Work of the Lord," *New Era*, Apr. 2014, 4).

Ask a student to read 1 Corinthians 11:11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about the relationship between a husband and a wife.

- What did Paul teach about the relationship between a husband and a wife?



Use objects to help students understand spiritual truths

It can be difficult to teach the intangible aspects of the gospel. Using objects to stimulate a discussion can help students analyze and understand doctrines and principles and can enhance the learning environment by encouraging a spirit of inquiry.

Point out the phrase “in the Lord.” Explain that this phrase refers to the Lord’s plan to help us become like Him and obtain eternal life.

- What doctrine does this verse teach about man and woman in the Lord’s plan? (Using students’ words, write the following truth on the board: **In the Lord’s plan, men and women cannot obtain eternal life without each other.** [See D&C 131:1–4.]

To help students understand the truth identified above, hold up a pair of scissors and begin cutting a piece of paper. Ask students to imagine that the two halves of the scissors have been separated.

- How successful would a person be if he or she tried to cut a piece of paper with only half of the pair of scissors? How are the scissors like a husband and wife working together?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“By divine design, men and women are intended to progress together toward perfection and a fulness of glory. Because of their distinctive temperaments and capacities, males and females each bring to a marriage relationship unique perspectives and experiences. The man and the woman contribute differently but equally to a oneness and a unity that can be achieved in no other way. The man completes and perfects the woman and the woman completes and perfects the man as they learn from and mutually strengthen and bless each other” (“Marriage Is Essential to His Eternal Plan,” *Ensign*, June 2006, 83–84).

- How do the different characteristics and responsibilities of men and women complement each other in a family?

Remind students of the different attitudes about marriage depicted in the statements you read at the beginning of the lesson. Invite a few students to share their thoughts and testimonies concerning the importance of marriage in the Lord’s plan. You may want to share your testimony as well.

1 Corinthians 11:17–34

Paul teaches the Corinthian Saints not to treat the sacrament lightly

Write the following phrases on the board: *a truly spiritual experience, a renewal for the soul, the highlight of my Sabbath day.*

Ask students to ponder their most recent experience partaking of the sacrament and to consider whether they would use any of the phrases on the board to describe their experience. Ask students to look for truths as they study 1 Corinthians 11:17–34 that can help them make partaking of the sacrament a more spiritual and meaningful experience.

Explain that in Paul’s time, members of the Church maintained a practice reminiscent of the Last Supper. They would eat a meal together and then partake of the sacrament. Summarize 1 Corinthians 11:17–22 by explaining that Paul noted a report he had received that when the Corinthian Saints gathered together to partake of the sacrament, there were dissensions, or contention, among them. Paul condemned the Saints for turning these gatherings into common meals rather than preserving the sacredness of the sacrament ordinance.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul encouraged Church members to remember about the sacrament. You may want to explain that the word *shew* in verse 26 means to proclaim, announce, or testify of (see 1 Corinthians 11:26, footnote *b*).

Display the picture *The Last Supper* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 54; see also LDS.org).

- What did Paul say the Savior taught His disciples to remember as they partook of the sacrament?
- How might remembering the Savior’s body and blood during the sacrament have helped those Church members who were struggling with dissension?

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 11:27–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the warning Paul gave the Corinthian Saints about the sacrament.

- According to verses 27 and 29, what did Paul warn the Corinthian Saints about?



- What truth can we learn from these verses about what happens when we partake of the sacrament unworthily? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Those who partake of the sacrament unworthily bring condemnation and damnation to themselves.**)

Explain that we “do not need to be perfect in order to partake of the sacrament, but [we] should have a spirit of humility and repentance in [our] heart” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 148). If we partake of the sacrament while living in serious sin or with an unrepentant heart, having no desire to remember and follow the Savior, we are partaking of the sacrament unworthily. Encourage students to pray to their Heavenly Father and talk to their bishops (see 3 Nephi 18:26–29) if they have questions about their worthiness to partake of the sacrament.

- Why do you think partaking of the sacrament unworthily would bring damnation to our souls?
- According to 1 Corinthians 11:28, what counsel did Paul give Church members? (Using students’ words, write the following truth on the board: **We should examine our lives as we partake of the sacrament.**)

Point out that the purpose of examining our lives is not only to consider whether we are worthy to partake of the sacrament but also to consider how well we are striving to keep our covenants with the Lord and how we might seek to repent and improve.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Howard W. Hunter:



“I asked myself this question: ‘Do I place God above all other things and keep all of His commandments?’ Then came reflection and resolution. To make a covenant with the Lord to always keep His commandments is a serious obligation, and to renew that covenant by partaking of the sacrament is equally serious. The solemn moments of thought while the sacrament is being served have great significance. They are moments of self-examination, introspection, self-discernment—a time to reflect and to resolve” (“Thoughts on the Sacrament,” *Ensign*, May 1977, 25).

To help students to consider how they might apply the truth they identified in 1 Corinthians 11:28, invite them to think of questions they could consider as they prepare to partake of the sacrament. For example, they might ask, “How can I be a better disciple of Jesus Christ?” Ask students to share other questions they could ask themselves. You might also suggest some questions of your own. Invite students to list in their class notebooks or scripture study journals questions they can ask themselves during the sacrament as they examine their worthiness.

Testify that as students examine their worthiness prior to and during partaking of the sacrament, the Lord can help them know how they might better fulfill their covenants and qualify to receive the blessings He desires to give them. These blessings include being cleansed from their sins and receiving a greater measure of the power of the Holy Ghost in their lives. Invite students to set a goal regarding how they will better prepare for their next opportunity to partake of the sacrament.

Summarize 1 Corinthians 11:33–34 by explaining that Paul gave additional direction to the Corinthian Saints regarding the meal they had in conjunction with the administration of the sacrament.

Conclude the lesson by testifying of the truths identified in 1 Corinthians 11.

1 Corinthians 12

Introduction

Paul wrote about the many gifts of the Spirit. He compared the Church to a physical body and explained that just as the body needs every part to function properly,

each Church member can use the gifts of the Spirit to contribute to and strengthen the Church.

Lead your students through the learning process

Students are edified when you lead them through a learning process that resembles what you experienced while preparing the lesson. Lead students to search the scriptures for understanding and to discover gospel truths for themselves. Give them opportunities to explain the gospel in their own words and to share and testify of what they know and feel. This helps them internalize the gospel in their minds and hearts.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Corinthians 12:1–11

Paul teaches about spiritual gifts

Display a picture of the following stone:

Invite a student to read aloud the inscription at the top of the stone. Explain that while President David O. McKay was serving a mission in Scotland, he saw this stone above the door of a building near Stirling Castle and was inspired by its message (see Francis M. Gibbons, *David O. McKay: Apostle to the World, Prophet of God* [1986], 45).

Explain that each symbol in the nine squares of this stone represents a numerical value. Ask students to identify the numerical value of each shape. (From left to right, the symbols represent 5, 10, and 3 in the top row; 4, 6, and 8 in the middle row; and 9, 2, and 7 in the bottom row.)

- What is the sum of the three numbers represented in the top row? the middle row? the bottom row?

Explain that the numbers represented in any given row, column, or diagonal line on this stone add up to 18. One reason these shapes may have been included with the phrase “What-E’er Thou Art Act Well Thy Part” is that if any of these shapes were rearranged or if their values changed, the rows and columns on the stone would no longer add up to 18 in every direction.

Invite students as they study 1 Corinthians 12 to consider how we as members of the Church are like the shapes on the stone.

Summarize 1 Corinthians 12:1–2 by explaining that Paul wanted to teach the Church members in Corinth about spiritual gifts, which many of the Saints had misunderstood. Paul reminded them that before their conversion, they had been led astray by idolatry.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 12:3 aloud, and ask the class to look for how we can know for ourselves that Jesus is the Lord and Savior. Explain that Joseph Smith taught that the word *say* in verse 3 should be understood as *know* (in *History of the Church*, 4:602–3).

- According to 1 Corinthians 12:3, how can we obtain a personal testimony of Jesus Christ? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Only through the Holy Ghost can we obtain a personal testimony that Jesus Christ is our Savior.** You might want to explain that the same principle applies to obtaining a personal testimony of Joseph Smith or the Book of Mormon).

To help students better understand this truth, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:



“A testimony is a most precious possession because it is not acquired by logic or reason alone, it cannot be purchased with earthly possessions, and it cannot be given as a present or inherited from our ancestors. We cannot depend on the testimonies of other people. We need to know for ourselves. President Gordon B. Hinckley said, ‘Every Latter-day Saint has the responsibility to know for himself or herself with a certainty beyond doubt that Jesus is the resurrected, living Son of the living God’ (‘Fear Not to Do Good,’ *Ensign*, May 1983, 80). . . .



“We receive this testimony when the Holy Spirit speaks to the spirit within us. We will receive a calm and unwavering certainty that will be the source of our testimony and conviction” (“The Power of a Personal Testimony,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2006, 38).

- Why is it important to understand that a testimony of Jesus Christ comes only through the Holy Ghost?
- What can we do to invite the Holy Ghost into our lives?

Explain that as recorded in 1 Corinthians 12:4–6, Paul taught that there are a variety of spiritual gifts that operate in different ways but that all come from God through the Holy Ghost. You may want to explain that gifts of the Spirit are blessings or abilities given through the Holy Ghost and that God gives at least one gift to every member of the Church (see D&C 46:11).

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 12:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why gifts of the Spirit are given to us. (If necessary, explain that “to profit withal” means for the common good of all Saints.)

- What truth can we learn from Paul about why gifts of the Spirit are given to Heavenly Father’s children? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **Gifts of the Spirit are given to benefit all of Heavenly Father’s children.** Write this truth on the board.)

To help students understand this truth, copy the following chart on the board and ask students to copy it into their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

Spiritual Gifts	How These Spiritual Gifts Benefit God’s Children

Divide the class into groups of two or three. Invite each group to study 1 Corinthians 12:8–11 and to follow the accompanying instructions. You may want to list these instructions on the board or provide them on a handout.

1. In the first column of your chart, list each spiritual gift mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:8–11.
2. Discuss the meaning or give an example of each spiritual gift.

Invite each group to report the spiritual gifts they discovered and the meaning of each gift. As needed, explain that “the word of wisdom” (verse 8) refers to good judgment and the appropriate application of knowledge; the “word of knowledge” (verse 8) refers to a knowledge of God and his laws; “discerning of spirits” (verse 10) refers to recognizing truth and untruth and perceiving the good and evil in others; and “divers kinds of tongues” (verse 10) refers to the ability to speak in foreign or unknown languages.

Ask each group to pick two spiritual gifts mentioned in verses 8–10 and to write in the second column of the chart how those gifts can benefit God’s children. After sufficient time, invite a few students to explain one of their answers from the second column to the class.

Point out that the spiritual gifts mentioned specifically in the scriptures are only a few of the numerous gifts we can receive through the Spirit.

- What other gifts could come to us through the Holy Ghost?
- What spiritual gifts have you noticed in your family members, friends, and classmates?
- What can we do to discover our spiritual gifts? (Ask Heavenly Father about them in prayer and receive and study our patriarchal blessings.)

Invite students to ponder the spiritual gifts they have been given and how they can benefit from them and use them to benefit others.

1 Corinthians 12:12–31

The gifts of the Spirit are given to bless the entire membership of the Church

Ask four students to come to the board. Without letting the rest of the class hear, assign each of these students one of the following words: *foot*, *hand*, *ear*, and *eye*. Instruct each student to draw a picture of his or her word on the board, and ask the class to guess what each student is drawing. After the class correctly identifies each drawing, invite the students to return to their seats. Ask the class to consider how the feet, hands, ears, and eyes contribute to the work the body does.

- Have you ever injured a minor body part, such as a finger, tooth, or toe? How did this minor injury affect even simple daily tasks?

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 12:12–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul compared the body and its parts to.

- What did Paul compare the body and its parts to? (The Church of Jesus Christ and its members.)

Write the following scripture reference and question on the board:

1 Corinthians 12:15–22, 25–30

In what ways did Paul compare the body to the Church?

Divide students into the same groups as before. Ask each group to read 1 Corinthians 12:15–22, 25–30 aloud together, looking for ways in which Paul compared members of the Church to parts of the body. You may want to suggest that students look for what Paul taught about the body and its parts before identifying how he likened parts of the body to Church members. After sufficient time, ask students to report what they found.

- Why do you think Paul discussed the roles of individual Church members right after he wrote about spiritual gifts?
- What concerns might Church members today have that could be resolved by Paul's teachings about Church members being like parts of the body?
- What principle can we learn from Paul's comparison of Church members to parts of the body? (Make sure students identify the following principle: **As we use our unique spiritual gifts to serve others, we can strengthen the Church.** Write this principle on the board.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley. Consider giving each student a copy of the statement.



"We are all in this great endeavor together. We are here to assist our Father in His work and His glory, 'to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man' (Moses 1:39). Your obligation is as serious in your sphere of responsibility as is my obligation in my sphere. No calling in this church is small or of little consequence. All of us in the pursuit of our duty touch the lives of others" ("This Is the Work of the Master," *Ensign*, May 1995, 71).

- How is the Church blessed because of the different spiritual gifts and callings of individual members?
- How have you seen your family, a seminary class, or a ward or branch strengthened by the spiritual gifts of its members?

Ask students to ponder how they can use their spiritual gifts to strengthen the Church and bless the lives of others.

Invite students to read 1 Corinthians 12:31 silently, looking for what Paul counseled the Corinthian Saints to do.

- What did Paul counsel the Saints to do? (Explain that *covet* in this verse means to "seek earnestly" [verse 31, footnote a].)
- What can we do to earnestly seek "the best gifts" of the Spirit (see also D&C 46:8–9)?

Express your testimony and gratitude for spiritual gifts, and encourage students to earnestly seek for and use spiritual gifts to serve others and strengthen the Church.

LESSON 110

1 Corinthians 13–14

Introduction

Paul taught the importance of charity. He counseled the Corinthian Saints to obtain and follow after charity and seek other spiritual gifts. Paul taught that the gift

of prophecy is greater than the gift of tongues and is given to Church members so they can strengthen others spiritually.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Corinthians 13

Paul teaches about the importance of having charity

Before class write the following scenarios on the board, or provide students with copies of them. Invite a student to read each scenario aloud, and ask students to consider whether any of these statements describe them.

1. *You frequently get annoyed and upset by the behavior of a sibling.*
2. *A classmate is rude to you, so you feel justified in being rude in response.*
3. *You feel envious of a friend's talents and accomplishments.*
4. *Sometimes you find it easy to gossip and speak badly about others in your priesthood quorum or Young Women class.*

- What harmful effects can result from having these attitudes and behaviors?

Invite students to look for truths as they study 1 Corinthians 13 that can help them avoid attitudes and behaviors that can disrupt personal happiness and relationships with others.

Remind students that the Saints in Corinth were behaving in ways that led to contention and divisions in the Church. In his epistle, Paul taught that spiritual gifts are given to profit all and to help Church members serve and strengthen one another. Paul counseled the Saints to seek earnestly the “best gifts” (see 1 Corinthians 12:7–31).

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 13:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for an attribute and gift of the Spirit that Paul praised highly.

- What attribute and gift of the Spirit did Paul praise highly? (Charity.)

Explain that “charity is the highest, noblest, strongest kind of love, not merely affection” (Bible Dictionary, “Charity”).

- How did Paul describe those who do not have charity despite having other spiritual gifts?

Explain that the phrases “sounding brass” and “tinkling cymbal” in verse 1 refer to instruments that make loud or ornamental sounds. In the context of verse 1, these phrases can signify speaking words that become empty or meaningless when the speaker is not motivated by charity.

- Why do you think we are nothing without charity?
- How is it possible that someone can give away all of his or her possessions to feed the poor or willingly die for the truth and yet still not have charity? (Explain that charity is more than an act of generosity and more than dying for the truth.)

Copy the following chart on the board:

What Charity Is or Does	What Charity Is Not or Does Not Do

Prepare each lesson with students in mind

As you prepare to teach lessons, consider what outcomes you hope will occur in students' lives. President Thomas S. Monson reminded: “The goal of gospel teaching . . . is not to ‘pour information’ into the minds of class members. . . . The aim is to inspire the individual to think about, feel about, and then do something about living gospel principles” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1970, 107).

Explain that Paul described qualities and characteristics of charity to help the Corinthian Saints better understand this gift. Divide students into pairs. Invite students to read 1 Corinthians 13:4–8 with their partners, looking for Paul’s descriptions of charity.

After sufficient time, ask students to come to the board and write Paul’s descriptions of charity under the appropriate heading on the chart. As needed, help students understand each description.

- Who fits the description of all these attributes of charity? (Jesus Christ.)

Remind students that the prophet Mormon taught that “charity is the pure love of Christ” (Moroni 7:47). Explain that charity can be described in two important ways: (1) Christ’s love for us and (2) our Christlike love for others. Ask students to choose a few descriptions of charity from the list on the board and explain to the class how they are good descriptions of Jesus Christ.

- What do you think it means in verse 8 that “charity never faileth”?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“True charity . . . is shown perfectly and purely in Christ’s unflinching, ultimate, and atoning love for us. . . . It is that charity—his pure love for us—without which we would be nothing, hopeless, of all men and women most miserable. . . .

“Life has its share of fears and failures. Sometimes things fall short. Sometimes people fail us, or economies or businesses or governments fail us. But one thing in time or eternity does *not* fail us—the pure love of Christ” (*Christ and the New Covenant* [1997], 337).

- How can it be helpful to remember that the pure love of Jesus Christ will never fail?
- Based on what we have learned from 1 Corinthians 13:4–8, what happens to us as we obtain the gift of charity? (Students may identify a variety of truths, but make sure it is clear that **as we seek to obtain the spiritual gift of charity, we become more like our Savior, Jesus Christ.** Write this truth on the board.)

Summarize 1 Corinthians 13:9–12 by explaining that Paul taught why the spiritual gifts of knowledge and prophecy would eventually vanish. Paul observed that the knowledge available in this life is incomplete and that we will gain a perfect knowledge in eternity.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 13:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for three gifts of the Spirit that Paul taught would *abide*, meaning to endure or remain constant. Invite students to report what they find.

- What did Paul teach is the greatest spiritual gift? (Students should identify the following truth: **Charity is the greatest gift of the Spirit.** Write this truth on the board.)
- What is the relationship between faith, hope, and charity? (Faith leads to hope, and hope leads to charity.)
- Based on what we have learned in 1 Corinthians 13, why do you think charity is the greatest gift of the Spirit?

Point out Paul’s counsel in 1 Corinthians 14:1 to “follow after charity.”

- What can we do to “follow after,” or obtain, the gift of charity?

Invite a student to read Moroni 7:48 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Mormon taught his people to do to obtain the gift of charity. Invite students to report what they find.

- How can having charity improve our relationships with family, friends, and peers?
- Can you describe a time when you have witnessed charity in the way someone treated you or others? (Consider sharing an experience of your own.)

Invite students to write on pieces of paper which descriptions of charity they feel are most difficult for them and why. Encourage students to write a goal regarding what they will do to continue seeking to obtain greater charity. Invite students to place it somewhere they will see it often and be reminded of their goal.

1 Corinthians 14

Paul teaches that the gift of prophecy is greater than the gift of tongues

Bring items to class that can be used to build a tower, such as blocks, boxes, cards, or books. Invite a student to use the items you brought to build a tower as tall as possible in one minute. Afterward, invite the student to be seated. Ask students to read 1 Corinthians 14:1–3 silently, looking for the word in these verses that relates to the demonstration of building a tower.

- What word in verse 3 relates to building a tower? (Edification. If necessary, explain that *edify* means to “build up,” as in to strengthen or improve spiritually.)

Invite students to look for a principle as they study 1 Corinthians 14 that will help them know how they can edify others.

Explain that Paul addressed members of the Church in Corinth who were experiencing the gift of tongues, or the ability to speak in other languages. Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 14:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what spiritual gift Paul counseled the Saints to seek instead.

- What gift of the Spirit did Paul counsel the Saints to desire and seek?

Explain that “a prophecy consists of divinely inspired words or writings, which a person receives through revelation from the Holy Ghost. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy (Rev. 19:10). When a person prophesies, he speaks or writes that which God wants him to know, for his own good or the good of others” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Prophecy, Prophesy,” scriptures.lds.org).

Write the following phrase on the board: *prophecy = to teach and testify by inspiration*

- According to verse 3, how can teaching and testifying by inspiration help us bless others? (Using their own words, students should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we teach and testify by inspiration, we can help edify and comfort others.**)
- How have you been edified and comforted by the inspired teachings and testimony of another person?

Summarize 1 Corinthians 14:4–30 by explaining that Paul cautioned the Corinthian Saints about the gift of speaking in tongues. Paul warned that if used improperly, the gift of tongues would fail to edify the Church and would distract members from seeking more useful spiritual gifts.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 14:31, 33, 40 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what counsel Paul gave the Saints about prophesying.

- What counsel did Paul give the Saints about prophesying? (All, both male and female, may prophesy, or teach and testify. This should be done in order, one person at a time.)
- What truth can we learn about the Church of Jesus Christ from these verses? (Using their own words, students should identify a principle similar to the following: **In the Church of Jesus Christ, all things are to be done in order.**)
- Why do you think it is important for all things in the Church to be done in proper order?

Explain that Paul’s writings in 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 provide an example of how he directed the Saints at Corinth to maintain order in the Church. Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught Church members at Corinth. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that it is difficult to understand the intent of Paul’s counsel since he clearly did not forbid women from praying or speaking in Church meetings (see 1 Corinthians 11:5). The Joseph Smith Translation replaces the word *speak* in verses 34 and 35 with *rule*. This word change suggests the possibility that Paul was trying to correct a situation in which some Corinthian women were either being disorderly during worship services or were improperly seeking to take responsibility to lead rather than sustaining and following priesthood leaders (see *New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 380).

Conclude the lesson by testifying of the truths taught in 1 Corinthians 13–14.

Home-Study Lesson

1 Corinthians 7–14 (Unit 22)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied 1 Corinthians 7–14 (unit 22) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (1 Corinthians 7–8)

From Paul's instructions to married and single members of the Church in Corinth, students learned that physical intimacy between husband and wife is ordained of God and that faithful followers of Jesus Christ have a sanctifying effect on their families. Students also learned that we can show charity for others by avoiding actions that could lead them to stumble spiritually.

Day 2 (1 Corinthians 9–10)

As students continued their study of Paul's counsel to the Corinthians Saints, they learned that to obtain eternal life, we must learn to exercise self-mastery in all things. They also discovered that God will provide a way for us to escape temptation, but we must choose to separate ourselves from the temptation.

Day 3 (1 Corinthians 11)

Students learned that in the Lord's plan, men and women cannot obtain eternal life without each other. They also learned that those who partake of the sacrament unworthily bring condemnation and damnation to themselves. Therefore we should examine our lives as we partake of the sacrament.

Day 4 (1 Corinthians 12–14)

From Paul's teachings on the gifts of the Spirit, students learned the following truths: Only through the Holy Ghost can we obtain a personal testimony that Jesus Christ is our Savior. As we seek to obtain the spiritual gift of charity, we become more like our Savior, Jesus Christ. Charity is the greatest gift of the Spirit. As we teach and testify by inspiration, we can help edify and comfort others.

Introduction

Paul wrote about the numerous gifts of the Spirit. He compared the Church to a physical body and explained that just as the body needs every part to function properly, each Church member can use the gifts of the Spirit to contribute to and strengthen the Church.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Corinthians 12:1–11

Paul teaches about spiritual gifts

Display a picture of the following stone:

Invite a student to read aloud the inscription at the top of the stone. Explain that while President David O. McKay was serving a mission in Scotland, he saw this stone above the door of a building near Stirling Castle and was inspired by its message (see Francis M. Gibbons, *David O. McKay: Apostle to the World, Prophet of God* [1986], 45).



Explain that each symbol in the nine squares of the stone represents a numerical value. Ask students to identify the numerical value of each shape. (From left to right, the symbols represent 5, 10, and 3 in the top row; 4, 6, and 8 in the middle row; and 9, 2, and 7 in the bottom row.)

- What is the sum of the three numbers represented in the top row? the middle row? the bottom row?

Explain that the three numbers represented in any row, column, or diagonal line on this stone add up to 18. One reason these shapes may have been included with the phrase "What-E'er Thou Art Act Well Thy Part" is that if any of these shapes were rearranged or if their values changed, the rows and columns on the stone would no longer add up to 18 in every direction.

Invite students as they study 1 Corinthians 12 to consider how we as members of the Church are like the shapes on the stone.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 12:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why gifts of the Spirit are given to us. (If necessary, explain that "to profit withal" means for the common good of all Saints.)

- What truth can we learn from the Apostle Paul about why gifts of the Spirit are given to Heavenly Father's children? (Students may use different words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **Gifts of the Spirit are given to benefit all of Heavenly Father's children.** Write this truth on the board.)

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 12:8–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the spiritual gifts Paul mentioned.

Invite students to report the spiritual gifts they discovered and the meaning of each gift. As needed, explain that “the word of wisdom” (verse 8) refers to good judgment and the appropriate application of knowledge; the “word of knowledge” (verse 8) refers to a knowledge of God and His laws; “discerning of spirits” (verse 10) refers to recognizing truth and untruth and perceiving the good and evil in others; and “divers kinds of tongues” (verse 10) refers to the ability to speak in foreign or unknown languages.

- How can these spiritual gifts benefit God’s children?

Point out that the spiritual gifts mentioned specifically in the scriptures are only a few of the numerous gifts we can receive through the Spirit.

- What other gifts could come to us through the Holy Ghost?
- What spiritual gifts have you noticed in your family members, friends, and classmates?
- What can we do to discover our spiritual gifts? (Ask Heavenly Father about them in prayer and receive and study our patriarchal blessings.)

Invite students to ponder the spiritual gifts they have been given and how they can benefit from them and use them to benefit others.

1 Corinthians 12:12–31

The gifts of the Spirit are given to bless the entire membership of the Church

Ask four students to come to the board. Without letting the rest of the class hear, assign each of these students one of the following words: *foot, hand, ear,* and *eye*. Instruct each student to draw a picture of his or her word on the board, and ask the class to guess what each student is drawing. After the class correctly identifies each drawing, invite the students to return to their seats. Ask the class to consider how the feet, hands, ears, and eyes contribute to the work the body does.

- Have you ever injured a minor body part, such as a finger, tooth, or toe? How did this minor injury affect even simple daily tasks?

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 12:12–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul compared the body and its parts to.

- What did Paul compare the body and its parts to? (The Church of Jesus Christ and its members.)

Write the following scripture reference and question on the board:

1 Corinthians 12:15–22, 25–30

In what ways did Paul compare the body to the Church?

Divide students into groups of two or three. Ask each group to read 1 Corinthians 12:15–22, 25–31 together, looking for ways in which Paul compared members of the Church to parts of the body. You may want to suggest that students look for what Paul taught about the body and its parts before identifying how he likened parts of the body to Church members. After sufficient time, ask students to report what they found.

- Why do you think Paul discussed the roles of individual Church members right after he wrote about spiritual gifts?
- What concerns might Church members today have that could be resolved by Paul’s teachings about Church members being like parts of the body?
- What principle can we learn from Paul’s comparison of Church members to parts of the body? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure they identify the following principle: **As we use our unique spiritual gifts to serve others, we can strengthen the Church.** Write this principle on the board.)

Refer to the picture of the stone displayed at the beginning of the lesson.

- How are we as members of the Church like the different shapes on this stone? (We are each unique, and we play an important role wherever the Lord calls us to serve. As we combine our gifts and abilities to serve the Lord, the entire Church is blessed. What we do matters, and it can help accomplish the work of the Church.)
- How have you seen your family; a seminary, Sunday School, Young Women, or priesthood class; or a ward or branch strengthened by the spiritual gifts of its members?

Ask students to ponder how they can use their spiritual gifts to strengthen the Church and bless the lives of others. Point out Paul’s counsel recorded in 1 Corinthians 12:31 to “covet earnestly the best gifts.” (Explain that *covet* in this verse means to “seek earnestly” [1 Corinthians 12:31, footnote a].)

- What can we do to earnestly seek “the best gifts” of the Spirit (see also D&C 46:8–9)?

Express your testimony and gratitude for spiritual gifts, and encourage students to earnestly seek for and use their spiritual gifts to serve others and strengthen the Church.

Next Unit (1 Corinthians 15–2 Corinthians 7)

Ask students to consider the following questions as they study the next unit: Why did the Apostle Paul mention baptism for the dead? Who will be resurrected? What glory awaits a resurrected being? Will all resurrected beings have the same glory? Invite students to think about what gives them hope, especially when they experience sorrow, setbacks, or tragedies. Explain that in the next unit they will learn doctrines and principles from Paul’s teachings to the Corinthian Saints that can bring them peace and hope.

1 Corinthians 15:1–29

Introduction

Paul learned that individuals in Corinth were teaching that there was no Resurrection of the dead. He testified to Church members in Corinth that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Paul then further expounded the

doctrine of the Resurrection and its implications for all of Heavenly Father's children. Paul mentioned that the ordinance of baptism for the dead would be meaningless without the Resurrection.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Corinthians 15:1–10

Paul gives evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:

“My brothers and sisters, we laugh, we cry, we work, we play, we love, we live. And then we die. Death is our universal heritage. All must pass its portals. Death claims the aged, the weary and worn. It visits the youth in the bloom of hope and the glory of expectation. Nor are little children kept beyond its grasp” (“I Know That My Redeemer Lives!” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 24).

Invite students to reflect on the thoughts or feelings they experienced when someone they know passed away. You might invite a few students to share their experiences if they feel comfortable doing so.

Invite students to look for principles as they study 1 Corinthians 15:1–29 that can help them when someone they know passes away.

Explain that as Paul concluded his epistle to the Saints in Corinth, he addressed a false belief that had been taught by some Church members. Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 15:12 aloud, and ask the class to look for the false belief that had been taught.

- What were some of the Corinthian Saints teaching? (There is no Resurrection of the dead.)

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 15:3–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Apostle Paul wrote to help Church members understand the reality of the Savior's Resurrection.

- What did Paul testify of to help Church members understand the reality of the Savior's mission and Resurrection?
- What truth can we learn about an Apostle's role from these verses? (Students may use different words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **Apostles testify that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was resurrected from the dead.**)
- How might the Apostles' testimonies of Jesus Christ's Resurrection help people who struggle with believing in the Resurrection?

To help students feel the truth and importance of this truth, invite a student to read aloud the following testimony of President Monson. (You may also want to share testimonies concerning Jesus Christ's Resurrection that have been given by other Apostles in recent general conference addresses.)



“With all my heart and the fervency of my soul, I lift up my voice in testimony as a special witness and declare that God does live. Jesus is His Son, the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh. He is our Redeemer; He is our Mediator with the Father. He it was who died on the cross to atone for our sins. He became the firstfruits of the Resurrection. Because He died, all shall live again. ‘Oh, sweet the joy this sentence gives: “I know that my Redeemer lives!”’ May the whole world know it and live by that knowledge” (“I Know That My Redeemer Lives!” 25).

Invite students to ponder how the Apostles’ testimonies concerning Jesus Christ’s Resurrection have helped strengthen their faith in the Resurrection. You may want to ask a few students to share their thoughts.

1 Corinthians 15:11–29

Paul expounds the doctrine of the Resurrection

Summarize 1 Corinthians 15:11–15 by explaining that Paul questioned why the Corinthian Saints had begun to doubt the reality of the Resurrection. He reasoned that if Jesus Christ had not risen from the dead, then all the witnesses of His Resurrection were false and there would be no purpose in preaching the gospel.

Write the following incomplete statements on the board:

If Jesus had not risen from the dead, then . . . (see 1 Corinthians 15:16–19).

Since Jesus did rise from the dead, . . . (see 1 Corinthians 15:20–22).

Invite half of the class to read 1 Corinthians 15:16–19 silently, looking for what would happen if Jesus had not risen from the dead. Invite the other half to read 1 Corinthians 15:20–22 silently, looking for blessings that have come as a result of Jesus Christ’s Resurrection.

After sufficient time, ask students who read 1 Corinthians 15:20–22 to report how they could complete the corresponding statement on the board. Ask a student to write these students’ responses on the board.

Explain that the word *firstfruits* in verse 20 refers to the first portion of a crop that is harvested by a farmer. Just as these fruits of the harvest are the first of many to be harvested, Jesus Christ was the first of all beings to be resurrected.

- According to verse 22, what will happen to all of Heavenly Father’s children because Jesus Christ was resurrected? (Students may use different words but should identify the following doctrine: **Because of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, everyone will be resurrected.**)

Invite students who read 1 Corinthians 15:16–19 to report how they could complete the other statement on the board. Ask a student to write these students’ responses on the board.

Explain that in verses 14–19, Paul asks the Saints to consider what would be the consequences “if Christ has not risen.” Paul explains that all preaching would be in vain since Jesus Christ would not have shown that He has power over death and thus would not have been able to atone for our sins. But because Jesus Christ did rise from the dead, we know that He is the Son of God and does have that power.

Refer to Paul’s statement in verse 19, “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”

- Why would we be miserable if we could only have hope in Jesus Christ in *this* life or if our hope was gone after our death? (If there were no Resurrection of the dead, then our hope in Jesus Christ would apply only to this life and the purposes of the plan of salvation could not be accomplished.)


According to verses 20–22, what great hope does the Resurrection of Jesus Christ offer? (The hope that all of us will live again after death. After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Because of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, we can have hope.**)

- How can the Resurrection of Jesus Christ bring hope to us when someone we know passes away or when we are fearful about our own eventual death?

To help students further understand the significance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith. (If possible, provide this statement to students on a handout.)

“The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 49).

- What did Joseph Smith say are the fundamental principles of our religion?
- Based on what you have learned in this lesson, how is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ fundamental to other gospel truths?

 **1 Corinthians 15:20–22** is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

You may want to testify of the reality of the Resurrection and its importance in Heavenly Father's plan of salvation.

Explain that as recorded in 1 Corinthians 15:23–24, Paul taught that there will be an order to the Resurrection and that Jesus Christ will “[deliver] up the kingdom” to Heavenly Father after ending all forms of earthly (or worldly) “authority and power.”

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 15:25–26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught will ultimately happen to Jesus Christ's enemies.

- What did Paul say will ultimately happen to Jesus Christ's enemies? (They will be put “under his feet” [verse 25], or destroyed.)
- Who or what could be considered Jesus Christ's enemies? (Examples include sin, corruption, wickedness, and the adversary.)
- What is the last enemy Jesus Christ will destroy?
- Why could death be considered an enemy to Jesus Christ and to Heavenly Father's plan?

Remind students that some Church members in Corinth believed the dead would not be resurrected, but Paul pointed out that the Saints had been doing something that indicated their belief in the Resurrection of the dead.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 15:29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the ordinance the Corinthian Saints had been performing. Invite students to report what they find.

- How would you summarize what Paul asked the Saints concerning their participation in baptisms for the dead? (“If you do not believe in the Resurrection, why are you being baptized for the dead?”)

Point out that the ordinance of baptism for the dead is a witness of our belief in the Resurrection. Write the following truth on the board: **Those who have died without baptism may receive this essential ordinance.**

Display a picture of a temple. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley:

“Every temple, be it large or small, old or new, is an expression of our testimony that life beyond the grave is as real and certain as is mortality” (“This Peaceful House of God,” *Ensign*, May 1993, 74).

Invite students to consider a time when they performed baptisms for the dead or prepared names to take to the temple. Invite a few students to respond to the following questions:

- What feelings did you have as you prepared names or performed the work for them in the temple?
- In what ways have your experiences with family history and temple work strengthened your faith in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and of all people?

Consider testifying of the importance of performing family history and temple work for those who have passed away. Encourage students to demonstrate their faith in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the eventual Resurrection of all beings by regularly participating in family history and temple work.

Scripture Mastery—1 Corinthians 15:20–22

To help students understand how knowing the doctrine in 1 Corinthians 15:20–22 could prepare them to help others, invite them to consider someone they know who has lost a loved one. Ask students to write a short letter to this person in their class notebooks or scripture study journals using their understanding of this passage to teach and comfort this individual. Invite a few students to share with the class what they wrote.

LESSON 112

1 Corinthians 15:30–16:24

Introduction

Paul continued to teach the Saints in Corinth about the Resurrection. He rejoiced in Jesus Christ's victory over

death. Paul also encouraged Church members in Corinth to give donations for the poor Saints in Jerusalem.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Corinthians 15:30–52

Paul teaches about the Resurrection

Before class, write the following question on the board: *How might people choose to live if they didn't believe they would live again after they died?*

At the beginning of class, invite students to respond to the question written on the board.

Summarize 1 Corinthians 15:30–34 by explaining that Paul asked the Corinthian Saints (some of whom incorrectly believed that there would be no resurrection) to consider why someone who believed in Jesus Christ would endure persecution and risk death if there were no resurrection of the dead.

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 15:32 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what attitude Paul suggested some people might have if there were no resurrection of the dead.

- According to verse 32, what attitude did Paul suggest some people might have if they did not believe in the Resurrection?
- Since the Resurrection is a reality, why might this attitude be dangerous to adopt?

Invite students to look for truths as they study the remainder of 1 Corinthians 15 that can help them understand how having a knowledge of the Resurrection can influence their choices in mortality. (*Note:* As truths are identified, write them on the board.)

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 15:35 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for questions people might have about the Resurrection. Invite students to report what they find.

Summarize 1 Corinthians 15:36–38 by explaining that Paul helped answer these questions by using a seed to represent the mortal body, which after death and burial in the ground will come forth in the Resurrection.


Display (or draw on the board) pictures of the sun, the moon, and some stars.

- From our perspective here on earth, how does the light of the sun compare with the light of the moon?
- How does the light of the moon compare with the light of the stars?

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 15:39–42 aloud. Make sure he or she also reads the Joseph Smith Translation of 1 Corinthians 15:40, located in footnote *a*. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul used the brightness of the sun, moon, and stars to explain the differences in resurrected bodies. Explain that in this context the word *glory* can refer to light, splendor, or brilliance.

- What did Paul compare to the glory of the sun, moon, and stars? (The glory of resurrected bodies.)
- What can these differences in light or glory teach us about resurrected bodies? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following doctrine: **There are different degrees of glory for resurrected bodies.**)



 **1 Corinthians 15:40–42** is a scripture mastery passage.

Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

For an explanation of scripture mastery and a list of additional activities to help students master these selected passages, see the appendix of this manual.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith. Ask the class to listen for how the various glories of resurrected bodies will differ from each other. Before the student reads, explain that when President Smith referred to “celestial bodies,” he meant those who obtain the highest degree of the celestial kingdom (see D&C 131:1–4).

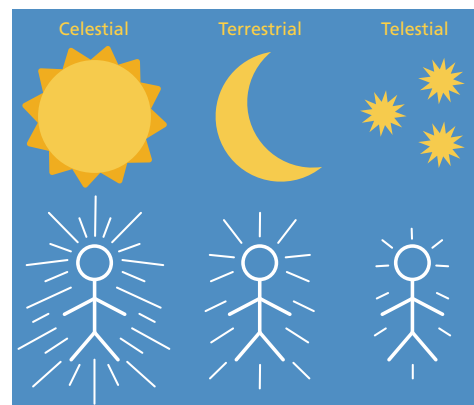


“In the resurrection there will be different kinds of bodies; they will not all be alike. The body a man receives will determine his place hereafter. There will be celestial bodies, terrestrial bodies, and telestial bodies. . . .

“ . . . Some will gain celestial bodies with all the powers of exaltation and eternal increase. These bodies will shine like the sun as our Savior’s does. . . . Those who enter the terrestrial kingdom will have terrestrial bodies, and they will not shine like the sun, but they will be more glorious than the bodies of those who receive the telestial glory” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 2:286, 287).

- How will the various glories of resurrected bodies differ from each other?

Label the drawing of the sun on the board with the word *Celestial*, the moon with *Terrestrial*, and the stars with *Telestial*. Under each of the drawings or pictures, draw a simple depiction of a body, with the celestial body appearing to have more glory than the terrestrial and the terrestrial appearing to have more glory than the telestial.



- According to President Smith, what will the body or glory a person receives in the Resurrection determine?
- According to President Smith, what will those who receive celestial bodies in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom receive as part of their glory that those with non-celestial bodies will not? (Write *Powers of exaltation and eternal increase* under the drawing of the celestial body.)

Explain that the “powers of exaltation” include the ability to live the kind of life God lives and “eternal increase” is the ability to continue having children in the eternities. These blessings are available only to those who are exalted in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom (see D&C 131:1–4; 132:19–20).

To help students understand what we must do to receive a celestial body in the Resurrection, invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 88:21–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what we must do to receive a celestial body.

- What must we do to receive a celestial body? (Explain that to “abide the law of [the] celestial kingdom” [verse 22] means to receive all of the ordinances and to make and keep all of the covenants necessary to enter the celestial kingdom.)
- How can knowing about the glory and blessings available only to resurrected beings in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom affect a person’s choices in mortality?

Summarize 1 Corinthians 15:42–52 by explaining that Paul further clarified what a resurrected body would be like. He referred to a mortal body as “natural” (verses 44, 46) and corruptible and to a resurrected body as “spiritual” (verses 44, 46) and “incorruptible” (verse 52), meaning immortal or not subject to death.

1 Corinthians 15:53–58

Paul rejoices in Jesus Christ’s victory over death

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 15:53 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the doctrine Paul taught about the state of our bodies when we are resurrected.

- According to verse 53, what will be the state of our bodies after the Resurrection? (Students should identify a doctrine similar to the following: **We will be resurrected in an incorruptible and immortal state.**)

- In what ways will our resurrected bodies be incorruptible? (They will no longer be subject to decay or death.)
- How might knowing that each of us will have our resurrected body and experience its corresponding degree of glory for eternity influence the decisions we make in mortality?

To prepare students to study the remainder of Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians, invite them to raise their hands if they have ever been stung by an insect.

- How would you describe the experience of being stung?

Invite students to read 1 Corinthians 15:54–55 silently, looking for what Paul said no longer has a sting.

- What did Paul say no longer has a sting? (Physical death.)
- In what ways can physical death “sting” (verse 55), or seem to be victorious over us?
- How has physical death been “swallowed up in victory” through Jesus Christ (verse 54)?
- What truth can we learn from Paul’s teachings about why physical death no longer has a permanent sting or any victory over us? (Make sure that students identify a truth similar to the following: **Physical death has no victory over us, because of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.**)

Explain that although the Resurrection of Jesus Christ has removed the sting that comes from physical death, there is another sting in death that can still remain. Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 15:56 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the sting that can still remain when we die.

- What sting can still remain when we die?

Invite a student to read 1 Corinthians 15:57–58 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught can remove the sting of death that comes from sin.

- What did Paul teach can remove the sting of death that comes from sin?
- According to verse 58, what did Paul invite his readers to do because of Jesus Christ’s victory over death?
- What principle can we identify from verses 56–58 about what we need to do to avoid the sting of death that comes from sin? (Help students identify a principle similar to the following: **If we are steadfast and immovable in living the gospel, the sting of death that comes from sin is removed through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.**)
- What does it mean to be steadfast and immovable in living the gospel?
- What role does repentance have in being steadfast and immovable?

To help students feel the importance of the truths they have learned, refer to the truths listed on the board and invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals their responses to the following question: *What truths about the Resurrection have you learned that can help you want to live righteously?* After sufficient time, invite a few students to share with the class what they wrote.

Invite students to set a goal regarding something they can do today to be more steadfast and immovable in living the gospel.

1 Corinthians 16

Paul organizes a collection for the poor living in Jerusalem

Summarize 1 Corinthians 16:1–24 by explaining that Paul instructed the Corinthian Saints to help care for the poor in Jerusalem, “stand fast in the faith” (verse 13), and do all things “with charity” (verse 14).

Testify of the truths students have identified in this lesson.

Scripture Mastery—1 Corinthians 15:40–42

Invite two students to come to the front of the class with their scriptures. Ask them to pretend that you are an investigator and they are missionary companions teaching you about the plan of salvation. Ask them to explain what they know about death and the Resurrection, using both of the scripture mastery passages in 1 Corinthians 15 and any others that may be helpful. Ask the class to share anything else they might want to explain about death and the Resurrection to an investigator.

The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians

Why study this book?

Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians stands out for its themes of comfort in the midst of affliction, strength in the midst of weakness (as exemplified by Paul himself), and discerning true teachers from false ones. Paul's example and teachings recorded in 2 Corinthians can inspire students to remain true and faithful to the eternal covenants they have made with God, the Eternal Father, no matter the circumstances or the consequences.

Who wrote this book?

Paul wrote the Second Epistle to the Corinthians (see 2 Corinthians 1:1).

When and where was it written?

Shortly after Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, a riot developed in Ephesus in opposition to his teachings (see Acts 19:23–41), and he departed to Macedonia (see Acts 20:1; 2 Corinthians 2:13; 7:5). It appears that while he was in Macedonia he wrote 2 Corinthians, likely around A.D. 55–57 (see Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles"; Guide to the Scriptures, "Pauline Epistles," scriptures.lds.org).

To whom was it written and why?

The book of 2 Corinthians was written to Church members in Corinth. While Paul was in Macedonia during his third missionary journey, Titus brought him news from Corinth that an earlier letter he had sent had been well received by the Saints there (see 2 Corinthians 7:6–13). The Corinthian branch was making progress, but Paul also learned of false teachers there who were corrupting the pure doctrines of Christ. Sometime after Paul's initial visit to Corinth and a probable second visit (2 Corinthians 1:15–16), when Paul seems to have chastised some of the Saints (see 2 Corinthians 2:1; 12:21), preachers from the Jerusalem area had come to Corinth and begun teaching the Saints that they must adopt Jewish practices, contrary to Paul's teachings. Much of 2 Corinthians addresses the problems caused by these false teachers.

Paul's letter addressed both those who desired more of his words (see 2 Corinthians 1–9) and those who were reluctant to accept his teaching (see 2 Corinthians 10–13). In general, the text of 2 Corinthians reveals several purposes of this letter:

1. To express gratitude to and strengthen the Saints who had responded favorably to his previous letter
2. To warn of false teachers who corrupted the pure doctrines of Christ
3. To defend his personal character and authority as an Apostle of Jesus Christ (see 2 Corinthians 10–13)
4. To encourage the Corinthian Saints to make a generous financial offering to the impoverished Saints of Jerusalem (see 2 Corinthians 8–9)

What are some distinctive features of this book?

While many of Paul's letters focus on doctrine, much of this letter emphasizes Paul's relationship with the Corinthian Saints and his love and concern for them. Though Paul was firm in his opposition to critics, throughout 2 Corinthians we see him as a tender priesthood leader caring for the happiness and well-being of the Saints. Paul also shared some autobiographical details of his life and wrote of his "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7).

In a sacred experience recorded in 2 Corinthians 12:2–4, Paul described himself as "a man in Christ" who was "caught up to the third heaven," where he saw and heard unspeakable things. This vision, taken together with his previous doctrinal statement concerning the differences in glory of resurrected bodies (see 1 Corinthians 15:35–44), can be seen as a biblical parallel to the vision recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 76.

Outline

2 Corinthians 1–5 Paul testifies that God comforts His children in all their tribulations. He challenges the Saints to love and forgive each other. The gospel and the workings of the Spirit of the Lord are more glorious than the letter of the law of Moses. Paul encourages his readers in their moments of adversity and reminds them of the eternal nature of God's love and glory. He helps readers understand their need to be reconciled to God through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 6–13 While facing criticism and opposition from false teachers, Paul defends his sincerity as a servant of the Lord and invites his readers to be separate from the world. He teaches about "godly sorrow" (see 2 Corinthians 7:10). Paul thanks the Corinthian Saints for their contributions to the poor in Jerusalem and encourages them to continue to give generously. He speaks strongly against "false apostles" (2 Corinthians 11:13). Paul glories in the Lord and shares biographical details of his tribulations and faith in Jesus Christ. He writes of his vision of the third heaven. Paul invites the Saints to examine themselves and to prove themselves faithful.

2 Corinthians 1–3

Introduction

Paul wrote to the Saints in Corinth and explained how they would be able to comfort others. He also exhorted them to forgive a sinner who had been in their congrega-

tion. Paul taught the Saints that if they turned to the Lord, they would become more like God.

Suggestions for Teaching

2 Corinthians 1

Paul teaches the Corinthian Saints how to comfort others

Invite students to think of a time when someone they know experienced a difficult trial or affliction.

- What did you do to help him or her?
- Have you ever wanted to comfort someone during a trial but didn't know how?

Invite students to look for a truth as they study 2 Corinthians 1 that can help them know how to comfort others in their trials and afflictions.

Explain that after Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, a riot broke out in Ephesus in response to his teachings. (See Acts 19:23–41. *Note:* Asia was a Roman province in modern-day Turkey.) Paul left Ephesus and went to Macedonia, where Titus brought him news that Paul's earlier letter had been well received by the Saints in Corinth. Paul also learned that the Saints were experiencing tribulations and that some false teachers in Corinth were corrupting the true doctrine of Christ. Paul wrote 2 Corinthians to comfort the Saints and to address the problems these unwelcome teachers had caused.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 2 Corinthians 1:1–5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul told the Saints about their tribulations.

- What did Paul tell the Saints about God in verse 3 that might have comforted them in their tribulations?
- What truth can we learn from verse 4 about what we can do as we receive Heavenly Father's comfort? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **When Heavenly Father comforts us in our tribulations, we are able to help others receive His comfort.**)
- How has receiving God's comfort during a trial helped you help someone else receive His comfort? (Consider sharing one of your experiences while students think of their own experiences.)

Summarize 2 Corinthians 1:6–8 by explaining that Paul told the Saints in Corinth about the severe and life-threatening tribulations he and his companions had experienced while preaching the gospel in Ephesus.

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 1:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what helped Paul and his companions during their trials.

- What helped Paul and his companions during their trials?
- What truth can you identify in verse 11 about how we can help people who are experiencing trials? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Our prayers can help those who are experiencing trials.**)
- How can our prayers help someone who is experiencing trials?
- How have the prayers of others helped you during a trial you experienced?

Summarize 2 Corinthians 1:12–24 by explaining that Paul rejoiced in those who had received the counsel he gave in his first epistle. In verses 15–20 Paul responded to those

who found fault with him when he changed his plans to visit them. Some of Paul's critics seemed to say that because Paul changed his travel plans they could no longer trust him or his teachings. Paul declared that the message of the gospel was true, regardless of his change in plans.

2 Corinthians 2

Paul exhorts the Saints in Corinth to forgive a sinner

Invite students to think of a time when a person hurt or offended them or someone they love.

- Why might it be difficult to forgive that person?

Invite students to look for truths as they study 2 Corinthians 2 that will help them know why it is important to forgive all people.

Remind students that in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians he had chastened them for their disobedience and lack of faith. Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 2:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul hoped the Saints in Corinth would know about his chastening.

- According to verse 4, what did Paul want the Saints to know about his motive for chastening them?
- How can chastening or correction be evidence of someone's love for us?

Summarize 2 Corinthians 2:5–6 by explaining that Paul wrote about a Church member who had sinned against other Church members and had caused them grief. As a result, the Church had disciplined this man.

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 2:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul said about how the Saints should treat this man.

- How were the Saints supposed to treat this man who had caused so much grief?

Explain that even though this man had sinned, the worth of his soul is great in the sight of God (see D&C 18:10). Paul exhorted the Saints to forgive, comfort, and love this man to help him repent.

Invite students to read 2 Corinthians 2:9–11 silently, looking for another reason why Paul said the Saints should forgive others.

- According to what Paul taught the Saints in verse 11, what is another reason we should forgive others? (Using their own words, students should identify the following truth: **If we do not forgive others, Satan will have an advantage over us.** You may want to suggest that students mark this truth in verse 11.)

Point out that forgiving others does not mean that the sinner should not be held accountable for his or her actions. Nor does it mean putting ourselves in situations in which people can continue to mistreat us. Rather, forgiving others means treating with love those who have mistreated us and harboring no resentment or anger toward them. We are commanded to forgive all people. (See Guide to the Scriptures, "Forgive," scriptures.lds.org; D&C 64:9–11.)

- How do you think Satan has an advantage over us when we do not forgive others?

Testify of the importance of forgiving others. Ask students to think about someone they may need to forgive. Invite them to set a goal to forgive this person so that Satan won't have an advantage over them.

Explain that we read in 2 Corinthians 2:14 that Paul wrote that he thanked God, who always "cause[d him] to triumph in Christ," even during difficult times.

2 Corinthians 3

Paul teaches the Saints in Corinth that as they turn to the Lord, they will become more like God

Explain that during Paul's absence from Corinth, some false teachers began to oppose Paul's teachings and tried to discredit Paul by telling the converts that they still needed to follow the law of Moses. Summarize 2 Corinthians 3:1 by explaining that in response to those who tried to discredit him, Paul asked the members of Corinth rhetorically if he needed to provide them with a "[letter] of commendation" that testified of his character

Help students develop a deeper understanding of the principle

Students need to understand a doctrine or principle before they can apply it. You can help students understand doctrines and principles by asking questions that lead to a clear understanding of the meaning of a particular principle or doctrine, that encourage students to think about a principle in a modern context, or that invite students to explain their understanding of a principle.

and his legitimacy as a true Apostle of Jesus Christ. (Explain that in Paul’s time, newcomers to a community would carry letters of commendation with them. These letters introduced the newcomers and attested to their good character.)

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 3:2–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul said served as his letter of commendation.

- What served as Paul’s letter of commendation? (The Saints’ changed lives were like an epistle from Christ Himself.)
- What does the phrase “known and read of all men” in verse 2 mean? (Many people would first come to know the Church and judge its truthfulness through the personal conduct and examples of Church members.)

Point out the phrase “not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart” in verse 3 and explain that during Moses’s day, the commandments had been written on stone tablets. Paul taught the Corinthian Saints that, through the power of the Holy Ghost, the commandments had been written in their hearts.

Summarize 2 Corinthians 3:5–13 by explaining that Paul reasoned that if the old law of Moses, which was to be done away with, was itself glorious, then the glory of the everlasting gospel covenant is even greater. Paul reminded the Saints in Corinth that Moses wore a veil over his face when he came down from talking with the Lord on Mount Sinai because the children of Israel were afraid of the glory that emanated from his face.

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 3:14–15 aloud, and ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul compared the Israelites who were afraid of the glory that emanated from Moses’s face to the Jews in his day.

- How did Paul compare the Israelites who demanded Moses wear a veil to the Jews in his day?
- What might the phrases “their minds were blinded” in verse 14 and “[they had a] veil . . . upon their heart” in verse 15 mean?

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 3:16–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul promised would remove the veil of misunderstanding from the hearts and minds of the people. Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation modifies the phrase “when it shall turn to the Lord” in verse 16 to “when the heart shall turn to the Lord” (Joseph Smith Translation, 2 Corinthians 3:16).

- According to the Joseph Smith Translation of 2 Corinthians 3:16, what did the people have to do to have the veil of misunderstanding removed?

Write on the board: *As we turn our hearts to the Lord . . .*

- According to verse 18, what happens to those who turn to the Lord and have the veil of misunderstanding taken away? (Explain that the phrase “changed into the same image from glory to glory” refers to the gradual change we receive through the Spirit that helps us become more like God.)

Complete the statement on the board so that it reads, **“As we turn our hearts to the Lord, we will have the Spirit, which will gradually help us become more like God.”**

- What do you think it means to turn our hearts to Jesus Christ?

Invite students to take one minute to list in their class notebooks or scripture study journals ways people can turn their hearts to Jesus Christ. Invite a few students to share their lists with the class.

Invite students to ponder how the Spirit has changed them or someone they know. Ask a few students to share their experiences with the class.

Invite students to think about what they could do to better turn to the Lord. Ask them to set a goal to turn to the Lord so they can receive the Spirit and become more like God.

2 Corinthians 4–5

Introduction

In his letter to the Saints in Corinth, Paul taught that the trials and afflictions of this life are temporary and small compared to the blessings of eternity. He also taught the

Saints about the Judgment and testified that Jesus Christ made it possible for us to be reconciled to God.

Objects and pictures

It is often difficult to teach the intangible aspects of the gospel. Using objects and pictures can be an effective way to help students understand spiritual principles.



Suggestions for Teaching

2 Corinthians 4

Paul testifies that even though he has afflictions, he is not fearful or troubled

Display image 1.

- What does this picture portray?
- What might the person being pushed think about the person who is pushing him?

Display image 2.

- How does seeing the first picture in a larger context change your judgment about what it portrays?

Explain that Paul wrote to the Corinthian Saints to help them see the larger context of their tribulations. Invite students to look for truths as they study 2 Corinthians 4 that Paul taught the Saints about their tribulations.

Summarize 2 Corinthians 4:1–7 by explaining that Paul assured the Saints that he had truthfully preached the gospel to them. He taught that Satan, “the god of this world” (verse 4), works to keep people from accepting the gospel. Paul compared himself and his fellow ministers to clay pots that contain the “treasure” of “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God” (verses 6–7).

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 4:8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul described the challenges of his missionary labors.

- How did Paul describe the challenges of his missionary work?
- What phrases did Paul use to describe how he responded to these challenges?
- Why do you think Paul could keep a positive attitude while he experienced these challenges?

Summarize 2 Corinthians 4:11–14 by explaining that Paul taught that even though some people would die for the gospel of Jesus Christ, their death would be temporary.

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 4:14–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul knew that helped him face trials and persecution.

- What did Paul know that helped him face trials and persecution?
- What does the phrase “though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day” (verse 16) mean? (Even though Paul and his companions would die physically, their spirits were being strengthened daily.)

Divide students into pairs. Invite each partnership to read 2 Corinthians 4:17–18 aloud together, looking for truths Paul taught the Saints about trials and afflictions. Ask each pair to work together to answer the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. You may want to provide the questions on a handout or write them on the board.

2 Corinthians 4:17–18

1. What truths did Paul teach the Saints about trials and afflictions?
2. Why is it important to see our afflictions in the larger context of Heavenly Father's plan?
3. When have you seen someone remain strong during trials because they saw their afflictions in the larger context of Heavenly Father's plan?

After sufficient time, invite several students to write their answers to the first question on the board. Students may write several possible truths, including the following: **Our trials and afflictions in this life are small compared to the everlasting blessings and growth that come as we faithfully endure them. Because temporary afflictions can bring about eternal growth and glory, we need not despair in times of trouble. There is eternal purpose in our afflictions, even when we cannot see it in mortality.**

Invite several students to report their answers to the second question. After they report, consider asking follow-up questions such as the following:

- In what ways can our trials and afflictions bring about growth?
- How can remembering these truths help us faithfully endure trials and afflictions?

Invite several students to share their answers to the third question. Consider sharing one of your own experiences.

2 Corinthians 5

Paul teaches the Saints about the Judgment and Atonement of Jesus Christ

Give each student a piece of paper. Ask each one to fold the paper in half and to write his or her name on one half of the paper and *Heavenly Father* on the other half. Explain that when we came to earth, we left Heavenly Father's presence. Invite students to tear their papers in half and to keep the two halves separated.

- In what ways can the ripped paper represent what happened when we left Heavenly Father's presence and came to earth to experience mortality?

Invite students to look for truths as they study 2 Corinthians 5 that will help them understand what we must do to return to Heavenly Father's presence.

Summarize 2 Corinthians 5:1–6 by explaining that Paul acknowledged that though in mortality we are separated from God and will eventually die, we will be resurrected and live again.

Invite students to read 2 Corinthians 5:6–7 silently, looking for what Paul taught the Saints they should do knowing they were separated from God in mortality.

- What truth did Paul teach about our separation from God in mortality? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Because we are separated from God in mortality, we are to walk by faith and not by sight.** Invite each student to write this truth on the half of the paper that has his or her name on it.)
- What does it mean to “walk by faith, [and] not by sight”? (verse 7).
- What are some examples of situations or decisions you might face that would require you to walk by faith and not by sight? (Write students' responses on the board. Their answers might include following the standards of the Church, deciding to serve a mission, or sharing their testimonies.)

Invite students to think of a time when they (or someone they know) walked by faith and not by sight. Ask a few of them to share their experiences.

Invite students to consider a situation or decision they are currently facing in which they struggle to walk by faith. Encourage them to walk by faith in that situation and in all situations.

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 5:8–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul said we should do while we are separated from God in mortality.

- According to verse 9, what did Paul say we should do while we are separated from God in mortality?

- Based on Paul’s teachings recorded in verse 10, what truth can we learn about why we should labor to do good works in this life? (Students may use different words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **Each of us will be judged by Jesus Christ according to what we have done in mortality.** Invite students to consider marking the phrases in verse 10 that teach this truth.)

Invite students to consider changes they may need to make to prepare for the time when they will be judged by Jesus Christ. Encourage them to follow any promptings they may receive.

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 5:15–16 aloud. Ask this student to also read aloud the Joseph Smith Translation of 2 Corinthians 5:16 (in 2 Corinthians 5:16, footnote *a*). Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus Christ did for us so that we can return to Heavenly Father’s presence.

- According to verse 15, what did Jesus Christ do to help us return to Heavenly Father?
- According to verses 15–16, what do believers do because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ? (Believers live Christ-centered lives and do not follow the ways of the world or give in to the flesh. Invite each student to write this statement on the half of the paper that has his or her name on it.)

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 5:17–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Atonement of Jesus Christ can help the Saints return to Heavenly Father’s presence.

- How can the Atonement of Jesus Christ help us return to Heavenly Father’s presence? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can become new creatures and be reconciled to God.** Invite students to write this truth on the half of the paper that has “Heavenly Father” written on it.)
- What do you think it means to become “a new creature”? (verse 17).

Invite students to read Mosiah 27:23–26 silently, looking for any additional details about what it means to become a new creature. After sufficient time, invite a few students to share what they found.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for his explanation about how we can become new creatures.



“The essence of the gospel of Jesus Christ entails a fundamental and permanent change in our very nature made possible through the Savior’s Atonement. True conversion brings a change in one’s beliefs, heart, and life to accept and conform to the will of God (see Acts 3:19; 3 Nephi 9:20) and includes a conscious commitment to become a disciple of Christ.

“... As we honor the ordinances and covenants of salvation and exaltation (see D&C 20:25), ‘press forward with a steadfastness in Christ’ (2 Nephi 31:20), and endure in faith to the end (see D&C 14:7), we become new creatures in Christ (see 2 Corinthians 5:17)” (“Converted unto the Lord,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 107).

Invite each student to put the two halves of the paper together. Explain that to reconcile is to bring together two parties who were previously separated. Because of the Fall of Adam as well as our own sins, we become separated spiritually from our Heavenly Father. Jesus Christ offers, through His Atonement, to reconcile us to the Father and restore our relationship with Him.

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 5:20–21 aloud. Ask the class to look for what Paul admonished the Saints to do.

- What did Paul admonish the Saints in Corinth to do?
- What did Paul teach about Jesus Christ as recorded in verse 21? (Even though Jesus Christ was without sin, He suffered for our sins so we could be made righteous.)

Testify of the truths students identified in this lesson. Ask students to review the list of truths they wrote down and to consider what they must do to become or remain reconciled to God. Encourage them to follow any promptings they may receive.

2 Corinthians 6–7

Introduction

Paul continued to defend to the Corinthian Saints his conduct as a minister of God. He exhorted the Saints to separate themselves from all unrighteousness. He

affirmed his devotion to the Saints and rejoiced that they had experienced godly sorrow and repented of their sins.

Suggestions for Teaching

2 Corinthians 6:1–13

Paul describes characteristics of ministers of God

Invite students to consider the following scenario:

- While you and some others from your ward or branch are doing a service project, some people pass by and make rude remarks about the Church. What might happen if you or others in your group respond with rudeness?

Ask students to think of times when they may have experienced opposition or ridicule while they were serving the Lord. Invite students to look for a truth as they study 2 Corinthians 6:1–13 that can guide them during such times.

Summarize 2 Corinthians 6:1–2 by explaining that Paul referred to himself and his fellow laborers as “workers together with Christ” (Joseph Smith Translation, 2 Corinthians 6:1 [in 2 Corinthians 6:1, footnote *b*]). Paul cited the prophet Isaiah’s words (see Isaiah 49:8) to emphasize that the time had come for the Saints to consider their salvation.

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 6:3–7 aloud. Ask half the class to look for words or phrases that describe the opposition Paul and his fellow ministers experienced. Ask the other half to look for words or phrases that describe how Paul and his fellow ministers reacted to the opposition.

- What kinds of opposition did Paul and his fellow ministers experience?
- What words or phrases describe how they reacted to the opposition?

Review verse 3, and explain that the word *ministry* refers to the work of the Church.

- How might the actions of Church members today affect others’ opinions about the Church?
- How would you summarize Paul’s teachings in verses 3–7 as a principle? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we respond to opposition with love, kindness, and righteousness, we can help others view the Church in a positive way.**)

Remind students of the scenario presented at the beginning of the lesson. Invite them to explain how a person could respond to that situation in a righteous way and what results could come from doing so.

2 Corinthians 6:14–18

Paul counsels the Saints to come out from among the wicked

Divide students into pairs, and provide each student with a copy of the accompanying handout.

2 Corinthians 6:14–18

Counsel to the Saints	Promises from the Lord

Pacing

Occasionally you will not have enough time to use all the teaching suggestions in the manual. You may need to adapt portions of the lesson by briefly summarizing a group of verses or by guiding students to quickly identify a principle or doctrine before moving on to the next group of verses. Seek the direction of the Spirit and prayerfully consider students’ needs as you determine which portions of the scripture block to emphasize.

Invite students to read 2 Corinthians 6:14–18 in pairs. Ask one student in each pair to look for Paul’s counsel to the Saints. Ask the other student to look for the promises from the Lord that would be fulfilled if the Saints heeded Paul’s counsel. Invite them to use what they find to complete the chart together. You may need to explain that the word *concord* means harmony, *belial* refers to wickedness (see Bible Dictionary, “Belial”), and *infidel* refers to an unbeliever or one who believes in gods other than Heavenly Father. Additionally, Paul had previously compared the Corinthian Saints to God’s temple; thus, the word *temple* in verse 16 refers to them as a people.

Allow sufficient time for the pairs to report their findings to one another and complete the chart.

Explain that Paul was specifically warning the Saints to separate themselves from “unclean thing[s]” (verse 17)—including idolatry and those who practiced it—in order to protect themselves from sin. Idolatry is to love or worship any man-made creation more than God.

Invite students to write *If* above the heading “Counsel to the Saints” and *Then* above the heading “Promises from the Lord” on their handouts.

- What principles can we learn from 2 Corinthians 6:14–18? (Students may identify several principles, but be sure to emphasize that **as we separate ourselves from false practices and unclean things, the Lord will receive us.**)
- What might be some examples of false practices or unclean things in our day?
- How can we separate ourselves from these things and those who promote them?

Explain that this principle does not mean that we treat those with different beliefs rudely or refuse to associate with them but that we respectfully reaffirm our beliefs and avoid participating in any activity that would lead us to sin.

- What do you think it means that the Lord “will receive” us (2 Corinthians 6:17)?

Invite students to ponder a time when they felt the Lord was with them as they separated themselves from false practices that could have led them away from the Lord. Ask a few students to share their experiences.

Invite students to ponder what they may need to do in order to separate themselves from false practices and unclean things so they can receive the Lord’s blessings.

2 Corinthians 7

Paul rejoices in the Saints’ true repentance

Invite a student to read aloud the following scenario:

In an interview for a temple recommend for marriage, a young woman confesses some past sins to her bishop. After further discussion, the bishop comes to understand that the young woman has not truly repented of her sins and that her sins are serious enough to make her unworthy of a temple recommend. The bishop explains that the young woman will have to wait to receive a recommend until she has fully repented. She is alarmed, claiming she has repented because she hasn’t repeated any of those sins for a long time. The bishop explains that merely stopping the sin is not complete repentance, and he invites her to sincerely begin the process of true repentance.

- What do you think the young woman might be feeling at this point in the interview?

Invite the student to continue reading the scenario aloud:

The young woman explains to her bishop that she is very upset because the invitations to the wedding and reception have already been sent out. She says she could not face all the questions and the embarrassment of a delay in her wedding plans. She asks whether there is a way for her to be sealed in the temple as planned and then work through the repentance process later.

- Based on the young woman’s response to the bishop, what does she seem to be most concerned about?

Invite students to look for a truth as they study 2 Corinthians 7 that the young woman in the scenario needs to understand before she can truly repent of her sins.

Summarize 2 Corinthians 7:1–7 by explaining that Paul continued his defense against those who sought to discredit him and assured the Corinthian Saints that he had not wronged anyone.

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 7:8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how one of Paul’s earlier letters had affected the Corinthian Saints.

- How had the letter affected the Saints?
- Why did Paul rejoice in their sorrow?

Ask students to read 2 Corinthians 7:10–11 silently. You may want to suggest that they mark the two types of sorrow Paul mentioned and what each leads to.

- What are the two types of sorrow Paul mentioned?

Write the headings *Godly Sorrow* and *Worldly Sorrow* on the board. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson, who explained the meaning of the term “worldly sorrow”:



“It is not uncommon to find men and women in the world who feel remorse for the things they do wrong. Sometimes this is because their actions cause them or loved ones great sorrow and misery. Sometimes their sorrow is caused because they are caught and punished for their actions. Such worldly feelings do not constitute ‘godly sorrow’” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Ezra Taft Benson* [2014], 82).

- How would you summarize what worldly sorrow is?
- According to verse 10, what can worldly sorrow lead to? (Explain that the word *death* in verse 10 refers to spiritual death, meaning separation from God. Under the heading “Worldly Sorrow” on the board, write the following truth: **Worldly sorrow can lead us to spiritual death, or separation from God.**)
- In what ways can worldly sorrow lead a person to spiritual death? (It can prevent a person from truly repenting and receiving Heavenly Father’s forgiveness.)
- According to verse 10, what does godly sorrow lead to? (Under the heading “Godly Sorrow” on the board, write the following truth: **Godly sorrow leads us to repent of our sins and receive salvation.**)

To help students better understand why godly sorrow leads us to repent, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson:



“Godly sorrow is a gift of the Spirit. It is a deep realization that our actions have offended our Father and our God. It is the sharp and keen awareness that our behavior caused the Savior, He who knew no sin, even the greatest of all, to endure agony and suffering. Our sins caused Him to bleed at every pore. This very real mental and spiritual anguish is what the scriptures refer to as having ‘a broken heart and a contrite spirit.’ . . . Such a spirit is the absolute prerequisite for true repentance” (*Teachings: Ezra Taft Benson*, 83).

- Why do you think godly sorrow leads us to truly repent of our sins?

Invite students to reflect on the scenario concerning the young woman seeking a temple recommend.

- What about the young woman’s interview with the bishop indicates that she has not experienced godly sorrow?
- What can we do to replace worldly sorrow with godly sorrow?

If necessary, help students understand that the feelings of godly sorrow we experience as we repent may vary depending on the seriousness of the sin.

Testify that as we feel godly sorrow rather than worldly sorrow for our sins, we will be able to truly repent, be cleansed of our sins, and ultimately receive salvation. Invite students to seek godly sorrow in their efforts to repent.

Summarize 2 Corinthians 7:12–16 by explaining that Paul expressed his care for and confidence in the Saints.

Briefly review the truths students identified in their study of 2 Corinthians 6–7, and encourage them to follow any promptings they may have felt to apply these truths.

Home-Study Lesson

1 Corinthians 15–2 Corinthians 7 (Unit 23)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied 1 Corinthians 15–2 Corinthians 7 (unit 23) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (1 Corinthians 15:1–29)

As students studied the first half of 1 Corinthians 15, they learned that Apostles testify that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was resurrected from the dead. Students also learned that those who have died without baptism may receive this essential ordinance.

Day 2 (1 Corinthians 15:30–16:24)

In this lesson students continued studying Paul's teachings about the Resurrection. They learned that there are different degrees of glory for resurrected bodies. In addition, they learned that if we are steadfast and immovable in living the gospel, the sting of death that comes from sin is removed through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Day 3 (2 Corinthians 1–3)

From Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, students learned that when Heavenly Father comforts us in our tribulations, we are able to help others receive His comfort. They also learned that if we do not forgive others, Satan will have an advantage over us, and as we turn our hearts to the Lord, we will have the Spirit, which will gradually help us become more like God.

Day 4 (2 Corinthians 4–7)

As students studied Paul's description of his ministry in this lesson, they discovered the following truths: Our trials and afflictions in this life are small compared to the everlasting blessings and growth that come as we faithfully endure them. Because we are separated from God in mortality, we are to walk by faith and not by sight. Each of us will be judged by Jesus Christ according to what we have done in mortality. Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can become new creatures and be reconciled to God. As we separate ourselves from false practices and unclean things, the Lord will receive us.

Introduction

In his second epistle to the Corinthian Saints, the Apostle Paul affirmed his devotion to them and said he rejoiced in knowing they had accepted his earlier counsel. He taught that godly sorrow for sin leads to repentance.

Suggestions for Teaching

2 Corinthians 7:8–11

Paul rejoices in the Saints' true repentance

Invite a student to read aloud the following scenario:

In an interview for a temple recommend for marriage, a young woman confesses some past sins to her bishop. After further discussion, the bishop comes to understand that the young woman has not truly repented of her sins and that her sins are serious enough to make her unworthy of a temple recommend. The bishop explains that the young woman will have to wait to receive a recommend until she has fully repented. She is alarmed, claiming she has repented because she hasn't repeated any of those sins for a long time. The bishop explains that merely stopping the sin is not complete repentance, and he invites her to sincerely begin the process of true repentance.

- What do you think the young woman might be feeling at this point in the interview?

Invite the student to continue reading the scenario aloud:

The young woman explains to her bishop that she is very upset because the invitations to the wedding and reception have already been sent out. She says she could not face all the questions and the embarrassment of a delay in her wedding plans. She asks whether there is a way for her to be sealed in the temple as planned and then work through the repentance process later.

- Based on the young woman's response to the bishop, what does she seem to be most concerned about?

Invite students to look for a truth as they study 2 Corinthians 7:8–11 that the young woman in the scenario needs to understand before she can truly repent of her sins.

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 7:8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how one of Paul's earlier letters had affected the Corinthian Saints.

- How had the letter affected the Saints?
- Why did Paul rejoice in their sorrow?

Ask students to read 2 Corinthians 7:10–11 silently. You may want to suggest that they mark the two types of sorrow Paul mentioned and what each leads to.

- What are the two types of sorrow Paul mentioned?

Write the headings *Godly Sorrow* and *Worldly Sorrow* on the board. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson. Ask the class to listen for his description of worldly sorrow.



“It is not uncommon to find men and women in the world who feel remorse for the things they do wrong. Sometimes this is because their actions cause them or loved ones great sorrow and misery. Sometimes their sorrow is caused because they are caught and punished for their actions. Such worldly feelings do not constitute ‘godly sorrow’ ” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Ezra Taft Benson* [2014], 82).

- How would you summarize what worldly sorrow is?
- According to 2 Corinthians 7:10, what can worldly sorrow lead to? (Explain that the word *death* in verse 10 refers to spiritual death, meaning separation from God. Under the heading “Worldly Sorrow” on the board, write the following truth: **Worldly sorrow can lead us to spiritual death, or separation from God.**)
- In what ways can worldly sorrow lead a person to spiritual death? (It can prevent a person from truly repenting and receiving Heavenly Father’s forgiveness.)
- According to verse 10, what does godly sorrow lead to? (Under the heading “Godly Sorrow” on the board, write the following truth: **Godly sorrow leads us to repent of our sins and receive salvation.**)

To help students better understand why godly sorrow leads us to repent, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson:



“Godly sorrow is a gift of the Spirit. It is a deep realization that our actions have offended our Father and our God. It is the sharp and keen awareness that our behavior caused the Savior, He who knew no sin, even the greatest of all, to endure agony and suffering. Our sins caused Him to bleed at every pore. This very real mental and spiritual anguish is what the scriptures refer to as having ‘a broken heart and a contrite spirit.’ . . . Such a spirit is the absolute prerequisite for true repentance” (*Teachings: Ezra Taft Benson*, 83).

- Why do you think godly sorrow leads us to truly repent of our sins?

Invite students to reflect on the scenario concerning the young woman seeking a temple recommend.

- Considering the young woman’s responses during her interview with the bishop, does it appear that she has experienced godly sorrow for her sins? Why not? (She was more concerned with the delay in her marriage plans and other people’s opinions of her than she was with truly repenting and receiving Heavenly Father’s forgiveness.)
- What can we do to replace worldly sorrow with godly sorrow? (We can fast and pray, asking Heavenly Father to bless us with the gift of godly sorrow. We can also study about the Atonement of Jesus Christ and seek a deeper understanding of how our sins contributed to His suffering.)

Testify that as we feel godly sorrow rather than worldly sorrow for our sins, we will be able to truly repent, be cleansed from our sins, and ultimately receive salvation. Invite students to seek godly sorrow in their efforts to repent.

If there is time, briefly review the truths students identified as they studied the lessons in unit 23, and encourage them to follow any promptings they may have felt to apply these truths. You may want to review the scripture mastery passages in 1 Corinthians 15:20–22 and 1 Corinthians 15:40–42. Invite students to explain the doctrines in these passages and how they might use these verses to teach the plan of salvation to someone else.

Next Unit (2 Corinthians 8–Ephesians 1)

Ask students to consider the following questions: How do you know when you are feeling the Spirit? What are the fruits or feelings of the Spirit? What are Saints foreordained to receive? What is our responsibility to those who lack some of the temporal necessities of life, such as food, clothing, and shelter? What if we ourselves have some of these same needs? Explain that during the next week they will study how Paul addressed these questions and others.

2 Corinthians 8–9

Introduction

Paul wrote to the Saints in Corinth, explaining that the members in Macedonia had given freely to those in need. He encouraged the Corinthian Saints to also

follow the Savior’s example by giving to the poor. Paul taught about the blessings that come to those who cheerfully give to the poor.

Pray for your students

In order for students to feel the edifying influence of the Holy Ghost in their learning experience, they too should be “in a preparation to hear the word” (Alma 32:6). You can plead for the Lord to pour out His Spirit upon your students “to prepare their hearts to receive the word . . . with joy” (Alma 16:16–17).

Suggestions for Teaching

2 Corinthians 8

Paul counsels the Saints to care for the poor

Write the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (from “Are We Not All Beggars?” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 40) on the board before class, but leave a blank space instead of the word *poverty*. Begin the lesson by inviting a student to read the statement aloud.

“Down through history, poverty has been one of humankind’s greatest and most widespread challenges. Its obvious toll is usually physical, but the spiritual and emotional damage it can bring may be even more debilitating.”

Ask students to guess the missing word in the statement. Then write in the word *poverty*.

- What is poverty? (The condition of having little or no money, goods, or means of support.)
- Why can poverty be such a difficult challenge?

Encourage students to think of individuals they know who may need help or assistance of any kind, including physical, emotional, social, or spiritual assistance. Invite students to look for truths as they study 2 Corinthians 8–9 that can help them understand and fulfill their role in helping others who are in need.

Summarize 2 Corinthians 8:1–8 by explaining that Paul told the Corinthian Saints that Church members in Macedonia had given generously to help the poor in their temporal needs. (You may want to have students locate Corinth and Macedonia on Bible Maps, no. 13, “The Missionary Journeys of the Apostle Paul.”) Paul explained that the Macedonian members did so because they desired to do the will of God. He encouraged the Saints of Corinth to follow this example of providing for the needs of others out of sincere love.

Write the words *rich* and *poor* on the board.

Invite students to read 2 Corinthians 8:9 silently, looking for what Paul said Jesus Christ did for the Saints. After sufficient time ask the following questions, and list students’ responses on the board under the words *rich* and *poor*.

- In what ways was Jesus Christ rich in the premortal life? (Students’ responses may include the following: Jesus Christ was the Firstborn of the Father in the spirit. Even before He was born in mortality, Jesus Christ was a God who stood next to Heavenly Father in authority, power, and glory and created many worlds under the direction of the Father.)
- In what ways might He have been considered poor during His time in mortality? (He left His position of glory to be born in and live among lowly circumstances on earth.)
- What do you think it means in verse 9 that we “through [the Savior’s] poverty might be rich”? (Because Jesus Christ condescended from His premortal throne and came to earth to minister, set an example for us, and perform the Atonement, we can gain the riches of eternal life.)

Explain to students that about a year earlier, the Corinthian Saints had committed to take up a collection of goods for the poor Saints in Judea. Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 8:10–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul advised the Saints in Corinth to do.

- What did Paul advise the Saints in Corinth to do?

Explain that the phrases “to do” and “perform the doing of it” mean that Paul admonished the Saints to fulfill their previous commitment to give what they could to the Saints who were poor, just as the Savior had given eternal riches to them.

- What happens to each of us as we come to understand all that the Savior has given us? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we come to understand all that the Savior has given us, we will be more willing to give of our substance to others.**)
- How can reflecting upon the Savior’s gifts to us motivate us to give to those in need?
- What specific gifts has the Savior given you that might inspire you to give to others?

Invite a few students to read 2 Corinthians 8:12–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for an additional truth that Paul taught about the importance of supporting one another in temporal ways.

- What truth can we learn from verses 12–13? (Help students identify the following truth: **God wants us to be willing to give even when we may not have anything to give.**)

To help the class understand this truth, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland:


“Rich or poor, we are to ‘do what we can’ when others are in need” (“Are We Not All Beggars?” 41).

- What can we do for others if we don’t have anything physical to give them?
- According to verses 14–15, who benefits when all the Saints consistently give to those in need? (Whoever may be in need at any given time.)
- What are some ways in which everyone benefits when we are all willing to give?

To help students feel the importance of these truths and principles and apply them, read aloud the following statement by Elder Holland. Invite students to listen for how the Lord can help us respond compassionately to the poor.



“I don’t know exactly how each of you should fulfill your obligation to those who do not or cannot always help themselves. But I know that God knows, and He will help you and guide you in compassionate acts of discipleship if you are conscientiously wanting and praying and looking for ways to keep a commandment He has given us again and again” (“Are We Not All Beggars?” 41).

 If time permits and you are able, instead of reading the preceding quote, consider showing part of the video of Elder Holland’s general conference address “Are We Not All Beggars?” (0:00–7:04).

- What did Elder Holland say we should do to be ready to help the poor and needy?
- What are some ways the Church has established through which we can help meet the needs of the poor? (Through fast offerings, local service projects, and humanitarian opportunities.)

Encourage students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals one thing they plan to do based on what Paul taught about giving to the poor and needy.

Summarize 2 Corinthians 8:16–24 by explaining that Paul spoke to the Corinthian Saints about Titus and two other brethren who were being sent to collect charitable contributions for the Saints in Jerusalem. Paul spoke of his confidence in the Corinthian Saints and explained that their giving generously would serve as evidence of their love for others.

2 Corinthians 9

Paul teaches about the blessings of being a sincere giver

Summarize 2 Corinthians 9:1–5 by explaining that Paul continued to praise the Corinthian Saints. He told the Saints he had sent Titus and others to confirm their willingness to give freely.

Ask students to ponder whether they have ever given something to someone or provided a service for someone in a grudging manner.

- Why is it sometimes hard to be cheerful about giving your time, money, or other resources to help others?



Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 9:6–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the comparison Paul used to teach the members in Corinth about giving freely.

- What does it mean to sow? (To plant seeds.)
- To what did Paul compare sowing? (Giving to others.)

Hold up some fruit or vegetable seeds, or display a picture of some.

- Who are the sowers in this comparison? (The Saints, or us.)
- According to verse 7, how does the Lord expect us to sow, or give? (Cheerfully, not grudgingly. See also Moroni 7:8.)

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we give to those in need with a cheerful heart . . .*

- How is giving to others like sowing seeds in a field?
- What happens if we only sow sparingly?
- What happens if we sow bountifully?

Complete the principle on the board so that it conveys the following truth: **If we give to those in need with a cheerful heart, God will generously bless us.**

- How can giving to others with a cheerful attitude actually lead to our receiving more than we began with?

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 9:8–10 aloud. Ask the class to look for blessings Paul said would come to the Saints if they gave with a cheerful heart.

- What are some phrases Paul used to describe blessings the Lord gives to those who give with a cheerful heart? (Answers may include “all grace abound toward you” [verse 8], “all sufficiency in all things” [verse 8], “his righteousness remaineth for ever” [verse 9], and “increase the fruits of your righteousness” [verse 10].)

Explain that these phrases suggest that we will receive the Lord’s grace, which may include temporal blessings, sufficient for our needs.

- According to verse 10, who is “he that ministereth seed to the sower”? (The Lord. Display the seed again, and explain that we are only able to give to others because the Lord has provided for us in the first place.)
- How can remembering where everything we have comes from help us to give cheerfully?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 2 Corinthians 9:11–15. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about those Saints who give and receive cheerfully.

- According to verses 11–15, how do Saints who freely give and receive of one another’s substance feel toward God?

You may want to invite students to consider marking any phrases of gratitude found in these verses, such as “which causeth through us thanksgiving to God” (verse 11), “many thanksgivings unto God” (verse 12), “they glorify God” (verse 13), and “thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift” (verse 15).

You may want to suggest that students write the following truth in their scriptures near verses 11–15: **Recognizing God’s generosity in blessing us can help us feel gratitude toward Him.**

- When have you felt gratitude toward God after recognizing the blessings He sent to you for serving and giving to others in a cheerful manner?

Testify of the principles and truths students identified in 2 Corinthians 8–9.

Encourage students to consider ways they might help someone in need this week. Invite them to set a goal to help that person.

LESSON 117

2 Corinthians 10–13

Introduction

The Apostle Paul taught about the spiritual war that the children of God are engaged in. He defended himself against those who opposed him. He recounted how he was caught up into the third heaven and described how

his weaknesses proved to be a blessing. Before ending his epistle, Paul exhorted the Saints in Corinth to examine themselves and prove their faithfulness.

Suggestions for Teaching

2 Corinthians 10–11

Paul writes about spiritual warfare, Satan’s deceptions, and his own tribulations

Write the word *war* on the board.

- In what ways are we engaged in a war against Satan?
- What are some of the most difficult battles we face in this spiritual war?

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 10:3–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught we must do to be successful in this war against Satan.

- What must we do to be successful in this war against Satan?
- What do you think it means to bring “into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”? (verse 5).
- What principle can we learn from verse 5 about how to be successful in the war against Satan? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **As we control our thoughts in obedience to Jesus Christ, we will be more successful in the war against Satan.**)
- What can we do to control our thoughts? (Among other things, we can pray, memorize scriptures, and sing or memorize hymns.)

You may want to share an experience that illustrates how controlling your thoughts in obedience to the Savior has helped you overcome Satan’s influence. Consider inviting students to share their own experiences as well. Invite students to set a goal to better control their thoughts in obedience to the Savior.

Invite a student to read aloud the following summary:

In 2 Corinthians 10:7–18 we learn that Paul gloried in the Lord and taught that his own weaknesses should not be used to justify not listening to him. In 2 Corinthians 11 we read that Paul mentioned additional ways Satan seeks to corrupt our thoughts and lead us away from Jesus Christ, including the use of false Christs and false apostles. Paul recounted the suffering he had endured as a true Apostle of the Savior.

2 Corinthians 12

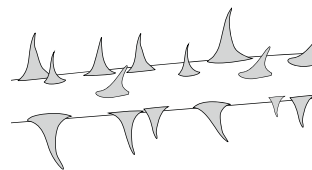
Paul recounts being caught up into heaven and teaches how acknowledging our weaknesses can benefit us

Bring a thorn to class, or draw a picture of one on the board similar to the one shown. Invite students to consider times when they have been hurt by thorns.

- In what ways can thorns make life difficult?

Explain that Paul used the concept of a thorn to symbolize a trial or weakness he experienced.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen and consider what kinds of trials or weaknesses they or their loved ones have experienced:



“Some have lost a loved one to death or care for one who is disabled. Some have been wounded by divorce. . . . Others have crippling physical or mental impairments. Some are challenged by same-gender attraction. Some have terrible feelings of depression or inadequacy. In one way or another, many are heavy laden” (“He Heals the Heavy Laden,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2006, 6).

Invite students to look for truths as they study 2 Corinthians 12 that can help them as they experience trials and weaknesses.

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 12:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a vision Paul had. (Explain that these verses refer to Paul in the third person.)

- What do you think it means that Paul was “caught up to the third heaven”? (verse 2). (He had a vision of the celestial kingdom.)

Explain that the phrase “whether in the body . . . or whether out of the body, I cannot tell” (verse 2) means that Paul did not know whether he had been taken to the celestial kingdom or had seen a vision of it.

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 12:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul responded to this vision.

- How did Paul respond to this vision?
- What did Paul worry might happen if he gloried of himself? (Paul was concerned that others might think too highly of him when he still had mortal struggles to overcome.)

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 12:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord helped Paul remain humble. You may want to explain that to “be exalted above measure” (verse 7) means to be prideful.

- How did the Lord help Paul stay humble?
- How many times did Paul pray to have this “thorn in the flesh” removed?

Point out that in spite of Paul’s prayers, it seems that the Lord chose not to remove Paul’s “thorn in the flesh.”

- What can we learn from Paul about why the Lord may allow us to experience weaknesses and trials? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The Lord may allow us to experience weaknesses and trials so we can learn to be humble.** Write this truth on the board.)

Invite students to read 2 Corinthians 12:9–10 silently and look for truths Paul learned that helped him endure his weaknesses. Ask students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals the truths they identify.

- What truths did Paul learn that helped him endure his weaknesses? (Students may identify several truths, such as the following: **The grace of Jesus Christ is sufficient to strengthen us in our weaknesses. The Lord does not always remove our challenges, but He will strengthen us as we endure them faithfully.**)

Remind students that *grace* is the “divine means of help or strength” made possible through the Atonement of Jesus Christ (Bible Dictionary, “Grace”).

- What does it mean that the Savior’s grace is sufficient to strengthen us in our weaknesses? (Through the strength we receive from the Savior, we can do all that He asks us to do.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks:

“The healing power of the Lord Jesus Christ—whether it removes our burdens or strengthens us to endure and live with them like the Apostle Paul—is available for every affliction in mortality” (“He Heals the Heavy Laden,” 8).

- How can the truths we identified in verses 9–10 help us as we experience weaknesses and trials?
- When have you or someone you know been strengthened by the Savior? (Remind students not to share anything that is too private or personal.) How was that experience a blessing to you or them?

2 Corinthians 13

Paul exhorts the Saints to examine themselves and prove their faithfulness

Remind students that there were false teachers among the Corinthian Saints who challenged Paul and his authority as an Apostle.

Invite students to testify

You can encourage students to testify of gospel truths by asking questions that invite them to share their experiences and beliefs. As students testify of gospel truths, the Holy Ghost can often lead them to a deeper testimony of the very things they are expressing. Through the power of the Spirit, their words can also have a significant impact on the hearts of their peers.

- What are some examples of how people today might challenge those who are called to leadership positions in the Church?

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 13:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what some Church members in Corinth were seeking proof of.

- What were some Church members in Corinth seeking proof of?

Invite a student to read 2 Corinthians 13:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul exhorted the Corinthian Saints to do rather than question whether the Lord spoke through him as an Apostle. Explain that a *reprobate* is a corrupt or immoral person.

- According to verse 5, what did Paul exhort the Corinthian Saints to do? (You may want to encourage students to mark the verbs *examine*, *prove*, and *know* in this verse.)
- What did Paul say these Saints needed to examine about themselves? (Explain that to “be in the faith” [verse 5] means to be faithful to the Lord’s Church.)
- What principle can we learn from these verses about what we should do instead of criticizing Church leaders? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **Rather than criticizing Church leaders, Church members should examine their own faithfulness.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith:

“[If a man] rises up to condemn others, finding fault with the Church, saying that they are out of the way, while he himself is righteous, then know assuredly, that that man is in the high road to apostasy; and if he does not repent, will apostatize, as God lives” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 318).

- What will happen if we criticize our leaders instead of examining our own faithfulness?

To help students examine their faithfulness and their attitude toward their Church leaders, provide them with copies of the following questions. Give students sufficient time to read and answer the questions silently.

1. On a scale of 1–10 (10 is perfectly), how well do you follow the counsel of Church leaders?
2. What is one standard taught by prophets and apostles that you could follow more faithfully?
3. On a scale of 1–10 (10 is every opportunity you have), how often do you express gratitude for your Church leaders, either in person or in prayer?
4. What could you do to show more appreciation for the sacrifice and effort your leaders make on your behalf?

After sufficient time, ask:

- What blessings can come from regularly doing a spiritual self-examination such as this?

Summarize 2 Corinthians 13:7–14 by explaining that Paul exhorted the Saints to avoid evil and strive for perfection.

Testify of the truths you have discussed in this lesson. Invite students to write down a specific goal regarding how they will apply one of these truths in their lives.

Scripture Mastery Review

Students’ understanding of scripture passages will increase as they create their own questions about those passages. Divide the class into two (or more) teams. Invite the teams to write clues that point to specific scripture mastery passages. (You may want to select a group of passages that you would like students to learn or review.) Encourage students to not make their clues too challenging. After sufficient time, invite the teams to take turns reading their clues aloud to see if the other team can identify the correct passage.

Note: If you do not have time to use this activity as part of this lesson, you may use it on another day. (The following lesson is fairly short. You may have time to use this activity then.) For other review activities, see the appendix at the end of this manual.

The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians

Why study this book?

The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians was written to Jewish Christians who were straying from the Lord by relying once again on the works of the law of Moses. The Apostle Paul sought to correct this problem by emphasizing the difference between the burdensome “yoke” of the law of Moses, which led to spiritual bondage, and the gospel of Jesus Christ, which leads to spiritual freedom. Studying this epistle can help students to better appreciate the liberty offered through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Who wrote this book?

The Apostle Paul wrote Galatians (see Galatians 1:1).

When and where was it written?

Paul likely wrote his Epistle to the Galatians while traveling through Macedonia during his third missionary journey in about A.D. 55–57 (see Bible Dictionary, “Pauline Epistles”).

To whom was it written and why?

“There is some uncertainty as to what churches were addressed in this epistle. They were either in northern Galatia, the district of which Ancyra was capital, or in the district on the borders of Phrygia and Galatia that was visited by Paul on his first missionary journey. In either case the Galatian churches were certainly visited by Paul on his second (Acts 16:6) and third (Acts 18:23) journeys” (Bible Dictionary, “Pauline Epistles: Epistle to the Galatians”).

Paul wrote to the Saints in Galatia because he was deeply concerned that they were straying from the Lord by following the teachings of some who sought to “pervert the gospel” (see Galatians 1:6–7). Jewish Christians were teaching Gentile Christians the false doctrine that they had to be circumcised and observe the ritual requirements of the law of Moses in order to be saved (see Galatians 6:12; see also Acts 15:1). Some Galatian Saints had embraced the teachings of these people (see Galatians 4:10).

Paul’s main purposes in writing this epistle included:

1. Defending himself against the accusations of the false teachers who opposed him.
2. Teaching that all people, whether Jew or Gentile, are saved by the Atonement of Jesus Christ by placing their faith in Jesus Christ instead of relying upon the works of the law of Moses.
3. Clarifying the role of the law of Moses in God’s plan.
4. Distinguishing between the old covenant God made through Moses and the new covenant in Christ.
5. Calling upon the Saints to live by the Spirit.

What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Galatians stands out as Paul’s most impassioned letter, in which he delivered a sharp rebuke to both the Church members who were straying and the false teachers who were leading them astray. Galatians contains Paul’s earliest written presentation of the doctrine of justification—we are not justified by the works of the law of Moses but by faith in Jesus Christ. The epistle contrasts “the works of the flesh” with “the fruit of the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16–25).

Outline

Galatians 1–2 Paul writes to the Galatian Saints because they have strayed from the Lord and embraced false teachings. He defends his calling as an Apostle by recounting his initial opposition to the Church and his conversion. He emphasizes that he received revelation directly from God and clarifies that his ministry to the Gentiles has been approved by the Apostles. He states that he once disagreed with Peter concerning the Gentile Saints. He teaches that people are not justified by the works of the law of Moses but by faith in Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3–4 Paul defends the gospel message. He teaches that Abraham was an example of a person who was justified by faith and not by the works of the law of Moses. Through the Atonement, Jesus Christ redeemed mankind from the curse of the law. The purpose of the law of Moses was to be a “schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.” Through faith and baptism, Saints receive the blessings of the Atonement, enter the gospel covenant, become heirs of God through Christ, and are no longer servants but children of God.

Galatians 5–6 Paul calls upon the Saints to remain firm in the gospel covenant offered by Christ. Paul contrasts the life of a person who is involved in the “works of the flesh” with one who enjoys the “fruits of the Spirit.” He teaches that Saints should bear one another’s burdens and not be weary in doing good. We reap what we sow.

LESSON 118

Galatians 1–4

Introduction

The Apostle Paul rebuked the Galatian Saints for following after false teachings and taught that they could

become heirs of God by having faith in and following Jesus Christ.

Suggestions for Teaching

Galatians 1–2

Paul rebukes the Saints for following false teachers and encourages them to return to the gospel

Invite students to imagine that one of their siblings or friends has expressed that he or she is no longer sure that the teachings of the Church are true. As a result, this person has stopped attending church and is no longer living the gospel. Ask students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they would say to this sibling or friend to help him or her know that the Church's teachings are true.

Invite students to look for a truth as they study Galatians 1 that can help them know how to recognize true teachings.

Explain that Galatia was a region in north-central Asia Minor that included many cities Paul visited during his second and third missionary journeys (see Acts 16:6; 18:23). (You may want to invite students to locate Galatia on Bible Maps, no. 13, "The Missionary Journeys of the Apostle Paul.") Invite a student to read Galatians 1:6–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a problem that existed among the Galatian Saints.

- Why were many of the Galatian Saints falling away from the true gospel?

Explain that those who were troubling the Galatians and corrupting gospel teachings were raising doubts (see Galatians 1:7, footnote *a*) about Paul's teaching that salvation comes only through Jesus Christ. These false teachers were Jewish Christians who claimed that the Galatian Saints had to be circumcised (see Bible Dictionary, "Circumcision") and observe the rituals of the law of Moses in order to be saved.

Invite a student to read Galatians 1:8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul said about those who preached a gospel contrary to the one he preached as an Apostle of the Lord. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Galatians 1:10–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who was the source of Paul's teachings.

- According to verse 12, who was the source of Paul's teachings?
- What truth can we learn from Paul's words in verses 10–12 about true doctrine? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Jesus Christ reveals true doctrine to His prophets.**)
- How can remembering this truth help us when we have questions about the prophets' teachings?

Explain that because Jesus Christ reveals true doctrine to His prophets, He can also reveal to us the truthfulness of a prophet's teachings.

- What can we do to receive revelation from the Lord so that we can know for ourselves that the prophets' teachings are true?

Remind students of the scenario you introduced at the beginning of the lesson. Invite a few students to explain to the class how they would use the truth they have just identified about revelation to respond to the person who is questioning Church teachings.

Testify that we can recognize true doctrine as we study the prophets' teachings and seek revelation from the Lord.

Help students understand content

The content of the scriptures is the story line, people, events, sermons, and inspired explanations that make up the scriptural text. It gives life and relevance to the doctrines and principles found in a scripture block. Help students understand the content so they can identify eternal truths found in the text, but do not overemphasize such background and details to the degree that they become the core of the lesson.

Summarize Galatians 1:13–2:21 by explaining that Paul recounted his conversion and initial missionary journeys. He also explained that salvation was not in the law of Moses, but rather we are forgiven, or justified, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3–4

Paul invites the Galatians to obtain all the blessings promised to Abraham through Jesus Christ

Read aloud the following scenarios. After reading each one, ask students to explain why the individual in the scenario may feel at a disadvantage in receiving all of the Lord’s blessings compared to others in the Church who had been faithful to the gospel from an early age.

1. A young man grew up in a less-active family and was not taught the gospel when he was young. His family is now returning to activity in the Church and is beginning to learn and live the gospel.
2. A woman criticized the Church for many years. She recently experienced a change of heart and was baptized.

Invite students to look for a truth as they study Galatians 3–4 that can help us understand what blessings are available to everyone, regardless of his or her circumstances and past choices.

Explain that many of the Galatian Saints were Gentile converts to Christianity and so were not literal descendants of Abraham, to whom all of God’s blessings were promised. Invite a student to read Galatians 3:7–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about those who “are of faith” (verse 7), or who believe, in Jesus Christ.

- What did Paul teach about those who believe in Jesus Christ?
- According to verse 8, what did the Lord promise Abraham?
- According to verse 9, what will happen to those who have faith in Jesus Christ?

Explain that to be “blessed with faithful Abraham” refers to being a beneficiary of the covenant God made with Abraham that through him all people could enjoy the blessings of the gospel (see Abraham 2:11).

Summarize Galatians 3:10–25 by explaining that Paul taught that the law of Moses was intended to help the Israelites come unto Jesus Christ and be justified by faith in Him.

Invite a student to read Galatians 3:26–27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what we must do to receive the blessings promised to Abraham.

- What must we do to receive the blessings promised to Abraham?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *All those who exercise faith in Jesus Christ and enter the gospel covenant will become . . .*

Invite a student to read Galatians 3:28–29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words or phrases they could use to complete the partial principle statement on the board.

- According to verse 28, what do different individuals become when they enter the gospel covenant?
- According to verse 29, what do those who are numbered among Abraham’s seed through Jesus Christ also become?

Explain that an *heir* is someone who is entitled by law to receive the estate, or belongings, of another.

Invite a student to read Galatians 4:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whose heirs we can become.

- Whose heirs can we become? (Using students’ words, complete the principle statement on the board so that it conveys the following truth: **All those who exercise faith in Jesus Christ and enter the gospel covenant will become one in Christ and heirs of God.**)
- Why is it important to know that God promises these blessings to everyone who enters the covenant, regardless of his or her circumstances?

Testify that Heavenly Father’s promises are for anyone who enters into the gospel covenant. Encourage students to be faithful to the covenants they have made.

Summarize Galatians 4:8–31 by explaining that Paul invited the Galatian Saints to return to Christ and to escape the bondage that comes from adherence to the law of Moses.

LESSON 119

Galatians 5–6

Introduction

Paul encouraged the Galatian Saints to restore their faith in Jesus Christ and to trust that salvation is attainable only through Him rather than through obedience

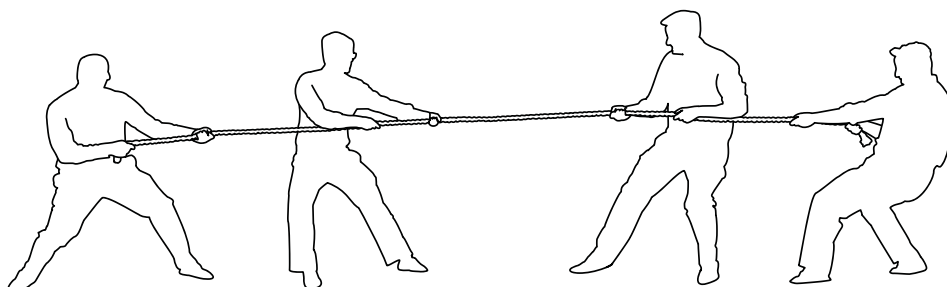
to the law of Moses. Paul concluded his letter by inviting members of the Church to become new creatures through Christ and to help others do the same.

Suggestions for Teaching

Galatians 5

Paul encourages the Galatian Saints to restore their faith in Jesus Christ

Draw an image of a tug-of-war on the board.



- What is a tug-of-war? How do you win one?
- In what ways are our lives similar to a tug-of-war?

If students did not mention it, point out that one aspect of our lives that is similar to a tug-of-war is our struggle against temptation. Invite students to look for truths as they study Galatians 5 that can help them know how to win the struggle against temptation.

Remind students that some Jewish Christians had misled the Saints in Galatia by teaching them that they needed to live the law of Moses and be circumcised in order to be saved. Paul described these false teachings about the law of Moses as a “yoke of bondage” (Galatians 5:1).

Invite a student to read Galatians 5:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who Paul said brings freedom from this yoke of bondage.

- Who brings freedom from this yoke of bondage?

Summarize Galatians 5:2–15 by explaining that Paul chastened the Galatian Saints for being so easily swayed away from the liberty of the gospel of Jesus Christ and returning instead to the bondage of the law of Moses. He then clarified that even though followers of Christ had been freed from the bondage of the law of Moses, that did not mean they had the freedom to indulge freely in sin.

Invite a student to read Galatians 5:16–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for two competing forces Paul described.

- What are the two competing forces Paul described?

Create a chart on the board by drawing a vertical line down the center of the image of the tug-of-war. Write *Walk in the Spirit* above one side of the tug-of-war, and write *Fulfill the lust of the flesh* above the other side.

- What does it mean to “walk in the Spirit”? (verse 16). (To live worthy of and follow the Holy Ghost.)
- What does “the lust of the flesh” (verse 16) refer to? (Temptations to sin.)
- How are these considered competing forces?

- What principle can we learn from verse 16 about how we can overcome the temptations of the flesh? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we walk in the Spirit, we will overcome the temptations of the flesh.** Write this principle on the board.)

Ask students to ponder which side they are on in this tug-of-war and which force is winning in their lives.

Divide the class into groups of two or three. Assign half of the groups to read Galatians 5:19–21 aloud together, looking for the results of “[fulfilling] the lust of the flesh.” Invite the other half to read Galatians 5:22–23 aloud together, looking for the results of walking in the Spirit. When they finish reading, invite one member from each group to list in the appropriate column on the board one of the answers they found. Invite them to continue listing their answers until the chart reflects what Paul listed. You may want to bring a dictionary to class and invite a student to look up any words that are difficult to understand.

- According to verse 21, what did Paul teach will happen to people who give in to the “works of the flesh”?
- According to verses 22–23, what fruits, or results, indicate that someone is walking in the Spirit? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.** You may want to suggest that students mark this truth in their scriptures.)

Refer to the side of the chart where the fruits of the Spirit are listed.

- Why are these blessings worth having?

Below the chart draw a large arrow pointing toward the side where the lusts of the flesh are listed. Ask students to imagine that in this figurative tug-of-war we allow ourselves to move toward the lusts of the flesh.

- What happens to the fruits of the Spirit when we give in to the lusts of the flesh? (We begin losing the fruits of the Spirit.)

Erase the arrow and draw another arrow pointing toward the fruits of the Spirit. Ask students to imagine that we now allow ourselves to move toward this side.

- What happens to the works of the flesh when we walk in the Spirit? (They cease to be a part of our lives.)

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals about a time when they felt or experienced one of these fruits of the Spirit. Ask them to include what they were doing to walk in the Spirit at that time. When they finish, invite a few students to share what they wrote.

Invite a student to read Galatians 5:24–25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what disciples of Jesus Christ try to do with the lusts of the flesh.

- What do disciples of Jesus Christ try to do with the lusts of the flesh? (Crucify them, or eliminate them from their lives.)

Invite students to consider what they will do to walk more fully in the Spirit. Encourage them to follow the promptings they receive so they can enjoy the fruits of the Spirit.


Galatians 6

Paul invites the Galatian Saints to be changed through Jesus Christ

Invite students to think of someone they know who is currently not receiving the blessings of the gospel, even if that person is a member of the Church. Ask the class to look for a principle as they study Galatians 6 that can guide them in their efforts to help the person they thought of to receive the blessings of the gospel.

Invite a student to read Galatians 6:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about how members of the Church should respond to someone who has sinned. (You may need to explain that to be “overtaken in a fault” [verse 1] means to sin.)

- According to Paul, how should members of the Church respond to someone who has sinned? (“Restore” the person, or help him or her return to the gospel path.)

 **Galatians 5:22–23** is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

- Why is it important to have “the spirit of meekness” (verse 1) as we help someone return to the gospel path?
- What are some ways we can “bear . . . one another’s burdens”? (verse 2).

Summarize Galatians 6:3–5 by explaining that Paul taught that we should not be arrogant and self-righteous and that every person will “bear his [or her] own burden” (verse 4), or be accountable for his or her choices.

Display a few seeds of a fruit or vegetable that students will easily recognize. Ask them to identify what kind of seeds they are.

- What can you expect if you plant these seeds?

Invite a student to read Galatians 6:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about what we can expect when we plant seeds.

- What did Paul teach about what happens when seeds are planted? (What you sow, or plant, is what you reap, or harvest. This is called the law of the harvest.)
- How does the law of the harvest relate to the decisions we make?

Invite students to read Galatians 6:9–10 silently. Ask them to look for why Paul taught the law of the harvest.

- Why do you think Paul taught the law of the harvest after he invited the Galatians to help each other stay on or return to the gospel path?
- What principle can we learn from these verses about helping others who are not enjoying the blessings of the gospel? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we are diligent in well doing, we will reap the blessings of our actions.**)
- How can the promise that we will reap “in due season” help us to not “faint” (verse 9), or give up, in our efforts to serve others and live the gospel in our own lives?
- When have you or someone you know been diligent in well doing even though the blessings did not come immediately? (You might also consider sharing an experience.)

Summarize Galatians 6:11–18 by explaining that Paul concluded his epistle to the Galatian Saints by reiterating that the peace and mercy of Jesus Christ are upon all those who become new creatures through faith on His name.

Encourage students to “not be weary in well doing” (verse 9) and to prayerfully consider who they can help return to the Lord’s path. Invite them to diligently follow the impressions they receive from the Holy Ghost.

Scripture Mastery—Galatians 5:22–23

To help students memorize Galatians 5:22–23, invite the class to recite it one word per student at a time. For example, the first student would say “but,” the second student would say “the,” the third student would say “fruit,” and so forth until both verses are completed. Time the class, and give them multiple tries to achieve a target time. As you repeat this activity, consider shifting the order of students so that they say different words. You could also suggest that students practice at the beginning of class several days in a row so they can improve their time. After students have heard the scripture repeated several times, invite them to try reciting it from memory to someone sitting near them.

Commentary and Background Information

Galatians 5:24. “Crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts”

Paul’s teaching that “they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts” does not mean

that those who follow Christ will cease to experience temptation. Rather, it means that they will learn how to overcome their temptations.

The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians

Why study this book?

“Ephesians is an epistle for all the world, for Jew and Gentile, for husband and wife, for parent and child, for master and servant. It was the mind and will of God in Paul’s day; it is the voice of inspiration in our day; it is an epistle of universal appeal and application.

“. . . It contains some of Paul’s best writing, and is a document that deals with fundamentals, with the gospel of God in all its saving glory” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 2:489).

Studying the Epistle to the Ephesians can inspire students to set aside the things of this world and can help them grow spiritually and learn to more fully partake of the unity and fellowship of the Church.

Who wrote this book?

The Apostle Paul wrote the Epistle to the Ephesians (see Ephesians 1:1).

When and where was it written?

Paul stated that he was a prisoner at the time he wrote the Epistle to the Ephesians (see Ephesians 3:1; 4:1; 6:20). Ephesians may have been written during Paul’s first imprisonment in Rome, around A.D. 60–62 (see Guide to the Scriptures, “Pauline Epistles,” scriptures.lds.org). During this time Paul was being held under house arrest, but he had the freedom to receive visitors and teach the gospel (see Acts 28:16–31).

To whom was it written and why?

In the King James Version of the Bible, Ephesians 1:1 states that the Epistle to the Ephesians is addressed “to the saints which are at Ephesus.” However, the earliest manuscripts of Ephesians do not contain the words “which are at Ephesus.” This suggests the possibility that Paul may not have written the epistle specifically to the Ephesians but to several congregations of Saints, including those in Ephesus. Ephesus served as Paul’s headquarters during his third missionary journey (see Acts 19:9–10; 20:31), and he had great affection for these people (see Acts 20:17, 34–38).

In this letter, Paul addressed Gentile members of the Church (see Ephesians 2:11)

who were perhaps recent converts (see Ephesians 1:15). He wrote to help develop the spirituality and testimonies of those who were already members. His main purposes were to help these converts grow in their spiritual knowledge of God and the Church (see Ephesians 1:15–18; 3:14–19); to promote unity, particularly between Gentile and Jewish Saints (see Ephesians 2:11–22; 4:1–16; 5:19–6:9); and to encourage the Saints to withstand the powers of evil (see Ephesians 4:17–5:18; 6:10–18). Many Saints in Ephesus were living righteously enough to be sealed up to eternal life (see Ephesians 1:13; Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 2:493–94).

What are some distinctive features of this book?

Ephesians contains many teachings and ideas that are familiar to Latter-day Saints, including foreordination, the dispensation of the fulness of times, the Holy Spirit of Promise, the importance of prophets and apostles, the idea of one true and unified Church, and the various offices, callings, and functions within the organization of the Church. This letter also contains some of the most sublime teachings on the family that are found anywhere in scripture.

Outline

Ephesians 1:1–4:16 Paul writes of the Saints’ foreordination to receive the gospel; the dispensation of the fulness of times; sealing by the Holy Spirit of Promise; salvation by grace; the unifying of Gentile and Jewish Saints in the Church; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; the purpose of the Church; and the Church’s organization upon a foundation of prophets and apostles, with Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone. Paul teaches that God will gather all things together in Christ in the dispensation of the fulness of times.

Ephesians 4:17–6:24 Paul encourages the Saints to apply true doctrine in their daily lives. He encourages them to put off the old man (their former sins) and put on the new man they become through Christ. He gives counsel to wives, husbands, children, parents, servants, masters, and congregations. He encourages Saints to “put on the whole armour of God” (Ephesians 6:11).

LESSON 120

Ephesians 1

Introduction

Paul wrote a letter to the Saints at Ephesus regarding their foreordination to receive the gospel. He wrote about the final dispensation, or the dispensation in which

we now live. Paul taught that we can come to know Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ through revelation.

Suggestions for Teaching

Ephesians 1:1–8

Paul teaches the Saints that they were foreordained to receive the gospel

Invite students to consider a time when they agreed to take on an important responsibility and were promised they would be rewarded for fulfilling this task.

- When the task grew challenging, how were you sustained by the knowledge that you had agreed to this assignment and that someone trusted you to fulfill it?
- How were you blessed or rewarded for fulfilling your responsibility?

Explain that in his epistle recorded in Ephesians 1–6, the Apostle Paul addressed the Saints who were in Ephesus and surrounding areas. His aim was to strengthen those who were already members of the Church and to help recent converts grow in their spiritual knowledge and remain faithful to their covenants.

Invite several students to take turns reading Ephesians 1:3–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for truths Paul taught the Saints to help them remain faithful to their covenants.

- What truths did Paul teach the Saints to help them remain faithful? (As students respond, you may want to invite them to explain how understanding the truths they mention could have helped the Saints remain faithful.)
- What do you think it means in verse 4 that God had chosen some “before the foundation of the world”?

Explain that this phrase, in conjunction with the word *predestinated* and the phrase “the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself” in verse 5, refers to those who were chosen or foreordained in the premortal existence to receive the gospel. Write the following truth on the board: **God’s children were foreordained to receive the blessings of the gospel.** The receipt of these blessings is conditioned upon our faithfulness in this life.

To help students understand this truth, invite a student to read aloud the following statement:

“In the premortal spirit world, God appointed certain spirits to fulfill specific missions during their mortal lives. This is called foreordination.

“Foreordination does not guarantee that individuals will receive certain callings or responsibilities. Such opportunities come in this life as a result of the righteous exercise of agency, just as foreordination came as a result of righteousness in the premortal existence. . . .

“The doctrine of foreordination applies to all members of the Church, not just to the Savior and His prophets. Before the creation of the earth, faithful women were given certain responsibilities and faithful men were foreordained to certain priesthood duties. Although you do not remember that time, you surely agreed to fulfill significant tasks in the service of your Father. As you prove yourself worthy, you will be given opportunities to fulfill the assignments you then received” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 69–70).

- How can understanding that we were foreordained to receive the gospel and its many blessings help us remain faithful to our covenants?

Help students understand the Basic Doctrines

Students will learn the Basic Doctrines as they study and discuss the scriptures and as they master key scripture passages. You should not divert from sequential scripture study to focus on the Basic Doctrines. Rather, you should give attention to those doctrines as they arise in their scriptural context. For instance, in this lesson you could emphasize the doctrine of gospel dispensations as it relates to what is taught in Ephesians 1.

Ephesians 1:9–12

Paul speaks of the dispensation of the fulness of times

Draw a simple picture of several different rivers emptying into a large body of water. Ask students to imagine that each river represents a gospel dispensation.



- What is a gospel dispensation?

You may want to review the definition of a gospel dispensation by inviting a student to read aloud the following statement from the Bible Dictionary:

“A dispensation of the gospel is a period of time in which the Lord has at least one authorized servant on the earth who bears the holy priesthood and the keys, and who has a divine commission to dispense the gospel to the inhabitants of the earth. When this occurs, the gospel is revealed anew, so that people of that dispensation do not have to depend basically on past dispensations for knowledge of the plan of salvation. There have been many gospel dispensations since the beginning. The Bible suggests at least one dispensation identified with Adam, another with Enoch, another with Noah, and so on with Abraham, Moses, and Jesus with His Apostles in the meridian of time” (Bible Dictionary, “Dispensations”).

Invite a student to read Ephesians 1:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what dispensation Paul referred to. Explain that the phrase “mystery of his will” in verse 9 refers to God’s plans and purposes.

- What dispensation did Paul refer to in Ephesians 1:10?

Point out that the dispensation of the fulness of times is the dispensation in which we now live.

- How might the dispensation of the fulness of times be likened to a body of water with rivers flowing into it?
- What did Paul prophesy would happen during the dispensation of the fulness of times? (Explain that when Paul wrote that “all things in Christ,” both heavenly and earthly, might be gathered “together in one” [verse 10], he referred to the restoration and bringing together of all the keys, powers, and promises God has revealed to His children since the world began, as well as other knowledge that has never before been revealed [see D&C 128:18]. Write the following doctrine on the board: **During the dispensation of the fulness of times, all things from former dispensations will be restored.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder B. H. Roberts of the Seventy:



“This is the dispensation of the fullness of times, and we see running into it, as mighty streams rush into the ocean, all the former dispensations, putting us in touch with them, putting them in touch with us; and we see that God has had but one great purpose in view from the beginning, and that has been the salvation of His children. And now has come the final day, the final dispensation, when truth and light and righteousness must flood the earth”

(in Conference Report, Oct. 1904, 73).

Invite students to come to the board and label the drawings of rivers with truths, scriptures, covenants, and powers from previous dispensations that have been restored or brought forth in the dispensation of the fulness of times. (Labels might include the sealing power, saving ordinances, the Book of Mormon, and so forth; students can draw additional rivers as needed.)

- How is living in the dispensation of the fulness of times a blessing for you?
- According to the statement by Elder Roberts, what must happen during this dispensation? (Truth, light, and righteousness must flood the earth.)
- What resources in our dispensation enable us to flood the earth with the truth and light of the gospel?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“My beloved brothers and sisters, what has been accomplished thus far in this dispensation communicating gospel messages through social media channels is a good beginning—but only a small trickle. I now extend to you the invitation to help transform the trickle into a flood. . . . I exhort you to sweep the earth with messages filled with righteousness and truth—messages that are authentic, edifying, and praiseworthy—and literally to sweep the earth as with a flood” (“To Sweep the Earth as with a Flood” [Brigham Young University Campus Education Week devotional, Aug. 19, 2014], LDS.org).

Invite students to share what they are doing to help flood the earth with messages filled with righteousness and truth.

Summarize Ephesians 1:11–12 by explaining that Paul taught that through Jesus Christ the Saints had obtained an “inheritance” (verse 11) in God’s kingdom.

Ephesians 1:13–23

Paul teaches about the Holy Spirit of Promise

Invite a student to read Ephesians 1:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a blessing the Saints had received because of their faithfulness and their trust and belief in Jesus Christ.

- According to verse 13, what blessing had the Saints received? (They were “sealed with [the] holy Spirit of promise.”)

Explain that being “sealed [by the] holy Spirit of promise” means that the Holy Ghost “witnesses to the Father that the saving ordinances have been performed properly and that the covenants associated with them have been kept” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Holy Spirit of Promise,” scriptures.lds.org). The Spirit is “the earnest of our inheritance” (verse 14). This means that the presence of the Holy Ghost in our lives is a token, reminder, and indication from God that if we continue faithful we will receive eternal life.

Summarize Ephesians 1:15–16 by explaining that Paul told the Saints that he continually gave thanks to God for their faithfulness.

Invite a student to read Ephesians 1:17–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul prayed God would give the Saints.

- What did Paul pray that God would give the Saints?
- What do these verses teach us about how we can come to know Heavenly Father? (Using their own words, students should identify the following truth: **We can come to know Heavenly Father through the spirit of revelation.**)

To help students understand the spirit of revelation, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar. Ask students to listen for what the spirit of revelation is.



“Revelation is communication from God to His children on the earth and one of the great blessings associated with the gift and constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, ‘The Holy Ghost is a revelator,’ and ‘no man can receive the Holy Ghost without receiving revelations’ (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 132).

“The spirit of revelation is available to every person who receives by proper priesthood authority the saving ordinances of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost—and who is acting in faith to fulfill the priesthood injunction to ‘receive the Holy Ghost’ ” (“The Spirit of Revelation,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 87).

- What is the spirit of revelation?
- How can revelation through the Holy Ghost help us come to know Heavenly Father?

You may want to invite students to share how revelation through the Holy Ghost has helped them come to know Heavenly Father better. Consider sharing an experience of your own. Encourage students to strive to be worthy of the companionship of the Holy Ghost so they can continue to come to know Heavenly Father better.

Summarize Ephesians 1:19–23 by explaining that Paul continued to teach about the Saints’ promised inheritance and Jesus Christ’s position as the head of His Church.

Home-Study Lesson

2 Corinthians 8–Ephesians 1 (Unit 24)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied 2 Corinthians 8–Ephesians 1 (unit 24) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (2 Corinthians 8–9)

In this lesson students learned that as we come to understand all that the Savior has given us, we will be more willing to give of our substance to others. Students also learned that God wants us to be willing to give even when we may not have anything to give. Additionally, students learned that if we give to those in need with a cheerful heart, God will generously bless us, and recognizing God's generosity in blessing us can help us feel gratitude toward Him.

Day 2 (2 Corinthians 10–13)

From Paul's teachings on spiritual warfare, students learned that as we control our thoughts in obedience to Jesus Christ, we will be more successful in the war against Satan. From Paul's teachings about his own thorn of the flesh, students discovered that the Lord may allow us to experience weaknesses and trials so we can learn to be humble. The grace of Jesus Christ is sufficient to strengthen us in our weaknesses, and the Lord does not always remove our challenges, but He will strengthen us as we endure them faithfully.

Day 3 (Galatians)

As students studied Paul's teachings to the Galatians, they learned that Jesus Christ reveals true doctrine to His prophets. Students also learned that all those who exercise faith in Jesus Christ and enter the gospel covenant become one in Christ and heirs of God. They came to understand that as we walk in the Spirit, we will overcome the temptations of the flesh and that if we are diligent in well doing, we will reap the blessings of our actions.

Day 4 (Ephesians 1)

From the first chapter of Paul's teachings to the Ephesians, students learned that God's children were fore-ordained to receive the blessings of the gospel. They also learned that during the dispensation of the fulness of times, all things from former dispensations will be restored and that we can come to know Heavenly Father through the spirit of revelation.

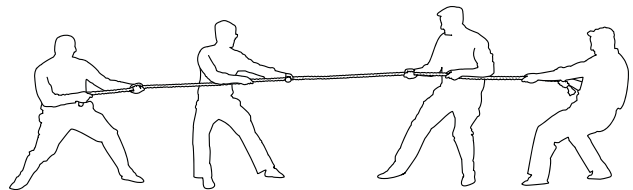
Introduction

The Apostle Paul encouraged the Galatian Saints to restore their faith in Jesus Christ and to trust that salvation is attainable only through Him rather than through obedience to the law of Moses.

Suggestions for Teaching

Galatians 5

Paul encourages the Galatian Saints to restore their faith in Jesus Christ



Draw an image of a tug-of-war on the board.

- What is a tug-of-war? How do you win one?
- In what ways are our lives similar to a tug-of-war?

If students did not mention it, point out that one aspect of our lives that is similar to a tug-of-war is our struggle against temptation. Invite students to look for truths as they study Galatians 5 that can help them know how to win the struggle against temptation.

Remind students that Jewish Christians had misled the Saints in Galatia by teaching them that they needed to live the law of Moses and be circumcised in order to be saved. The Apostle Paul described these false teachings about the law of Moses as "the yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1).

Invite a student to read Galatians 5:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who Paul said brings freedom from this yoke of bondage.

- Who brings freedom from this yoke of bondage?

Summarize Galatians 5:2–15 by explaining that Paul chastened the Galatian Saints for being so easily swayed away from the liberty of the gospel of Jesus Christ and returning instead to the bondage of the law of Moses. He then clarified that even

though followers of Christ had been freed from the bondage of the law of Moses, that did not mean they had the freedom to indulge freely in sin.

Invite a student to read Galatians 5:16–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for two competing forces Paul described.

- What are the two competing forces Paul described?

Create a chart on the board by drawing a vertical line down the center of the image of the tug-of-war. Write *Walk in the Spirit* above one side of the tug-of-war, and write *Fulfill the lust of the flesh* above the other side.

- What does it mean to “walk in the Spirit”? (Galatians 5:16). (To live worthy of and follow the Holy Ghost.)
- What does “the lust of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16) refer to? (Temptations to sin.)
- How are these considered competing forces?
- What principle can we learn from Galatians 5:16 about how we can overcome the temptations of the flesh? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we walk in the Spirit, we will overcome the temptations of the flesh.** Write this principle on the board.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Melvin J. Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for the question Elder Ballard asked us to consider.



“All the assaults that the enemy of our souls will make to capture us will be through the flesh. . . . The approach he makes to us will be through the lusts, the appetites, the ambitions of the flesh. All the help that comes to us from the Lord to aid us in this struggle will come to us through the spirit

that dwells within this mortal body. So these two mighty forces are operating upon us through these two channels.

“How is the battle going with you? . . . That is a very important question. The greatest conflict that any man or woman will ever have (I care not how numerous their enemies may be) will be the battle that is had with self” (“Struggle for the Soul,” *New Era*, Mar. 1984, 35).

Ask students to ponder which side they are on in this tug-of-war and which force is winning in their lives.

Divide the class into groups of two or three. Assign half of the groups to read Galatians 5:19–21 aloud together, looking for the results of “[fulfilling] the lust of the flesh.” Invite the other half to read Galatians 5:22–23 aloud together, looking for the results of walking in the Spirit. When they finish reading, invite one member from each group to list in the appropriate column on the board one of the answers they found. Invite them to continue listing their answers until the chart reflects what Paul listed. You may want to bring a dictionary to class and invite a student to look up any words that are difficult to understand.

- According to Galatians 5:21, what did Paul teach will happen to people who give in to the “works of the flesh”? (Galatians 5:19).
- According to Galatians 5:22–23, what fruits, or results, indicate that someone is walking in the Spirit? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.** You may want to suggest that students mark this truth in their scriptures.)

Refer to the side of the chart where the fruits of the Spirit are listed.

- Why are these blessings worth having?

Below the chart draw a large arrow pointing toward the side where the lusts of the flesh are listed. Ask students to imagine that in this figurative tug-of-war we allow ourselves to move toward the lusts of the flesh.

- What happens to the fruits of the Spirit when we give in to the lusts of the flesh? (We begin losing the fruits of the Spirit.)

Erase the arrow and draw another arrow pointing toward the fruits of the Spirit. Ask students to imagine that we now allow ourselves to move toward this side.

- What happens to the works of the flesh when we walk in the Spirit? (They cease to be a part of our lives.)

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals about a time when they felt or experienced one of these fruits of the Spirit. Ask them to include what they were doing to walk in the Spirit at that time. When they finish, invite a few students to share what they wrote.

Invite a student to read Galatians 5:24–25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what disciples of Jesus Christ try to do with the lusts of the flesh.

- What do disciples of Jesus Christ try to do with the lusts of the flesh? (Crucify them, or eliminate them from their lives.)

Invite students to consider what they will do to walk more fully in the Spirit. Encourage them to follow the promptings they receive so they can enjoy the fruits of the Spirit.

Next Unit (Ephesians 2–Philippians 4)

Invite students to think about the changing values, laws, and opinions in the world. How can we know what is right and wrong in a world where ideas constantly change? The Apostle Paul counseled the Saints and helped them understand what the Lord has provided to ensure that we are not carried away with the false philosophies of the world. Also explain that as they continue to study Paul’s writings during the next week, they will find answers to the following questions: How should children treat their parents? What does Paul say will “quench all the fiery darts of the wicked”? (Ephesians 6:16).

Ephesians 2–3

Introduction

Paul taught the Saints in Ephesus that all sinners could be saved by God's grace and that Jews and Gentiles had become one in the household of God. Paul also explained

that the Church of Jesus Christ is built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, and he shared his desire that the Saints experience the love of Jesus Christ.

Suggestions for Teaching

Ephesians 2

Paul teaches how the blood of Jesus Christ saves both Jew and Gentile

As class begins, invite one or more of your students (depending on the size of your class) to sit on the floor in a different area of the classroom. Place a boundary between these students and the rest of the class with tape or string, and then instruct the separated students that they may not verbally participate in the lesson (yet). Ask the rest of the class:

- What might this situation communicate about the relationship between you and the separated students? (That one group is more favored than the other.)
- How do you think the separated students might feel? Why?

Ask students to consider whether they have ever felt this way in certain circumstances in life.

Write the words *Gentiles* and *Jews* on the board, creating two columns.

- Based on what you have learned about social conditions in some branches of the Church during Paul's ministry, which label would fit the separated students? (*Gentiles*.) Which label would fit the rest of the class? (*Jews*.)
- What might have caused this separation? (Some Jews believed that because they were Israelites by birth and had been circumcised, they were more favored by God and superior to Gentile converts.)

Invite a student to read Ephesians 2:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul described the spiritual condition of the Gentile Saints ("you" and "ye" in verses 1–2) and the Jewish Saints ("we" in verse 3) prior to their conversion to the Savior and His Church. Explain that the phrase "prince of the power of the air" in verse 2 refers to the devil and his prevalent influence throughout the world.

- According to verses 1–2, how did Paul describe the Gentiles prior to their conversion? (List students' responses on the board under the column labeled "Gentiles.")
- According to verse 3, how did Paul describe himself and the Jews prior to their conversion? (List students' responses on the board under the column labeled "Jews.")

Point out that the Gentiles as well as the Jews were spiritually dead, or separated from God, because of their sins (see verse 1).

Invite a student to read Ephesians 2:4–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the spiritual condition of the Gentile and Jewish Saints after their conversion. Point out that the word *quickened* means made alive and that *heavenly places* refers to realms in heaven that people inherit.

- How did Paul describe the Saints after their conversion? (The Lord had quickened them, or made them alive, from their spiritually dead and sinful state. Remind students that we refer to this as being spiritually reborn [see Mosiah 27:24–26].)

Invite a few students to read Ephesians 2:7–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what enabled the Gentiles and Jews to make this transformation.

- What enabled both groups of Saints to make this transformation? (The grace of Jesus Christ.)

- What truth can we learn from these verses about what the grace of Jesus Christ makes possible for all God’s children? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Because of the grace of Jesus Christ, all mankind can be saved through faith in Him.**)

Point out that Paul emphasized that we cannot be saved by our works alone no matter how good those works are (see verses 8–9). To help the class better understand the truth identified above, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:



“Because we have all ‘sinned, and come short of the glory of God’ [Romans 3:23] and because ‘there cannot any unclean thing enter into the kingdom of God’ [1 Nephi 15:34], every one of us is unworthy to return to God’s presence. . . .

“ . . . We cannot earn our way into heaven; the demands of justice stand as a barrier, which we are powerless to overcome on our own.

“But all is not lost.

“The grace of God is our great and everlasting hope.

“Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the plan of mercy appeases the demands of justice [see Alma 42:15] ‘and [brings] about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance’ [Alma 34:15].

“Our sins, though they may be as scarlet, can become white as snow [see Isaiah 1:18]. Because our beloved Savior ‘gave himself a ransom for all’ [1 Timothy 2:6], an entrance into His everlasting kingdom is provided unto us [see 2 Peter 1:11].

“The gate is unlocked! . . .

“To inherit this glory, we need more than an unlocked gate; we must enter through this gate with a heart’s desire to be changed—a change so dramatic that the scriptures describe it as being ‘born again; yea, born of God, changed from [our worldly] and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters’ [Mosiah 27:25]. . . .

“Grace is a gift of God, and our desire to be obedient to each of God’s commandments is the reaching out of our mortal hand to receive this sacred gift from our Heavenly Father” (“The Gift of Grace,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 108, 110).

- How does exercising faith in Jesus Christ and repenting of our sins help us receive the gift of grace?

To help students understand the historical context of the relationship between Jews and Gentiles before the gospel was preached to all God’s children, show the accompanying picture of the “wall of partition” (Ephesians 2:14) in the outer courts of the temple in Jerusalem (or invite students to turn to Bible Photographs, no. 9, “Temple of Herod”). Explain that Gentiles, who had not made covenants with the Lord, were forbidden to go beyond this wall to the more sacred areas of the temple; they were treated as “strangers and foreigners” (Ephesians 2:19). The physical wall of partition symbolized the spiritual separation that existed between Jews and Gentiles prior to Peter’s revelation that the gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles.



Invite a few of the students who are separated from the class to take turns reading aloud from Ephesians 2:12–15. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior did with the barrier between the Jews and Gentiles. Point out that the word *enmity* means “antagonism, hostility, and hate” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Enmity,” scriptures.lds.org).

- What brought the Gentiles and Jews together? (Through the blood of Christ, the figurative wall spiritually separating the Jews and Gentiles was removed, and they became “one new man” [Ephesians 2:15], or one unified body in Christ. Write the following truth on the board: **As we come unto Jesus Christ and partake of His grace, we become unified with the Saints of God.**)

Help students understand historical context

One of the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning is to understand the historical context of the scripture block. Context includes the circumstances or background of a particular scripture passage, event, or story. As you help students understand the context of the scriptures, they will be prepared to recognize the messages of the inspired authors.

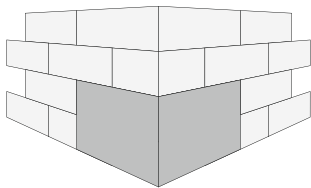
Remove the tape or string that separated the students, and invite the separated students to unite with the rest of the class. Encourage the students representing the Jews to invite the separated students to sit next to them.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Ephesians 2:16–19. Ask the class to follow along, looking for phrases that further emphasize the truth that as we come unto Jesus Christ and partake of His grace, we can be unified with the Saints of God.

- What phrases did you find that further emphasize the truth that as we come unto Jesus Christ and partake of His grace, we can be unified with the Saints of God?
- Why do you think this truth is important for us to understand and apply in the Church today?
- How can we help others become or feel again like “fellowcitizens” (verse 19) in the Church rather than strangers?
- When has someone helped you feel like a fellow citizen with the Saints rather than a stranger? When have you tried to help someone else feel this way?

Invite a student to read Ephesians 2:20–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught was the foundation of the Church.

- What truth did Paul teach in these verses about the structure of the Lord’s Church? (Students may use different words, but help them identify that **the Lord’s Church is founded on apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone.**)
- What is a cornerstone? (A large stone laid at the corner of a foundation to give strength and stability to the entire structure.)



Draw a simple picture of a cornerstone connecting two walls.

- In what ways is Jesus Christ the chief cornerstone of the Church? According to verse 21, what happens to the rest of the Church because of this cornerstone?
- In what ways do apostles and prophets form the remainder of the foundation of the Church?
- How does this foundation provide stability to the Church and protect it against the devil’s attacks?

Ephesians 3

Paul expresses his desires for the Ephesian Saints

Summarize Ephesians 3:1–16 by explaining that Paul preached about Jesus Christ and taught that through Him, Gentiles can be “fellowheirs” (verse 6) with Israel and partakers of God’s promises.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Ephesians 3:14–19. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else Paul desired to help the Saints know and feel.

- According to these verses, what did Paul want the Saints to know and feel?

Write the following truth on the board: **Apostles and prophets seek to help God’s children know and feel the love of Jesus Christ.**

Display the page showing the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles from the most recent general conference issue of the *Ensign* or *Liahona*.

- How do apostles and prophets seek to help God’s children know and feel the love of Jesus Christ in our day?
- When have the teachings of apostles and prophets helped you to better know and feel the love of Jesus Christ?

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths discussed in the lesson, and invite students to act on these truths.

LESSON 122

Ephesians 4

Introduction

Paul taught that the Lord had established His Church and called leaders to both perfect and unify the Saints.

He also encouraged Church members to put off their old ways and live what they knew to be true.

Suggestions for Teaching

Ephesians 4:1–16

Paul teaches the importance of Jesus Christ's Church

Invite students to consider the following two scenarios:

1. At school your teacher asks the class to express their views on a controversial topic. As students share their opinions, you realize that most of them support a position that is different from the teachings of the Church.
2. Lawmakers in your country have legalized behavior that Church leaders have taught is wrong.
 - Why might situations like these be difficult for a member of the Church?

Invite students to look as they study Ephesians 4:1–16 for a truth about how we can know what is right and what is wrong in a world of changing values and beliefs.

Remind students that in this epistle Paul may have been writing to new members of the Church. Invite a student to read Ephesians 4:1–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Paul taught about the Church and its doctrine.

- What did Paul teach about the Church and its doctrine?
- What do you think Paul meant when he taught that there is “one Lord, one faith, [and] one baptism”? (verse 5). (In Paul’s day, as in ours, there is only one true Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth [see D&C 1:30].)

Summarize Ephesians 4:7–10 by explaining that Paul taught that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we have all been given the gift of His grace. He also taught that Christ had given other gifts to mankind.

Invite a student to read Ephesians 4:11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord gave the Church. Invite students to report what they find.

- What did the Lord give to the Church?

Explain that the titles of the offices of the priesthood in the Church today may not be the same as the titles used in Paul’s day and the early Church may not have had every calling that the Church has today. For instance, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught that an “evangelist is a Patriarch” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 140). Also, a pastor is a shepherd, or one who leads a flock—a fitting description of modern-day bishops, branch presidents, stake presidents, and district presidents.

Write the following incomplete sentence on the board: *The Lord has called apostles, prophets, and other Church leaders to help . . .*

Invite a student to read Ephesians 4:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why the Lord gave the Church apostles, prophets, and other leaders.

- For what purpose did the Lord provide apostles, prophets, and other Church leaders for His Church? (Add *perfect the Saints* to the statement on the board.)
- In what ways do apostles, prophets, and other Church leaders help perfect us?

Invite a student to read Ephesians 4:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for another reason why the Lord gave His Church apostles, prophets, and other leaders.

- Why else did the Lord provide these leaders for members of the Church? (Add *and protect them from false doctrine* on the board so that the entire truth reads as follows:

Ephesians

4:11–14 is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.



The Lord has called apostles, prophets, and other Church leaders to help perfect the Saints and protect them from false doctrine.)

To help students understand the imagery in verse 14, display a picture of a boat in the midst of rough waters. Or you or a student could draw a picture of a boat in rough waters on the board.

- What can happen to a boat that is tossed about on the water in violent storms?

Refer to the scenarios presented at the beginning of the lesson.

- How can a boat that is tossed about in rough waters be likened to someone who is “tossed to and fro” (verse 14) by the changing winds of false teachings and public opinions?
- How do the teachings of apostles, prophets, and other Church leaders help followers of God navigate these troubled waters and return safely to Heavenly Father?

Write the following Church callings on the board: *apostles, prophets, patriarchs, bishops, and teachers*. Invite students to choose two of the callings and write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how a leader holding that calling has helped them improve or grow spiritually or helped protect them from false doctrine and deception. After sufficient time, invite a few students to share one of the experiences they wrote about.

Invite a student to read Ephesians 4:15–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the way in which our Church leaders should teach us the truths of the gospel.

- How should our Church leaders teach us the truths of the gospel?

Ephesians 4:17–32

Paul encourages the Saints to put off evil and become new through Jesus Christ

Bring to class a casual coat or jacket (preferably one that is well worn or tattered). Also, if possible, bring a coat or jacket that would be suitable to wear to a nice event. (If you prefer, you may bring one casual shirt and one nice shirt instead. Make sure that both shirts are large enough for a student to wear on top of his or her clothing.) Invite a student to come to the front of the class and to put on the casual coat. Ask the student to turn around and show the coat to the class. Next, ask him or her to take off the casual coat and then put on the nicer coat and show it to the class. Thank the student, and invite him or her to remove the coat and be seated.

- Which of these two coats would be more appropriate at a nice event?

Remind students that Paul may have been addressing recent converts to the Church. Invite students to look as they study Ephesians 4:17–32 for how Paul used the metaphor of taking off something and putting on something else to teach these new converts what they needed to do as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Invite a student to read Ephesians 4:17–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words or phrases that describe the spiritual state of Gentiles who had not joined the Church.

- How did Paul describe the spiritual state of the other Gentiles?
- What did Paul say was the reason the other Gentiles were in this spiritual state?

Invite a student to read Ephesians 4:21–24 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what had helped members of the Church become different from other people.

- According to verse 21, what had helped members of the Church become different from other people?

Refer to the student who put on the two coats, and ask the class what that student had to do before he or she could put on the nicer jacket or coat.

- What did Paul tell Church members to “put off”? (verse 22). (You may want to remind students that the word translated as *conversation* frequently refers to one’s conduct as a whole.)
- What does it mean to “put on the new man”? (verse 24). (To be spiritually reborn [see Mosiah 27:25] and diligently live the gospel of Jesus Christ daily.)
- What truth can we identify from these verses about disciples of Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify a truth similar to the following: **Disciples of Jesus Christ put off their old, sinful ways and put on new, righteous ways.**)

Invite students to copy the following chart in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

Old Self	New Self

Divide students into pairs. Invite each pair to read Ephesians 4:25–32 aloud together. Ask them to fill out their charts as they read, listing under “Old Self” the things disciples of Christ need to “put off” (verse 22) or “put away” (verse 31) and listing under “New Self” the things disciples of Christ need to “put on” (verse 24). Point out the Joseph Smith Translation for Ephesians 4:26 in footnote *a*.

After sufficient time, invite each pair to think of a scenario that illustrates the possible behavior of someone who has not put off his or her sinful nature in one of the areas Paul described. Invite each pair to also think of a scenario that illustrates how the same person might act if he or she came unto Christ and became a new person. After students have had time to plan, invite a few pairs to come to the front of the class and explain their scenarios. After a few pairs have presented, ask the class:

- How might a member of the Church who knows the truth but is not living it be like someone who is invited to a nice event but does not put on appropriate clothes?
- What challenges might we face as we try to put off our old, sinful natures and become new as disciples of Christ?
- Why is it important for members of the Church to remember that putting off our old ways and fully following Jesus Christ is a continual process and not a one-time event?

Explain that for many, putting on the new ways of righteousness is as simple as making small changes like being a little more kind or patient, keeping a commandment a little more fully, or eliminating a bad habit from our lives.

Testify of the importance of putting off our old, sinful ways and putting on new ways of righteousness. Invite students to write down one thing they can do today to put off their old ways and fully follow Jesus Christ. Encourage them to act on what they wrote down.

Scripture Mastery—Ephesians 4:11–14

To help students explain the doctrine taught in Ephesians 4:11–14, invite students to turn to a partner and use Paul’s teachings in Ephesians 4:11–14 to explain why the Lord established His Church and called leaders to serve in it. Then invite students to explain how they could use the doctrine in Ephesians 4:11–14 to help a friend who believes there is no need for an organized Church.

Commentary and Background Information

Ephesians 4:13. “Unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ”

What does it mean to come “unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ”? (Ephesians 4:13). Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that it refers to “the status of glory and exaltation enjoyed by Christ himself. The whole plan of salvation is designed to enable men to become like God. Those who gain infinite perfection shall be like Christ and he is like the Father. (3 Ne. 28:10.) [As the *Lectures*

on Faith state]: ‘Salvation consists in the glory, authority, majesty, power and dominion which Jehovah possesses and in nothing else; and no being can possess it but himself or one like him.’ [*Lectures on Faith* (1985), 76.]

“. . . Christ ‘received a fulness of the glory of the Father; And he received all power, both in heaven and on earth, and the glory of the Father was with him, for he dwelt in him.’ (D. & C. 93:16–17.)” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 2:511).

Ephesians 5–6

Introduction

Paul taught the Saints how to resist evil influences. He also taught them how to strengthen family relationships. Paul concluded his letter by exhorting followers of God

to “put on the whole armour of God” (Ephesians 6:11) in order to withstand Satan’s deceptions.

Determine pacing

Avoid the mistake of taking too much time on the first part of the lesson and having to rush through the rest of it. As you prepare, estimate how long each section of the lesson will take using the teaching methods you have chosen. Because you will almost always have more material to teach than there is time to teach it, determine which portions of the scripture block to emphasize and which to summarize.

Suggestions for Teaching

Ephesians 5:1–20

Paul teaches the Saints to resist evil influences

If possible, display something that students would recognize as having been newly made or purchased, and ask:

- How do we typically treat things that are new?

Remind students that Ephesians 4 contains Paul’s counsel to new Church members to “put off” their “old[,] . . . corrupt” selves (verse 22) and “put on the new man” (verse 24), or begin a new life as followers of Jesus Christ.

- How could the life of someone who has determined to follow Jesus Christ be considered new?

Invite students to look for a principle as they study Ephesians 5–6 that can help them “put on the new man” as followers of Jesus Christ.

Invite a student to read Ephesians 5:1–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul counseled the Saints to do and not do as followers of Jesus Christ.

- What did Paul counsel followers of Jesus Christ to do? What did he counsel them not to do?
- What truth can we identify from these verses about followers of Jesus Christ? (Students may identify a variety of truths, but be sure to emphasize that **followers of Jesus Christ do not partake of the world’s evils.**)
- According to verse 5, what will those who partake of the world’s evils forfeit?
- How could partaking of the world’s evils affect someone’s new life in Christ? How could this person’s example affect others?

Summarize Ephesians 5:8–20 by explaining that Paul encouraged the Saints to “walk as children of light” (verse 8), to be wise, and to seek to know the Lord’s will by being “filled with the Spirit” (verse 18).

Ephesians 5:21–6:9

Paul counsels the Ephesians regarding their family relationships

Ask students to think about their interactions with their family members during the past 24 hours and whether those interactions were positive or negative. (For example, were these interactions loving or contentious? kind or hurtful? uplifting or degrading?)

- Why can it sometimes be difficult to have positive family relationships?

Invite students to look for principles as they study Ephesians 5:21–6:9 that can help them strengthen their family relationships.

Invite a student to read Ephesians 5:21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul encouraged the Saints to do.

- What did Paul encourage the Saints to do? (Explain that “submit yourselves one to another” means we should place others ahead of ourselves and that “fear of God” refers to our love and respect for God.)

- In what ways did Jesus Christ exemplify the attribute of submission?
- How can placing others ahead of ourselves help strengthen our family relationships?

Invite a student to read Ephesians 5:22–29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul counseled husbands and wives to do in their relationships with each other.

- What relationship did Paul counsel wives to pattern their relationships with their husbands after? (Explain that Paul taught that a wife should “submit” herself to her husband [verse 22]. This can be interpreted as sustaining, supporting, and respecting her husband as she does the Lord. A husband’s divinely appointed role is to preside or watch over the family, just as the Savior watches over and leads His Church.)
- What did Paul counsel husbands to do in their relationships with their wives?
- How will a husband who loves his wife as the Savior loves the Church treat her? (He will “[give] himself” for her [verse 25], or place her ahead of himself, and “cherish” her [verse 29].)
- What truth can we identify from Paul’s teachings about what can happen in our families if we use the Savior’s relationship with the Church as our guide? (Using their own words, students should identify a principle similar to the following: **When we use the Savior’s relationship with the Church as our guide, we can strengthen our family relationships.**)

Invite a student to read Ephesians 5:30–33 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what husbands and wives become when they are married.

- According to verse 31, what do husbands and wives become when they are married? (They become “one flesh,” or united physically, emotionally, and spiritually.)
- How can following the Savior’s example in their interactions with one another help a married couple (and family) increase love and unity in their relationship?

Invite a student to read Ephesians 6:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how using Jesus Christ’s example as a guide applies to a child’s relationship with his or her parents. Invite students to report what they find.

- How does a child follow Jesus Christ’s example by obeying his or her parents?
- What did Paul counsel fathers to do in regard to raising their children?

Ask students to ponder how their family relationships would be strengthened if they used their relationship with the Savior as their guide. Invite them to choose one relationship they would like to improve and to write down some ways they can improve this relationship by following the Savior’s example. Encourage them to act on what they wrote.

Summarize Ephesians 6:5–9 by explaining that Paul taught about the relationship between a servant and master. In New Testament times, slavery was common throughout the Roman Empire, even among some members of the Church. Paul’s counsel does not imply that he approved of the institution of slavery.

Ephesians 6:10–24

Paul counsels the Saints to “put on the whole armour of God”

Write on the board the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson. (This statement is found in “The Power of the Word,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 79.) Invite a student to read this statement aloud.

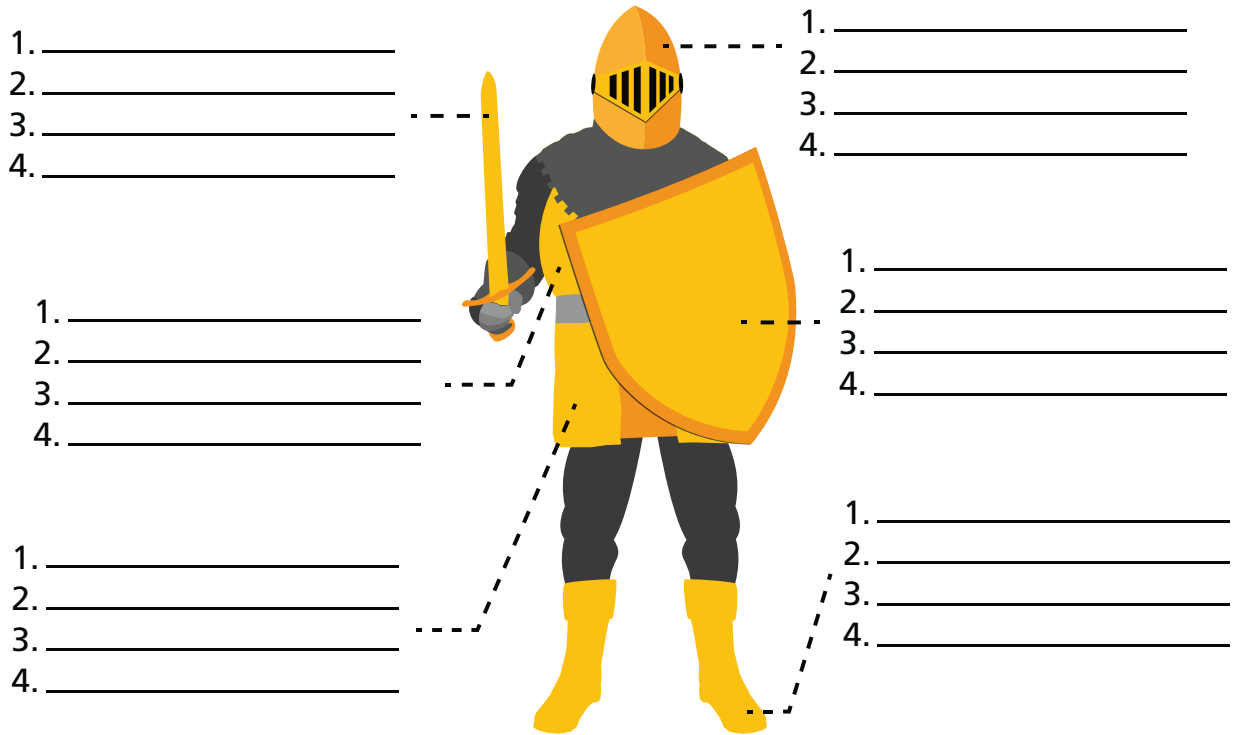
“Satan is waging war against the members of the Church who have testimonies and are trying to keep the commandments” (President Ezra Taft Benson).

- In what ways does Satan wage war against the youth of the Church?

Invite a student to read Ephesians 6:10–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul said the Saints in his day were fighting against. Explain that *wiles* refers to tricks or stratagems that are used to deceive or ensnare.

- What did Paul say the Saints in his day were fighting against?
- How is what Paul listed in verse 12 the same as what we are fighting against in our day?
- What did Paul tell the Saints in his day to put on so that they could withstand these evils? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we put on the whole armor of God, we will be able to withstand evil.**)

Put On the Whole Armor of God



Provide students with the accompanying handout. Divide the class into five groups, and assign each group one of the pieces of armor mentioned in Ephesians 6:14–17. (Do not assign the “loins girt about with truth” [verse 14]. If your class is small you may need to assign some groups more than one piece of armor.)

Write the following questions on the board:

1. *What is the piece of armor used for?*
2. *What did Paul call the piece of armor?*
3. *What could the body part being protected by the armor represent spiritually?*
4. *How can wearing this piece of spiritual armor help you withstand evil?*

To show students how to complete the handout, invite a student to read Ephesians 6:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the answers to the questions on the board as they apply to “loins girt about with truth” and writing the answers on their handouts.

Explain that armor “girt about” the loins is a belt that is tied around the midsection of the body. Students may suggest answers similar to the following: (1) It covers the loins (the vital organs dealing with reproduction). (2) Truth. (3) It represents our chastity or moral purity. (4) Knowing the truthfulness of the plan of salvation can motivate us to remain morally pure.

Invite students to follow this pattern as they read Ephesians 6:14–18 with their groups and complete the parts of the handout that corresponds with their assigned pieces of armor. (Explain that having “your feet shod” [verse 15] means wearing shoes or other foot protection.)

After sufficient time, invite a representative from each group to report what they learned to the class. As each group reports, invite students to record the group’s findings on their handouts.

- Why is it important to protect ourselves with the *whole* armor of God?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and ask students to listen for how we put on and strengthen the armor of God.



“I like to think of this spiritual armor not as a solid piece of metal molded to fit the body but more like chain mail. Chain mail consists of dozens of tiny pieces of steel fastened together to allow the user greater flexibility without losing protection. I say that because it has been my experience that there is not one great and grand thing we can do to arm ourselves spiritually. True spiritual power lies in numerous smaller acts woven together in a fabric of spiritual fortification that protects and shields from all evil” (“Be Strong in the Lord,” *Ensign*, July 2004, 8).

- What do you do to put on and strengthen the armor of God each day? How has this helped you to withstand evil, temptation, or deception?

Write the following questions on the board, and invite students to write down their responses:

Which pieces of your spiritual armor do you consider to be strong?

Which is your weakest piece of armor?

What could you do to strengthen each of these pieces of spiritual armor in your life?

Summarize Ephesians 6:19–24 by explaining that Paul concluded his letter by asking the Saints to pray that he would be given “utterance” (verse 19) and be able to preach the gospel with boldness while in prison.

Share your testimony of the truths students identified in Ephesians 5–6. Encourage students to act on any promptings they may have received during today’s lesson.

Commentary and Background Information

Ephesians 5:25–28; 6:4. “Even as Christ also loved the church”

President Ezra Taft Benson pointed to the Savior’s example as he counseled husbands on how to lead their families:

“We do not find the Savior leading the Church with a harsh or unkind hand. We do not find the Savior treating His Church with disrespect or neglect. We do not find the Savior using force or coercion to accomplish His purposes. Nowhere do we find the Savior doing anything but that which edifies, uplifts, comforts, and exalts the Church” (“To the Fathers in Israel,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 50).

President Spencer W. Kimball taught about the influence a husband can have when he loves his family as the Savior loves the Church:

“Christ loved the church and its people so much that he voluntarily endured persecution for them, suffered humiliating indignities for them, stoically withstood pain and physical abuse for them, and finally gave his precious life for them.

“When the husband is ready to treat his household in that manner, not only the wife but all the family will respond to his leadership” (“Home: The Place to Save Society,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1975, 5).

Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Ephesians 6:11. Video presentation—“The Whole Armor of God”

To help students understand the importance of putting on the whole armor of God, show the video “The Whole

Armor of God” (14:35), which portrays a modern-day application of Paul’s counsel. This video is available on LDS.org.

The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians

Why study this book?

In his Epistle to the Philippians, Paul gave the Saints in Philippi encouragement and exhorted them to stand fast in unity and work together to defend the faith. Perhaps one of the most important principles Paul taught in Philippians is that praying to God and trusting in Him brings “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding” (Philippians 4:7). Studying Paul’s messages of encouragement in this epistle can help students in their efforts to endure to the end faithfully. As students strive to follow Christ, they too can gain confidence and, like Paul, declare, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13).

Who wrote this book?

Although Timothy is mentioned along with Paul in the epistle’s greeting (see Philippians 1:1), Paul wrote the Epistle to the Philippians. This is supported by the use of the singular pronoun *I* throughout the letter and the reference to Timothy in Philippians 2:19. Timothy may have acted as Paul’s scribe, writing the letter under Paul’s direction.

When and where was it written?

Paul likely wrote Philippians sometime between A.D. 60 and 62, while he was imprisoned in Rome (see Philippians 1:7, 13, 17; see also Acts 28:16–31; Guide to the Scriptures, “Philippians,” scriptures.lds.org).

To whom was it written and why?

Philippi was the first place in Europe where Paul formally preached the gospel and established a branch of the Church (see Acts 16:11–40; Bible Dictionary, “Pauline Epistles”). One of Paul’s purposes in writing this letter was to express gratitude for the affection and financial assistance the Saints in Philippi had extended to him during his second missionary journey and his imprisonment in Rome (see Philippians 1:3–11; 4:10–19; see also Bible Dictionary, “Pauline Epistles”).

Paul also praised the members in Philippi for their faith in Jesus Christ and gave them counsel based on information

about them that he had received from a Philippian disciple named Epaphroditus (see Philippians 4:18). Paul’s counsel included encouragement to be humble and united (see Philippians 2:1–18; 4:2–3). Paul also warned the Philippians to beware of corrupt Christians, such as those who taught that circumcision was necessary for conversion. Such individuals (often referred to as Judaizers) falsely claimed that new converts had to submit to the former Old Testament law of circumcision before becoming Christian (see Philippians 3:2–3).

What are some distinctive features of this book?

Philippians is often called a prison Epistle, along with Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon. Despite being written from prison, Paul’s letter to the Philippians has been described by scholars as the happiest of his writings. Paul expressed gratitude, love, and confidence to Church members; described sacrifices he had made to follow Jesus Christ; and instructed the Philippian Saints in principles of righteous living. Students may recognize in Philippians 4:8 some of the language used in the thirteenth article of faith, which was penned by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Paul poetically depicted the Savior’s condescension from premortal divinity to mortal life, where He suffered “death of the cross” (see Philippians 2:3–8). Having fulfilled His divine mission, Jesus Christ now stands exalted, and the day will come when “every knee should bow” before Him and “every tongue . . . confess that Jesus Christ is Lord” (Philippians 2:10–11). Paul revealed that his inner source of confidence and strength came from Jesus Christ (see Philippians 4:13).

Outline

Philippians 1 Paul expresses gratitude for the fellowship of the Philippian Saints. He teaches that the opposition he had experienced in serving the Lord, including his imprisonment, had furthered the gospel cause. He encourages Church members to stand fast in unity in defending the faith.

Philippians 2 Paul further encourages Church members to be united and points to the example of Jesus Christ, who condescended to come into mortality, as an example of love, obedience, and humility. Everyone will one day acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord. Paul instructs Church members to work out their own salvation.

Philippians 3 Paul warns of Judaizers. He describes his earlier life as a Pharisee and how he willingly gave up all to follow Jesus Christ. He exhorts the Saints to follow his example in pressing forward toward salvation. Paul explains that Jesus Christ will change our mortal bodies into glorious bodies like His.

Philippians 4 Paul encourages the Saints to always rejoice in the Lord. He exhorts them to replace their anxiety with prayer and thanksgiving, promising that they will enjoy the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding. Paul admonishes Church members to think on things that are honest, just, true, pure, lovely, of good report, and virtuous. He acknowledges that he can do all things through Jesus Christ, who strengthens him.

Philippians 1–3

Introduction

Paul encouraged the Saints in Philippi to work together in living the gospel. He counseled them to follow the Savior's example of humility and selflessness and taught

that God was working within them to bring about their salvation. Paul described sacrifices he had made to follow Jesus Christ.

Suggestions for Teaching

Philippians 1

Paul describes blessings that come from opposition

Before class, write on the board the following statement by President Brigham Young. (This statement is found in *Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1954], 351.) Replace the underlined words with blank lines:

“Every time you kick ‘Mormonism’ you kick it upstairs; you never kick it downstairs. The Lord Almighty so orders it” (President Brigham Young).

Begin the lesson by asking:

- What are some examples, either from history or from our day, of people kicking, or opposing, the Savior's Church and His followers?

Invite students as they study Philippians 1 to look for a truth that can help them understand how opposition can affect the Lord's work.

Consider inviting students to locate Philippi on Bible Maps, no. 13, “The Missionary Journeys of the Apostle Paul,” which is located in the Bible appendix. Explain that Paul established a branch of the Church in Philippi during his second missionary journey (see Acts 16). He later wrote his epistle to the Philippians while he was imprisoned, likely in Rome. Summarize Philippians 1:1–11 by explaining that Paul expressed gratitude and love for the Philippian Saints.

Invite a student to read Philippians 1:12–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what resulted from the opposition Paul experienced during his missionary efforts.

- According to verse 12, what was the result of the opposition Paul experienced? (“The furtherance [advancement] of the gospel.”)
- According to verses 13–14, how did this opposition help advance the gospel? (People throughout the “palace” [verse 13], or military headquarters, knew that Paul was imprisoned for preaching about Jesus Christ. Paul's imprisonment also inspired other Church members to become bolder in preaching the gospel.)
- What truth can we learn from these verses about what can result when we experience opposition in following Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Opposition we experience in following Jesus Christ can help further His work.**)

Refer to President Young's statement on the board. Ask students what words they would use to fill in the blanks. Fill in the blanks with the correct words. You may need to explain that *upstairs* in this context means forward.

- What are examples of how opposition has helped further the Savior's work?

Summarize Philippians 1:15–26 by explaining that Paul expressed that the Savior would be magnified through whatever happened to Paul.

Invite a student to read Philippians 1:27–30 aloud. Ask this student to also read Joseph Smith Translation, Philippians 1:28 (in Philippians 1:28, footnote *a*). Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Paul encouraged the Saints to do. Explain that *conversation* (verse 27) refers to conduct.

- What did Paul encourage the Saints to do?
- According to verses 29–30, what would Church members experience on behalf of the Savior?

Remind students of the truth they previously identified.

- How do you think the Philippian Saints would have been blessed by remembering that opposition they experienced in following Jesus Christ could help further His work?

Philippians 2

Paul teaches about the Savior's condescension and instructs the Saints concerning their salvation

Invite students to read Philippians 2:2 silently, looking for Paul's counsel to the Philippian Saints.

- How would you summarize Paul's counsel?

Divide students into pairs. Instruct each pair to read Philippians 2:3–8 aloud together, looking for what Paul instructed the Saints to do to become unified. Ask a student from each pair to write on the board one item of counsel they found.

- According to Paul's teachings, how was Jesus Christ an example of humility and selflessness?
- What principle can we learn from Paul's teachings that can help us become more unified? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we follow Jesus Christ's example of humility and selfless concern for others, then we can become more unified.**)
- What are some ways in which we can follow the Savior's example of humility and selflessness in our families, schools, or wards or branches?
- When have you seen people consider others' needs before their own? How did these efforts increase unity?

Explain that as recorded in Philippians 2:9–11, Paul taught that ultimately everyone will bow and "confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" (verse 11). Invite students to ponder what they hope this experience will be like for them.

Invite a student to read Philippians 2:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul counseled the Philippians to do that could enable their experience of bowing before the Lord to be joyful. You may need to explain that "fear and trembling" (verse 12) refers to reverential awe and rejoicing (see Psalm 2:11; Guide to the Scriptures, "Fear," scriptures.lds.org).

Point out that some people misunderstand Paul's words in Philippians 2:12 to mean that we are saved by our own works.

- Who has made salvation possible for us? How?
- According to Philippians 2:13, what are two ways in which God helps those who are trying to do what is required for salvation? (God helps them to "will," or desire, and to obey "his good pleasure," or His commandments. After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **God helps us desire and do what is required of us for salvation, which is made possible through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.**)
- What are the requirements for salvation that God has provided and helps us to fulfill? (You might invite students to refer to the third and fourth articles of faith.)

Point out that through the influence of the Holy Ghost, God can help us change and purify our desires so that we want to obey Him (see Mosiah 5:2). Invite students to ponder how God has helped change their hearts so that they want to obey Him and how He has helped them to more faithfully keep His commandments.

Summarize Philippians 2:14–30 by explaining that Paul reminded the Saints that they "shine as lights in the world" (verse 15) and told them he would send messengers to learn of their well-being.

Philippians 3

Paul describes sacrifices he made to follow Jesus Christ

Invite students to think of something they value that the world would also consider valuable (such as family, friends, education, food, technology, or money) and, if possible, to display an item that represents what they thought of. Ask them to consider what they would be willing to give up these valued possessions for.

Invite students as they study Philippians 3 to look for what Paul gave up in order to gain a prize that is also available to us.

Summarize Philippians 3:1–3 by explaining that Paul warned the Philippians of corrupt teachers who claimed that Church converts should conform to certain Jewish practices, including circumcision (see *New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 436).

Invite a student to read Philippians 3:4–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul said about his Jewish heritage.

- What social and religious advantages in Jewish society did Paul once possess? (His Israelite pedigree, position as a Pharisee, zeal for Judaism, and strict obedience to the law.)

Invite a student to read Philippians 3:7–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul viewed the advantages he once had in Jewish society.

- How did Paul view what he had given up to follow Jesus Christ?
- Why was Paul willing to “[suffer] the loss of all things”? (verse 8). (So he could know Jesus Christ; “be found in him” [verse 9], or be in a faithful covenant relationship with Him; be justified through faith in Him; suffer for His sake; and be part of the Resurrection of the “just,” or the righteous [Joseph Smith Translation, Philippians 3:11 (in Philippians 3:11, footnote a)].)

Invite a student to read Philippians 3:12–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul recognized about his spiritual progression. Explain that *apprehend* means to obtain.

- Rather than focusing on what he had left behind, what was Paul pressing forward to obtain? (Explain that “the prize of the high calling of God” [verse 14] is eternal life.)
- What principle can we learn from Paul’s example about what we must do to come to know Jesus Christ and obtain eternal life? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we give up all that is necessary to follow Jesus Christ and press forward in faith, we can come to know Him and obtain eternal life.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following account by President Gordon B. Hinckley, which tells of his meeting a naval officer who had come from another nation to the United States for advanced training and who had joined the Church during his stay. Ask the class to listen for what the young man was willing to give up to follow Jesus Christ.



“He was introduced to me just before he was to return to his native land. . . . I said: ‘Your people are not Christians. What will happen when you return home a Christian, and, more particularly, a Mormon Christian?’

“His face clouded, and he replied, ‘My family will be disappointed. They may cast me out and regard me as dead. As for my future and my career, all opportunity may be foreclosed against me.’

“I asked, ‘Are you willing to pay so great a price for the gospel?’

“His dark eyes, moistened by tears, shone from his handsome brown face as he answered, ‘It’s true, isn’t it?’

“Ashamed at having asked the question, I responded, ‘Yes, it’s true.’

“To which he replied, ‘Then what else matters?’” (“It’s True, Isn’t It?” *Ensign*, July 1993, 2).

- What was this young man willing to give up to follow the Savior?
- What have you (or someone you know) given up to follow the Savior?
- Why are the prizes of knowing Jesus Christ and progressing toward eternal life worth the sacrifices you have made?

Ask students to ponder whether there is something they need to give up to more fully follow Jesus Christ. Invite them to write down a goal to do so.

Summarize Philippians 3:15–21 by explaining that Paul warned of the destruction awaiting those who focus solely on earthly pleasures. He also taught that Jesus Christ will change our imperfect physical bodies into immortal bodies like His.

Conclude by testifying of the truths identified in this lesson.

Do not be afraid of silence

When students are asked an effective question, they may not immediately respond. As long as it does not go on too long, this silence should not trouble you. At times, students need an opportunity to reflect on what they have been asked and how they might respond. Such reflection can facilitate instruction by the Holy Ghost.

Philippians 4

Introduction

Paul instructed the Saints in Philippi to be prayerful and to seek whatsoever is righteous. He also declared his confidence in the enabling strength of Jesus Christ. Paul

concluded his epistle with another expression of thanks to the Philippian Saints for the support they gave him in his times of need.

Suggestions for Teaching

Philippians 4:1–14

Paul instructs the Saints in Philippi to be prayerful and to seek whatsoever is righteous

Before class, write each of the following statements on separate pieces of paper, and give each of the papers to different students:

“I am worried about passing an upcoming test.”

“I am worried about a family member who is sick.”

“I am worried about standing up for my beliefs.”

“I am worried about whether I can be a successful missionary.”

Begin the lesson by writing the word *worry* on the board. Point out that throughout our lives, we will experience challenges or circumstances that may lead us to worry. Invite the students who have the papers to stand and read their statements one at a time. Ask the class to think about times they have had similar worries.

- What are other worries we might experience due to challenges or difficult circumstances?

Ask students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals about a challenge that they or someone they know is worried about. Invite students to look for a truth as they study Philippians 4 that can help them when they worry.

Remind students that in Paul’s epistle to Church members in Philippi, he commended the Church members’ faithfulness (see Philippians 2:12) and taught them about the eternal rewards that are available to those who sacrifice for and are faithful to Jesus Christ. Summarize Philippians 4:1–5 by explaining that Paul counseled the Saints to stand firm in faithfulness to the Lord, rejoice in the Lord, and let their gentleness (see verse 5, footnote *a*) be evident to others.

Invite a student to read the first phrase of Philippians 4:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Paul’s counsel to the Saints. Refer students to verse 6, footnote *a* to help them understand that the phrase “be careful for nothing” means to not be overly concerned about anything.

Write the following phrase on the board: *As faithful followers of Jesus Christ, if . . .*

Invite a student to read the remainder of Philippians 4:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul counseled the Saints to do instead of worry. You might explain that *supplication* is a humble, earnest request.

- How would you summarize Paul’s instructions in verse 6? (Write students’ responses on the board as an “if” statement similar to the following: *As faithful followers of Jesus Christ, if we pray with supplication and thanksgiving, . . .*)

Add the word *then* to the statement on the board. Invite a student to read Philippians 4:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the blessing Paul promised for praying with supplication and thanksgiving. Explain that the word *keep* in this verse means guard (see verse 7, footnote *c*).

- How would you summarize the blessing Paul promised? (Write students’ responses on the board after *then*. Students should have identified a principle similar to the following: **As faithful followers of Jesus Christ, if we pray with supplication and thanksgiving, then God will bless us with His peace.**)

- When we worry, how can expressing gratitude in our prayers help bring us peace?
- What does God’s peace guard our hearts and minds from?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for additional ways God’s peace can help us:



“Because He respects your agency, Father in Heaven will never force you to pray to Him. But as you exercise that agency and include Him in every aspect of your daily life, your heart will begin to fill with peace, buoyant peace. That peace will focus an eternal light on your struggles. It will help you to manage those challenges from an eternal perspective” (“Make the Exercise of Faith Your First Priority,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 93).

- According to Elder Scott, how can God’s peace help us with challenges we experience?
- When have you prayed with supplication and thanksgiving in a time of worry and been blessed with God’s peace?

Ask students to refer to the worry they wrote about earlier in the lesson. Encourage them to pray with supplication and thanksgiving instead of worrying. If students wrote about someone else’s worry, encourage them to share this principle with that person.

To prepare students to identify an additional principle that Paul taught the Philippian Saints, divide the class in thirds. Assign a third of the class to think about their favorite food item, another third of the class to think about a humorous image or story, and the remaining third to think about an image of or experience in the temple. Invite students to focus their minds on this thought for 30 seconds.

- What effect, if any, did focusing on this thought have on you?

Point out that what we think about can influence our desires and behaviors. Invite a student to read Philippians 4:8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul admonished the Philippian Saints to think on and do. You might explain that “think on” means to give careful, continuing thought.

Invite students to consider marking each type of thing that Paul instructed the Saints to focus their thoughts on.

- In addition to thinking on these things, what did Paul counsel Church members to do?
- What blessing did Paul promise the Saints if they would follow his teachings and example?
- What principle can we learn from what Paul taught the faithful Saints in Philippians 4:8–9? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If faithful Saints focus their thoughts on whatsoever is righteous and if they follow apostles and prophets, then the God of peace will be with them.**)
- How can focusing our thoughts on whatsoever is righteous influence our desires and behaviors?

Ask the class to turn to the Articles of Faith in the Pearl of Great Price. Invite a student to read aloud the thirteenth article of faith. Ask the class to follow along, looking for similarities with Philippians 4:8.

- What similarities do you notice between these two verses?

Point out that when the Prophet Joseph Smith cited this “admonition of Paul” from Philippians 4:8 in the thirteenth article of faith, he changed “think on these things” to the more active “we seek after these things.”

- Why do you think it is important for us to seek after things that are honest, true, chaste (or pure), virtuous, lovely, and praiseworthy?
- How would seeking after such things help us focus our thoughts on such things?

Divide students into groups of three or four. Give each group a copy of *For the Strength of Youth* (booklet, 2011) and the following handout. Assign each group two of the following topics from *For the Strength of Youth*: “Dating,” “Dress and Appearance,” “Education,” “Entertainment and Media,” “Friends,” “Language,” and “Music and Dancing.” (Adjust the size of groups and the number of topics depending on the size of the class.) Instruct students to follow the directions on the handout.

Philippians 4:8–9

Write your assigned topics here:

For each of these topics, discuss the following questions:

- How can we use Paul's instruction in Philippians 4:8–9 to guide our choices relative to this topic?
- As we strive to follow Paul's instruction, what challenges might we encounter relative to this topic?

Then discuss the following question:

- Why is having the God of peace with us worth the effort of seeking righteous things and following the apostles and prophets?

After sufficient time, invite a student from each group to report to the class what his or her group discussed for each question.

- As you have focused your thoughts on righteous things, how has the God of peace shown He was with you?

Encourage students to write in their scripture study journals or class notebooks one way they can improve their efforts to focus their thoughts on righteous things and follow God's apostles and prophets.

Summarize Philippians 4:10 by explaining that Paul thanked the Philippian Saints for the support and care they had offered him during his trials.

Invite a student to read Philippians 4:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul told the Saints he had learned.

- What had Paul learned to do in all circumstances?

Invite a student to read Philippians 4:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who the source of Paul's strength was.

- Who did Paul say was the source of his strength?

Explain that Paul's statement in verse 13 pertains to his ability, in the strength provided by Jesus Christ, to do all things that were pleasing to or required by God, including being content in any circumstance.

- What truth can we learn from verse 13? (Using their own words, students should identify the following truth: **We can do all things through Jesus Christ, who gives us strength** [see also Alma 26:12].)
- What can we do to access the strength that Jesus Christ provides?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency. Ask the class to listen for what this strength can enable us to do:

"God pours out blessings of power and strength, enabling us to achieve things that otherwise would be far beyond our reach. It is by God's amazing grace that His children can overcome the undercurrents and quicksands of the deceiver, rise above sin, and 'be perfect[ed] in Christ' [Moroni 10:32]" ("The Gift of Grace," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 108).

- In what ways might we experience this strength or grace? (Possible answers include increased resilience; resolve; courage; patience; perseverance; and physical, mental, or spiritual stamina and power.)
- When has Jesus Christ given you strength to do something good? (Consider sharing a personal experience as well.)

Philippians 4:15–23

Paul closes his epistle to the Philippians with an expression of thanks

Summarize Philippians 4:15–23 by explaining that Paul again thanked the Philippian Saints for supporting him in his times of need. The Saints' gifts were a pleasing offering to God, and Paul promised that God would meet their needs as well.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths discussed in this lesson.

Scripture Mastery—Philippians 4:13

Help students memorize Philippians 4:13 by writing the verse on the board and saying it aloud together. Erase one word and say the verse aloud again. Repeat this until all the words have been erased.

Philippians 4:13

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

Home-Study Lesson

Ephesians 2–Philippians 4 (Unit 25)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles your students learned as they studied Ephesians 2–Philippians 4 (unit 25) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Ephesians 2–3)

The Apostle Paul continued his address to the Church members in Ephesus by teaching them that because of the grace of Jesus Christ, all mankind can be saved through faith in Him and that as we come unto Jesus Christ and partake of His grace, we become unified with the Saints of God. Paul also taught that the Lord’s Church is founded on apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone, and that apostles and prophets seek to help God’s children know and feel the love of Jesus Christ.

Day 2 (Ephesians 4–6)

Through Paul’s continued teachings concerning the organization of the Church, students learned that the Lord has called apostles, prophets, and other Church leaders to help perfect the Saints and protect them from false doctrine. Paul also taught the Saints that disciples of Jesus Christ put off their old, sinful ways and put on new, righteous ways.

Day 3 (Philippians 1–3)

From Paul’s letter to the Saints in Philippi, students learned that opposition we experience in following Jesus Christ can help further His work and that if we follow Jesus Christ’s example of humility and selfless concern for others, then we can become more unified. Paul also taught that God helps us desire and do what is required of us for salvation, which is made possible through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and if we give up all that is necessary to follow Jesus Christ and press forward in faith, we can come to know Him and obtain eternal life.

Day 4 (Philippians 4)

As they continued their study of Paul’s epistle to the Saints in Philippi, students discovered that as faithful followers of Jesus Christ, if we pray with supplication and thanksgiving, then God will bless us with His peace, and if faithful Saints focus their thoughts on whatsoever is righteous and if they follow the apostles and prophets, then the God of peace will be with them. Paul concluded his epistle by teaching that we can do all things through Jesus Christ, who gives us strength.

Introduction

After teaching the Saints in Ephesus that they should put off their old selves and put on the new person as a follower of Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul taught them that they should also put on the whole armor of God.

Suggestions for Teaching

Ephesians 6:10–24

Paul counsels the Saints to “put on the whole armour of God”

Write on the board the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson. (This statement is found in “The Power of the Word,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 79.) Invite a student to read this statement aloud.

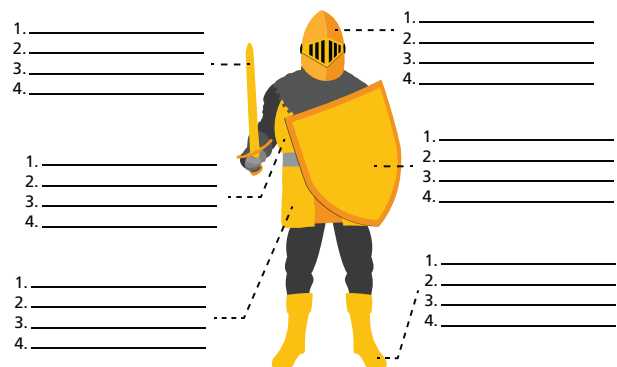
“Satan is waging war against the members of the Church who have testimonies and are trying to keep the commandments” (President Ezra Taft Benson).

- In what ways does Satan wage war against the youth of the Church?

Invite a student to read Ephesians 6:10–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul said the Saints in his day were fighting against. Explain that *wiles* refers to tricks or stratagems that are used to deceive or ensnare.

- What did Paul say the Saints in his day were fighting against?
- How is what Paul listed in verse 12 the same as what we are fighting against in our day?
- What did Paul tell the Saints in his day to put on so that they could withstand these evils? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we put on the whole armor of God, we will be able to withstand evil.**)

Put On the Whole Armor of God



Provide students with the accompanying handout. Divide the class into five groups, and assign each group one of the pieces of armor mentioned in Ephesians 6:14–17. (Do not assign the

“loins girt about with truth” [verse 14]. If your class is small you may need to assign some groups more than one piece of armor.)

Write the following questions on the board:

1. *What is the piece of armor used for?*
2. *What did Paul call the piece of armor?*
3. *What could the body part being protected by the armor represent spiritually?*
4. *How can wearing this piece of spiritual armor help you withstand evil?*

To show students how to complete the handout, invite a student to read Ephesians 6:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the answers to the questions on the board as they apply to “loins girt about with truth” and then writing the answers on their handouts.

Explain that armor “girt about” the loins is a belt that is tied around the midsection of the body. Then invite several students to report their answers to the class. Students may suggest answers similar to the following: (1) It is used to cover the loins (the vital organs dealing with reproduction). (2) Paul called it “truth.” (3) It represents our chastity or moral purity. (4) Knowing the truthfulness of the plan of salvation can protect us from being deceived and help us to remain morally pure.

Invite students to follow this pattern as they read Ephesians 6:14–18 with their groups and complete the part of the handout that corresponds with their assigned pieces of armor. (Explain that having “your feet shod” [verse 15] means wearing shoes or other foot protection.)

After sufficient time, invite a representative from each group to report what they learned to the class. As each group reports, invite students to record the group’s findings on their handouts.

- Why is it important to protect ourselves with the *whole* armor of God?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for how we put on and strengthen the armor of God.



“How do we put on the whole armor of God so that we may, as Paul promises, ‘be able to withstand in the evil day’?”

“I like to think of this spiritual armor not as a solid piece of metal molded to fit the body but more like chain mail. Chain mail consists of dozens of tiny pieces of steel fastened together to allow the user greater flexibility without losing protection. I say that because it has

been my experience that there is not one great and grand thing we can do to arm ourselves spiritually. True spiritual power lies in numerous smaller acts woven together in a fabric of spiritual fortification that protects and shields from all evil” (“Be Strong in the Lord,” *Ensign*, July 2004, 8).

- What do you do to put on and strengthen the armor of God each day?
- How has this helped you to withstand evil, temptation, or deception?

Write the following questions on the board. Invite students to answer these questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

Which pieces of your spiritual armor do you consider to be strong?

Which is your weakest piece of armor?

What could you do to strengthen each of these pieces of spiritual armor in your life?

Summarize Ephesians 6:19–24 by explaining that Paul concluded his letter by asking the Saints to pray that he would be given “utterance” (verse 19) and be able to preach the gospel with boldness while in prison.

Share your testimony of the truths identified in today’s lesson, and encourage students to act on any promptings they may have received.

Next Unit (Colossians–1 Timothy)

Invite students to look for answers to the following questions as they continue to study Paul’s writings during the coming week: What did Paul say about the love of money? How can we avoid being deceived by false traditions? According to Paul, what must take place before the Second Coming? How will we know it has occurred?

The Epistle of Paul to the Colossians

Why study this book?

Paul wrote his Epistle to the Colossians because of a report that they were falling into serious error (see Bible Dictionary, “Pauline Epistles”). False teachings and practices in Colossae were influencing the Saints there and threatening their faith. Similar cultural pressures pose challenges for Church members today. Part of this epistle’s value lies in how it identifies and exposes falsehoods while emphasizing Jesus Christ’s divinity and saving work. By studying the book of Colossians, students can deepen their conversion to the Savior and receive protection from deception and sin.

Who wrote this book?

The Epistle to the Colossians was sent by Paul and Timothy (see Colossians 1:1, 23; 4:18). Paul apparently handwrote his own salutation at the close of the epistle (see Colossians 4:18), indicating that a scribe, perhaps Timothy, had assisted him in writing the body of the letter.

When and where was it written?

Paul wrote this epistle during his first imprisonment in Rome, around A.D. 60–62 (see Guide to the Scriptures, “Pauline Epistles,” scriptures.lds.org). Paul probably wrote the Epistle to the Colossians around the same time he wrote Philippians, Ephesians, and Philemon.

To whom was it written and why?

This epistle was written to the faithful Saints in Colossae, a site in modern-day Turkey. Paul instructed the Colossian Saints to share the letter with the members of the Church in nearby Laodicea (see Colossians 4:16).

Paul wrote this epistle “after he was visited by Epaphras, the evangelist of the Church in [Colossae] [see Colossians 1:7–8]. Epaphras told Paul that the Colossians were falling into serious error—they thought they were better than other people because they carefully observed certain external ordinances [see Colossians 2:16], denied themselves certain physical wants, and worshiped angels [see Colossians 2:18]. These practices

made the Colossians feel they were being sanctified. They also felt they understood the mysteries of the universe better than other Church members. In his letter, Paul corrected them by teaching that redemption comes only through Christ and that we are to be wise and serve Him” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Colossians, Epistle to,” scriptures.lds.org).

What are some distinctive features of this book?

In the Epistle to the Colossians, Paul countered the false teachings in Colossae by emphasizing the divinity, saving mission, and preeminence of Jesus Christ (see Colossians 1:15–23). He taught that Christ is the very image of God the Father, the Creator, the Head of the Church, the first to be resurrected, and the Redeemer. He is “the head of all principality and power” (Colossians 2:10), and He fulfills His divine mission under the direction of the Father (see Colossians 1:19; 3:1).

Paul warned against those who taught that true spirituality was gained through special rituals, festivals, and diets (see Colossians 2:16–18, 20, 23). He taught instead that spiritual maturity and knowledge of God are manifest through setting our “affection on things above” (Colossians 3:2), eliminating unrighteous acts (see Colossians 3:5–9), and developing Christlike attributes (see Colossians 3:12–17). Paul counseled his readers to become “grounded and settled” in the gospel (Colossians 1:23) as well as “rooted and built up in [Jesus Christ], and established in the faith” (Colossians 2:7).

Outline

Colossians 1:1–23 Paul greets the Saints in Colossae and declares that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer, the Firstborn among all creation, the Creator, and the Lord of all divine perfection, in whom is the reconciliation of the universe. Paul exhorts the Saints to establish their faith in Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:24–2:23 Paul warns against believing any false philosophy or tradition of men, including worshipping angels and going to extremes in denying oneself basic physical needs as a form of spiritual discipline.

Colossians 3:1–4:18 Paul exhorts the Saints to set their hearts on things which are above, to abandon the sins of their former lives, and to be merciful to one another. He gives instruction about how Saints should worship and then gives counsel to wives, husbands, children, parents, servants, and masters. He closes the Epistle to the Colossians with commendations, greetings, and final instructions and blessings.

Colossians

Introduction

Paul taught of Jesus Christ's preeminence (superiority, greatness, or excellence) and warned against false doctrine. He encouraged the Colossian Saints to set their

affections on heavenly things and develop the characteristics of Christ. Paul also instructed them to be gracious and wise in their interactions with others.

Using the board

Effective use of a chalkboard or whiteboard during a lesson can prepare students to learn and can invite meaningful participation, especially for those who learn visually. On a board, a teacher can outline the major points or principles of the lesson, diagram a doctrine, draw maps, develop flow charts, display or draw pictures of things found in the scriptures, and do a multitude of other activities that will enhance learning.



Suggestions for Teaching

Colossians 1–2

Paul teaches of Jesus Christ's preeminence and warns against false doctrine

Draw the accompanying picture on the board.

- If a severe windstorm came, which of these trees would be more likely to fall? Why?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for the whirlwinds we need to beware of.

“More concerning than the prophesied earthquakes and wars [of the last days] are the spiritual whirlwinds that can uproot you from your spiritual foundations and land your spirit in places you never imagined possible, sometimes with your barely noticing that you have been moved” (“Spiritual Whirlwinds,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 18).

- What are some examples of spiritual whirlwinds that can uproot or separate us from our faith in Jesus Christ? (You may want to invite students to list their answers on the board near the drawing of the whirlwind.)
- Why can these spiritual whirlwinds be more troubling than physical challenges, such as earthquakes or wars?

Invite students to ponder what spiritual whirlwinds might be affecting them.

Explain that Paul wrote an epistle to the Church members in Colossae (referred to as Colossians) after learning about influences and false teachings there that threatened to uproot them from their faith in Jesus Christ. (You may want to invite students to locate Laodicea, which is a short distance west of Colossae, on Bible Maps, no. 13, “The Missionary Journeys of the Apostle Paul.”) Invite students to look as they study Colossians for how Paul sought to strengthen the Church members’ faith in Christ and for the blessings of having deeply rooted faith in Christ.

Summarize Colossians 1:1–11 by explaining that after greeting the Saints in Colossae, Paul acknowledged their faithfulness and explained that the gospel brings forth fruit, or blessings, in the lives of those who accept and live it. Paul then taught them about Jesus Christ.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Colossians 1:12–19. Ask the class to follow along, looking for truths Paul taught about Jesus Christ. (You may want to explain that the word “invisible” in verse 15 is translated from the Greek word *aoratos*, which can also mean “unseen.” Note that Hebrews 11:27 indicates that Moses saw “him who is invisible,” meaning usually unseen [see also D&C 67:11].)

- What did Paul teach about Jesus Christ? (Using students’ words, write the following truth on the board under the tree with deep roots: **Jesus Christ is the Redeemer, the firstborn of Heavenly Father’s spirit children, the Creator of all things, the head of the Church, and the first to be resurrected.**)
- Why do you think it is important for us to know and believe these truths about Jesus Christ? How can knowing and believing these truths strengthen our faith in Him?

Refer to the word *Redeemer* in the statement on the board, and explain that Paul reminded the Colossian Saints why they needed a Redeemer.

Invite a student to read Colossians 1:20–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught the Colossian Saints about their need for a Redeemer.

- According to verse 21, how does someone become alienated or separated from God?
- What is the meaning of the word *reconcile* in verse 20? (To bring into agreement or harmony.)
- According to verses 20 and 22, how did Jesus Christ reconcile us to God? (Explain that the phrase “made peace through the blood of his cross” refers to the Atonement of Jesus Christ.)

Explain that the blessing of being reconciled to God is conditional. Write the following phrase on the board: *We can be reconciled to God through the Atonement of Jesus Christ if . . .*

Invite a student to read Colossians 1:23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what is required to be reconciled to God.

- What is required on our part to be reconciled to God?
- What does it mean for us to “continue in the faith grounded and settled”? (To remain steadfast in our faith in Jesus Christ.)
- Based on what we learn from verse 23, how would you complete the statement on the board? (Using students’ words, complete the principle on the board as follows: **We can be reconciled to God through the Atonement of Jesus Christ if we continue to be grounded and settled in our faith.**)

Direct students’ attention to the drawing on the board, and ask:

- Whom do you know who is like the tree with deep roots—grounded and settled in his or her faith in Christ?
- How is his or her example a blessing to you?

Invite students to read Colossians 2:4, 8 silently, looking for the spiritual whirlwinds that were threatening to uproot the Colossian Saints.

- What were the spiritual whirlwinds that threatened to uproot the Colossian Saints? (Explain that there were several philosophies and traditions being taught by some who were trying to diminish the importance of Jesus Christ.)
- Why would believing false teachings, including teachings that diminish the importance of Jesus Christ, make it easy for someone to be spiritually uprooted?

Invite a student to read Colossians 2:5–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for counsel Paul gave to help the Saints avoid being led astray by worldly philosophies and traditions.

- What does Colossians 2:5–7 teach that can help us avoid being led astray by false worldly philosophies, religious teachings, or traditions? (Students may use their own words to identify a principle similar to the following: **By being rooted and built up in Jesus Christ, we can avoid being led astray by worldly philosophies and traditions.**)

Write the following questions on the board:

What do you believe is one of the most important things we can do to be rooted and built up in Jesus Christ? Why do you believe that one thing is so important?

Divide students into groups of three or four. Invite each student to explain his or her answers to the questions on the board to group members. After sufficient time, ask a few students to report what they learned from group members.

Invite students to review the personal spiritual whirlwinds they pondered at the beginning of class. Invite them to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they will do to remain rooted and built up in Jesus Christ and to avoid being uprooted by spiritual whirlwinds.

Colossians 3–4

Paul encourages the Colossians to set their affections on heavenly things and be wise

Summarize Colossians 3–4 by explaining that Paul exhorted the Colossian Saints to cease from unrighteousness and develop the characteristics of Jesus Christ. He also encouraged them to be prayerful and wise, especially in their interactions with non-Christians. He then relayed the greetings of several of his fellow servants, including Luke.

Share your testimony of the truths discussed in this lesson.

INTRODUCTION TO

The First Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians

Why study this book?

The First Epistle to the Thessalonians is believed to be the earliest of Paul's existing epistles and may be the oldest book in the New Testament. Paul's teachings in this epistle are primarily focused on the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, including the hardships that followers of Jesus Christ will face before His return (see 1 Thessalonians 3:3), the Resurrection of Christians at the Second Coming (see 1 Thessalonians 4:13–14), and the timing of Christ's Second Coming (see 1 Thessalonians 5:1–2). Through their study of this book, students will learn about the Second Coming and receive encouragement to remain faithful to the Lord.

Who wrote this book?

Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians (see 1 Thessalonians 1:1; see also 2:18).

When and where was it written?

"Paul wrote the epistles to the Thessalonians from Corinth during his second missionary journey," around A.D. 50–51 (Guide to the Scriptures, "Pauline Epistles," scriptures.lds.org).

To whom was it written and why?

Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians to the members of the Church in Thessalonica. Thessalonica was the most populous and prosperous city in the ancient Greek kingdom of Macedonia because of two important features: the city was built on the best natural harbor in the Aegean Sea, and it was located on the major highway that connected Rome and Asia.

During Paul's second missionary journey, the Spirit directed Paul and his companions—Silas, Timothy, and Luke—to travel across the Aegean Sea into Macedonia (see Acts 16:6–12). This initiated the preaching of the gospel in Europe. After preaching in Philippi (see Acts 16:12–40), Paul and Silas traveled to Thessalonica.

Paul labored with Silas in Thessalonica, but they were forced out of the city by Jewish leaders (see Acts 17:1–9). Later, Timothy reported to Paul that the Thessalonian Saints had remained faithful despite persecution and that their righteous

influence was spreading (see Acts 18:5; 1 Thessalonians 1:7–8; 3:6–8).

The Thessalonian converts were some of the first Europeans to embrace the gospel, and they faced persecution as a result. They also had many questions about the Second Coming. Therefore, in his letter to the Thessalonians, Paul wrote words of encouragement and strength and addressed their questions about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

What are some distinctive features of this book?

One of Paul's main themes in his First Epistle to the Thessalonians is the Second Coming. He focused on the participation of the righteous in the events of the Second Coming, especially Saints who had died previously (see 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 3:13; 4:13–17; 5:1–10). Unlike many of Paul's other epistles, 1 Thessalonians does not contain any major rebukes but instead offers praise and commendation for the Thessalonian Saints.

Outline

1 Thessalonians 1–3 Paul expresses great appreciation for the Saints in Thessalonica. He reminds his readers of his kindly ministry among them and expresses joy for their faithfulness. He encourages the Saints to grow in love toward one another and toward all men.

1 Thessalonians 4–5 Paul tells the Saints to be holy and to sanctify themselves. He explains that when the Lord comes again, Saints who have been faithful in their testimony of Christ, both those who have died and those who are still alive, will rise and meet the Lord. The Apostle reminds Church members to prepare and watch for the day of Christ's coming.

LESSON 127

1 Thessalonians 1–2

Introduction

Paul wrote to the Thessalonian Saints after learning that they had been faithful to the gospel amidst persecution. He praised them for their faithfulness and willingness to

teach the gospel. Paul described the reason he preached to the Thessalonian Saints.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Thessalonians 1

Paul praises the Thessalonian Saints for their faithfulness in affliction

Invite students to share positive experiences they have had while trying to share the gospel with others.

- What are some challenges we might experience as we try to share the gospel?

Invite students to look for truths as they study 1 Thessalonians 1–2 that can help them in their efforts to share the gospel.

Invite students to locate Thessalonica on Bible Maps, no. 13, “The Missionary Journeys of the Apostle Paul,” located in the Bible appendix. Ask a student to read aloud the following description of the Saints in Thessalonica:

The Saints in Thessalonica were some of the earliest European converts to the Church. Paul, Silas, and Timothy had first preached there during Paul’s second missionary journey but were driven out of the city by some of the Jewish leaders (see Acts 17:5–15). The Thessalonian Saints continued to be persecuted even after Paul and his companions left. Paul later wrote his epistle to the Saints to encourage them as they faced persecution.

Invite a student to read 1 Thessalonians 1:2–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why Paul rejoiced over the Saints in Thessalonica.

- Why did Paul rejoice over the Saints in Thessalonica?

Invite a student to read 1 Thessalonians 1:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul had preached the gospel to the Thessalonians during his previous visit.

- According to verse 5, how had Paul preached the gospel to the Thessalonians? (With words and with the power of God.)

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite the class to listen for what the word and power of the gospel refer to.



“The true gospel consists of two things: The Word, and The Power. Anyone can have the word; the books in which it is written are universally available. But the power must come from God; it is and must be dispensed according to his mind and his will to those who abide the law entitling them to receive it.

“The word of the gospel is the spoken or written account of what men must do to be saved. . . .

“But actual salvation comes only when the power of God is received and used; and this power is the power of the priesthood and the power of the Holy Ghost” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 3:42–43).

- According to Elder McConkie, what does the word of the gospel refer to? What does the power of the gospel refer to?
- According to verse 6, what did the Thessalonians do after they had been taught the gospel by the word and power of God? (They became followers of the Lord and His servants.)

- How would you summarize Paul’s teachings in verses 5–6 as a principle? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **As we teach the gospel of Jesus Christ by the word and power of God, we can help others become followers of the Lord and His servants.**)
- What can we do to prepare ourselves to teach the gospel by the word and power of God? Invite a student to read 1 Thessalonians 1:7–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else the Thessalonian Saints did after they had received the gospel.
- What else did the Thessalonian Saints do after they had received the gospel? How did their example affect other believers around them?
- What truth can we learn from these verses about how we can share the gospel? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **We can share the gospel through our example.**)

To help students understand this truth, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:



“The most effective way to preach the gospel is through example. If we live according to our beliefs, people will notice. If the countenance of Jesus Christ shines in our lives [see Alma 5:14], if we are joyful and at peace with the world, people will want to know why. One of the greatest sermons ever pronounced on missionary work is this simple thought attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi: ‘Preach the gospel at all times and if necessary, use words’ [in William Fay and Linda Evans Shepherd, *Share Jesus without Fear* (1999), 22]” (“Waiting on the Road to Damascus,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 77).

- How can being an example be a more effective way to share the gospel than only speaking about the gospel?
- How has someone’s example helped you to either accept the gospel or more fully live the gospel?

Rephrase the question

Sometimes students might struggle to answer a question because they do not understand what it is asking. You may need to rephrase the question or ask students if they understand what was asked. Avoid asking a series of questions in succession without giving students adequate time to think deeply enough to formulate appropriate responses.

1 Thessalonians 2

Paul describes how he and his companions ministered to the Thessalonians

Explain that after Paul praised the Thessalonian Saints for their righteous example, he reminded them of his love for them and of the example he had set when he had previously preached the gospel to them.

Write the following scripture reference and question on the board:

1 Thessalonians 2:1–13

- *What words or phrases describe the righteous example Paul and his companions set for the Thessalonians?*

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Thessalonians 2:1–13 while the class follows along. Or, instead of inviting students to read aloud, you could invite them to search these verses in small groups, in pairs, or individually. Ask students to look for words or phrases that describe the righteous example Paul and his companions set for the Thessalonians. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

After sufficient time, invite students to come to the board to list one or two words or phrases they discovered. Ask them to explain how those words or phrases can guide our efforts to set a righteous example for others.

Summarize 1 Thessalonians 2:14–18 by explaining that Paul said the Saints in Thessalonica were being persecuted for accepting the gospel. He told the Saints that he had tried to visit them again but had been “hindered” by the adversary (verse 18).

Invite a student to read 1 Thessalonians 2:19–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul described as his “hope, or joy, or . . . rejoicing” (verse 19).

- What did Paul describe as his “hope, or joy, or . . . rejoicing”?
- How might Paul’s hope, joy, and rejoicing reflect Heavenly Father’s hope, joy, and rejoicing for us?

Conclude by testifying of the truths identified in this lesson. Invite students to ponder how they can share the gospel both by speaking about it and by setting a righteous example. Encourage them to act on the promptings they receive.

LESSON 128

1 Thessalonians 3–5

Introduction

The Apostle Paul desired to strengthen the faith of Thessalonian Church members. He taught them about the Resurrection of the dead at the Second Coming of

Jesus Christ and taught them how to prepare for the Second Coming.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Thessalonians 3–4:12

Paul desires to strengthen the faith of Thessalonian Church members

Provide students with a copy of the following true–false quiz concerning the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, and ask them to select the answer *true* or *false* next to each question:

1 Thessalonians 3–5

- T / F 1. The faithful Saints who die before the Second Coming will not be resurrected until the end of the Millennium.
- T / F 2. The faithful Saints who are alive at the Second Coming will be caught up to meet Christ when He comes.
- T / F 3. The Second Coming will surprise everyone as a thief in the night.

Explain that you will not provide answers to the quiz at this point but that students can discover the correct answers during today’s lesson. Invite students to look for truths about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ as they study 1 Thessalonians 3–5.

Remind students that after preaching the gospel for a short time in Thessalonica, Paul, Silas, and Timothy were forced out of the city by Jewish leaders (see Acts 17:5–15). Later, Paul sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to check on new converts and strengthen their faith. In 1 Thessalonians 3:1–7, we learn that Timothy reported to Paul that the Saints had remained faithful despite experiencing persecution. Timothy also likely reported that the Saints had many questions about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Paul wrote his epistle to the Thessalonian Saints to answer their questions.

Invite a student to read 1 Thessalonians 3:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul said he prayed for during his absence from the Thessalonian Saints.

- What did Paul say he prayed for during his absence?
- What does the phrase “perfect that which is lacking in your faith” in verse 10 mean? (Paul desired to strengthen the faith of Church members in Thessalonica.)

Explain that one way Paul sought to strengthen the faith of Thessalonian Church members was to help them better understand how to prepare for the Second Coming. Invite a student to read 1 Thessalonians 3:11–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul hoped the Lord would do for the Saints to prepare them for His Second Coming.

- What did Paul hope the Lord would do to prepare the Saints for His Second Coming?

Invite a student to read 1 Thessalonians 4:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul exhorted the Saints in Thessalonica to do to prepare for the Second Coming.

- What did Paul exhort the Saints in Thessalonica to do to prepare for the Second Coming?

Assign each student in the class one of the following references (depending on the size of your class, more than one student may be assigned the same reference): 1 Thessalonians 4:2–5; 4:6–8; 4:9–12. Invite students to read their assigned references and answer the following questions (you may want to write these questions on the board):

Use a variety of teaching methods

Even a persuasive teaching technique may become ineffective or boring if overused. While you should not select teaching methods for the sake of variety alone, you will be a more effective teacher if you vary the way you teach from day to day. Using a variety of methods can help you reach students who learn in different ways.

- What did Paul exhort the Saints to do to please the Lord?
- How do you think living that teaching would help them be prepared for the Second Coming?

After sufficient time, invite several students to report their answers to the class.

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

Paul teaches about the Resurrection of the dead at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ

Display the picture *The Second Coming* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 66; see also LDS.org).

Explain that the Thessalonian Saints misunderstood certain aspects of the Second Coming. They worried that Church members in Thessalonica who had died would not be able to experience the blessings of the Second Coming.

Invite a student to read 1 Thessalonians 4:13–14, 16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about the faithful Saints who die before the Second Coming. Explain that Paul used the words *asleep* and *sleep* to refer to those who are dead.

- What truth did Paul teach about faithful Saints who die before the Second Coming? (Students should identify the following truth: **Faithful Saints who die before the Second Coming will be resurrected when Christ comes again.**)
- What does the phrase “them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him” in verse 14 mean? (The faithful Saints who are resurrected at the Second Coming will be caught up to meet Jesus Christ and will descend with Him in glory [see D&C 88:97–98].)

Invite a student to read 1 Thessalonians 4:15, 17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about faithful Saints who will be alive when Christ comes again. Invite the student to also read the Joseph Smith Translation in verse 15, footnote *a*. Then invite him or her to read the Joseph Smith Translation in verse 17, footnote *a*. You may want to point out that the Joseph Smith Translation replaces *we* in these verses with *they*, reflecting that the Second Coming would not occur in Paul’s day.

- What truth did Paul teach about faithful Saints who will be alive at the Second Coming? (Students should identify the following truth: **Faithful Saints who are alive at the Second Coming will be caught up to meet Jesus Christ when He comes.**)

Invite students to read 1 Thessalonians 4:18 silently, looking for what Paul hoped the Saints would do after hearing these truths about the Second Coming. Invite students to report what they find.

- What comfort do you find in these doctrines about the Second Coming?

1 Thessalonians 5

Paul teaches Thessalonian Church members how to prepare for the Second Coming

Invite a student to read 1 Thessalonians 5:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the two analogies Paul used to describe the timing of the Second Coming.

- What are the two analogies Paul used to describe the timing of the Second Coming? (“A thief in the night” [verse 2] and “a woman with child” having labor pains [verse 3].)

Explain that a thief in the night usually comes “unexpectedly and without warning” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 3:54).

- What does Paul’s analogy of a thief in the night teach us about the Second Coming?
- What does Paul’s analogy of a woman in labor teach us about the Second Coming?

After students answer the preceding questions, you may want to point out that Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught the following concerning the analogy of a woman in labor: “She does not know the hour or the minute of the child’s arrival, but she does know the approximate time” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:54). Based on this analogy, we might also consider how trials preceding the Second Coming are similar to labor pains. But just as the arrival of a baby is wonderful, so will the Second Coming be wonderful to the righteous.

Invite a student to read 1 Thessalonians 5:4–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why faithful Saints will not be surprised by the Second Coming.



- Why will faithful Saints not be surprised by the Second Coming?
- What does it mean to be “children of light”? (The phrase “children of light” in verse 5 refers to faithful Church members who “cast off the works of darkness” [Romans 13:12], have the companionship of the Holy Ghost, and will therefore be prepared for the Second Coming [see D&C 106:4–5].)
- What does it mean to “watch and be sober”? (1 Thessalonians 5:6).
- How would you summarize what Paul taught the Thessalonian Saints about how to prepare for the Second Coming? (Using students’ words, write the following truth on the board: **If we are faithful and watch for the signs preceding the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, then we will be prepared when He comes again.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith, and ask the class to listen for how we can prepare for the Second Coming:



“The earth is full of calamity, of trouble. The hearts of men are failing them. We see the signs as we see the fig tree putting forth her leaves; and knowing this time is near, it behooves me and it behooves you, and all men upon the face of the earth, to *pay heed to the words of Christ, to his apostles and watch*, for we know not the day nor the hour” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 3:52–53).

- According to President Smith, how can we prepare for the Second Coming?

Invite students to review the true–false statements and the answers they wrote at the beginning of class.

- Based on the truths you have learned in this lesson, would you change any of your answers? (Answers: [1] False, [2] True, [3] False.)

Summarize 1 Thessalonians 5:7–22 by explaining that Paul further counseled the Saints on how to prepare for the Second Coming.

Invite students to read 1 Thessalonians 5:12–22 silently, looking for what Paul counseled the Saints to do to prepare themselves and others to meet the Savior at His Second Coming. Encourage students to select an item of counsel that stands out to them. Invite students to answer the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. (You may want to write these questions on the board.)

- What counsel from 1 Thessalonians 5:12–22 stands out to you?
- How can living this counsel help you and others be prepared for the Second Coming?
- How would you encourage someone to use this counsel in daily life?

After sufficient time, invite students to report their answers to a classmate.

Invite a student to read 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul said God would do for His faithful Saints as they prepare for the Second Coming.

- What will God do for His faithful Saints as they prepare for the Second Coming?

Conclude by testifying of the truths taught in this lesson, and invite students to faithfully prepare for the Second Coming.

Commentary and Background Information

1 Thessalonians 4:17. “Caught up together”

“The Joseph Smith Translation of 1 Thessalonians 4:17 reads: ‘Then *they who* are alive, shall be caught up together *into* the clouds *with them who remain*, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be ever with

the Lord’ (in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, footnote a). Many Christians use the word *rapture* (from a Latin term meaning ‘caught up’) when referring to the time when the righteous will be caught up to meet the Savior at His coming” (*New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 450).

INTRODUCTION TO

The Second Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians

Why study this book?

In his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul wrote words of counsel and clarification to members of the Church who misunderstood certain aspects of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Studying his teachings can help students understand the nature of the Apostasy and how to prepare appropriately for the Lord's return.

Who wrote this book?

Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians (see 2 Thessalonians 1:1; see also 2 Thessalonians 2:5; 3:17). The beginning of the epistle also contains a greeting from Silas and Timothy (see 2 Thessalonians 1:1).

When and where was it written?

"Paul wrote the epistles to the Thessalonians from Corinth during his second missionary journey" around A.D. 50–51 (Guide to the Scriptures, "Pauline Epistles," scriptures.lds.org).

To whom was it written and why?

Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians to members of the Church in Thessalonica. The themes of 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians are similar, suggesting that Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians to clarify and expand on the first epistle. It appears that the Thessalonians had received a fraudulent letter that claimed to be from Paul and that this letter had caused some to believe that the Second Coming had already occurred (see 2 Thessalonians 2:2).

"In the short interval between the two epistles the Church suffered from persecution (2 Thes. 1:4); the prospect of an immediate return of the Lord fostered an unhealthy excitement (2:2)" (Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles"). Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians in order to strengthen the faith of these members and to correct doctrinal misunderstandings.

What are some distinctive features of this book?

The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians provides significant details about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Some examples include the ideas that the Lord will return in "flaming fire" and that the wicked will be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" (2 Thessalonians 1:8–9).

In this epistle we read that Paul also prophesied of the Great Apostasy, teaching that the Church would undergo a "falling away" from the gospel prior to the Second Coming of the Lord (see 2 Thessalonians 2:2–12). Paul's teachings about the Apostasy remind modern Church members why the latter-day Restoration of the gospel was necessary.

Outline

2 Thessalonians 1 Paul greets and commends the Saints in Thessalonica. He teaches that the ungodly will experience the Lord's vengeance at the Second Coming.

2 Thessalonians 2 Paul corrects the false idea that the Second Coming has already occurred and prophesies that an apostasy will occur prior to the Lord's return. He encourages the Thessalonian Saints to remain faithful.

2 Thessalonians 3 Paul counsels Church members to work to provide for their temporal needs and not to be weary in well doing.

LESSON 129

2 Thessalonians

Introduction

Shortly after writing his first epistle to the Thessalonian Saints, Paul wrote them a second epistle, in which he clarified truths about the Second Coming. He taught that the Savior would not come again until after an

apostasy had occurred. Paul then preached against idleness and counseled the Saints to “be not weary in well doing” (2 Thessalonians 3:13).

Suggestions for Teaching

2 Thessalonians 1–2

Paul encourages the Saints by prophesying of Jesus Christ’s Second Coming

Invite a student to read aloud the following declaration by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“I say to all and especially the youth of the Church that if you haven’t already, you will one day find yourself called upon to defend your faith or perhaps even endure some personal abuse simply because you are a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” (“The Cost—and Blessings—of Discipleship,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 6).

Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever had to defend their faith or endure opposition because of their membership in the Church. Invite a few students to share their experiences.

Explain that Paul wrote a second letter to the Thessalonian Saints and addressed several topics, including opposition that the Saints were facing. Invite students to look for a principle as they study 2 Thessalonians 1 that can help them endure opposition and tribulations they may face as Church members.

Invite a student to read 2 Thessalonians 1:3–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why Paul praised the Thessalonian Saints.

- Why did Paul praise the Thessalonian Saints?
- According to verse 5, what reward would the Saints receive for enduring opposition and tribulation with “patience and faith”?
- What principle can we learn from these verses concerning how we will be blessed if we endure opposition and tribulation with patience and faith? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we faithfully endure opposition and tribulation with patience and faith, we may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency. Ask the class to listen for what it means to patiently endure:



“Patience is not passive resignation, nor is it failing to act because of our fears. Patience means active waiting and enduring. It means staying with something and doing all that we can—working, hoping, and exercising faith; bearing hardship with fortitude, even when the desires of our hearts are delayed. Patience is not simply enduring; it is enduring well!” (“Continue in Patience,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2010, 57).

- According to President Uchtdorf, what does it mean to patiently endure?
- Why do we need faith in order to patiently endure opposition or tribulation?

Invite students to consider someone they know or have read about in the scriptures who faithfully and patiently endured opposition and tribulation.

- Whom did you think of, and how did he or she demonstrate faithfully and patiently enduring opposition and tribulation?

Invite students to reflect on the opposition or tribulations they might currently be experiencing and to determine how they can endure these challenges with patience and faith. Encourage them to pray for help.

Explain that as recorded in 2 Thessalonians 1:6–10, Paul prophesied of Jesus Christ’s Second Coming. Divide students into groups of two or three. Invite each group to read 2 Thessalonians 1:6–10 together and to discuss the following questions. (You may want to write these questions on the board or provide them as a handout.) Ask students to record their answers in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

- What words and phrases did Paul use to describe the Second Coming?
- What will happen to the righteous when the Second Coming occurs?
- What will happen to the wicked when the Second Coming occurs?

After sufficient time, invite a few students to report their group’s findings to the class. Write the following truth on the board: **At the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the righteous will rest and the wicked will be destroyed.**

- What do you think the righteous will rest from?
- How can this doctrine comfort those who are currently enduring hardships because of their commitment to Jesus Christ?

Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever wondered when the Second Coming of Jesus Christ will occur. Explain that the Thessalonian Saints wondered about this too and that Paul was concerned that they might have been misled.

Invite a student to read 2 Thessalonians 2:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul thought the Thessalonian Saints might have concluded about the timing of the Second Coming.

- What did Paul *not* want the Thessalonians to believe about the timing of the Second Coming? (That it would be soon.)

Ask students to read 2 Thessalonians 2:3 silently, looking for what Paul said would happen before the Second Coming. Explain that the phrase “that day” refers to the Second Coming, and “falling away” refers to apostasy.

- What truth can we learn from these verses about what would happen before the Second Coming? (Students may use different words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **Before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, an apostasy would occur.**)

Point out that in these verses, Paul suggested that members of the Church in his day should be more concerned about the apostasy that had already begun among them than about the timing of the Lord’s Second Coming.

To help students further understand what the Apostasy was, ask a student to read aloud the following explanation:

“After the death of Jesus Christ, wicked people persecuted the Apostles and Church members and killed many of them. With the death of the Apostles, priesthood keys and the presiding priesthood authority were taken from the earth. The Apostles had kept the doctrines of the gospel pure and maintained the order and standard of worthiness for Church members. Without the Apostles, over time the doctrines were corrupted, and unauthorized changes were made in Church organization and priesthood ordinances, such as baptism and conferring the gift of the Holy Ghost” (*Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* [2004], 35).

- Based on this understanding of the Apostasy, why was a restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ and His Church necessary?

Explain that the “man of sin” mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 refers to Satan. The Restoration of the gospel, including the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, “revealed” (verse 3) the deceptions of Satan and his followers.

Summarize 2 Thessalonians 2:4–17 by explaining that Paul prophesied that the Lord would permit Satan to deceive the earth’s inhabitants until the Second Coming. Paul encouraged the Saints to “stand fast” in what he had taught them (verse 15).

2 Thessalonians

2:1–3 is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

2 Thessalonians 3

Paul warns of those who are undisciplined and preaches self-reliance

Explain that at the time Paul wrote his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, Church members regularly held a feast in conjunction with partaking of the sacrament. However, some members in Thessalonica would attend the feast to eat but refused to help provide or prepare the food for the meal.

- What problems might have resulted from this situation?

Summarize 2 Thessalonians 3:1–9 by explaining that Paul commended the Saints who were faithful and warned them about associating with those who were “disorderly,” or undisciplined (verse 6). Paul also wrote that he and his companions had set an example of temporal self-reliance by working to support themselves.

Invite a student to read 2 Thessalonians 3:10–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul instructed the Saints to do regarding those who refused to work.

- According to verse 12, what instruction did Paul give those who refused to work? (To “work, and eat their own bread,” or be self-reliant by providing for their own needs.)
- According to verse 13, what additional instruction did Paul give the faithful Saints?
- What does it mean to “be not weary in well doing”?
- What truth can we learn from these verses? (Students may use different words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **We are commanded to strive to be self-reliant and to help others.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement from *For the Strength of Youth*. Ask the class to listen for how we can strive to be self-reliant.

“One of the blessings of work is developing self-reliance. When you are self-reliant, you use the blessings and abilities God has given you to care for yourself and your family and to find solutions for your own problems. Self-reliance does not mean that you must be able to do all things on your own. To be truly self-reliant, you must learn how to work with others and turn to the Lord for His help and strength.

“Remember that God has a great work for you to do. He will bless you in your efforts to accomplish that work” (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 41).

- How can we strive to be self-reliant?
- What are some blessings of self-reliance?

Testify that as we strive to be self-reliant, the Lord will help us meet our needs and help us find solutions to our problems.

Ask students to consider what they can do to become more self-reliant now and in the future. Invite them to set a goal that will help them become more self-reliant, and encourage them to seek the Lord’s help in achieving it.

Summarize 2 Thessalonians 3:14–18 by explaining that Paul concluded his epistle by counseling the Saints to discourage idleness and withdraw from idle and disruptive people. However, the Saints were to not treat them as enemies but reprove them as brothers and sisters in the gospel.

Conclude by testifying of the truths taught in this lesson.

Scripture Mastery—2 Thessalonians 2:1–3

Invite each student to use scripture study helps (such as footnotes, the Guide to the Scriptures, or the Topical Guide) to find a scripture other than 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3 that teaches about the Apostasy. After sufficient time, ask a few students to share the scriptures they found and to explain what these scriptures teach about the Apostasy. You may want to list on the board the references they find. Invite students to choose one scripture as a cross-reference to 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3. You may want to suggest that they write this reference in the margin of their scriptures next to 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3. Explain that this mastery passage is most often used to teach about the Apostasy and the need for the Restoration. Invite students to use 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3 and one of the scripture references listed on the board to teach a partner about the Apostasy.

The First Epistle of Paul to Timothy

Why study this book?

In 1 Timothy we read that Paul counseled Timothy, a Church leader in Ephesus, to ensure that sound doctrine was taught and not to allow popular falsehoods to distract from the teachings of the gospel. He taught Timothy about the offices of bishop and deacon and discussed the qualifications for those who served in these positions. Paul also recounted his deep gratitude for the mercy he had received from Jesus Christ when he was converted. Studying 1 Timothy can help students increase their awareness of the importance of teaching sound doctrine in the Church. Students can also deepen their appreciation for the Savior's mercy and for the important role of bishops and other Church leaders.

Who wrote this book?

Paul wrote 1 Timothy (see 1 Timothy 1:1).

When and where was it written?

Paul's First Epistle to Timothy was likely written sometime between A.D. 64 and 65, possibly while Paul was in Macedonia (see Guide to the Scriptures, "Pauline Epistles," scriptures.lds.org; 1 Timothy 1:3). Before writing this epistle, Paul had been released from his two-year imprisonment (house arrest) in Rome and was likely traveling widely, visiting regions where he had previously established branches of the Church (see Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles").

To whom was it written and why?

Paul wrote this epistle to Timothy, who had served with Paul during his second missionary journey (see Acts 16:3). Following their mission, Timothy continued to be a faithful missionary and Church leader (see Acts 19:22; Philippians 2:19) and one of Paul's most trusted associates (see 1 Corinthians 4:17). Paul referred to Timothy as his "own son in the faith" (1 Timothy 1:2). Timothy's father was a Greek Gentile, but he had a righteous Jewish mother and grandmother who had taught him and helped him learn the scriptures (see Acts 16:1; 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15).

At the time this epistle was written, Timothy was serving as a Church leader in Ephesus (see 1 Timothy 1:3). Paul hinted that some members doubted Timothy's leadership abilities because he was young (see 1 Timothy 4:12). Paul intended to visit Timothy in person, but he was unsure whether he would be able to do so (see 1 Timothy 3:14; 4:13). Paul wrote his epistle to Timothy to help the young Church leader better understand his duties.

What are some distinctive features of this book?

Paul's letters known as 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus are often called pastoral Epistles because they contain Paul's counsel to pastors or leaders in the Church (see Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles"). *Pastor* comes from the Latin word for "shepherd."

Paul suggested guidelines to help Timothy identify worthy candidates to serve as bishops or deacons (see 1 Timothy 3). Paul's guidelines helped highlight the responsibility of Church leaders to provide for members' temporal and spiritual needs (see 1 Timothy 5). Paul also addressed the common false idea of asceticism—the belief that greater spirituality could be attained through strict self-denial. For example, Paul warned that some Church members would apostatize and promote the belief that marriage should be forbidden (see 1 Timothy 4:1–3). To counteract this and other heretical influences, Paul gave instructions to Timothy to teach sound doctrine (see 1 Timothy 1:3–4, 10; 4:1–6, 13, 16).

Outline

1 Timothy 1 Paul cautions against false teachings. He glories in the Lord Jesus Christ, who extended great mercy to save him. Paul refers to himself as the "chief" (1 Timothy 1:15), or worst, of sinners, alluding to his opposition of Christians before his conversion. Paul reassures others that Christ's mercy will also help them.

1 Timothy 2–3 Paul teaches about the need for prayer and proper worship. He teaches that Jesus Christ is the ransom for all and is our Mediator with the Father. He instructs men and women how to conduct themselves during worship. He outlines the qualifications for bishops and deacons. He explains that the mystery of godliness is the condescension of Jesus Christ, His perfect life on earth, and His Ascension to glory.

1 Timothy 4 Paul warns Timothy that some people will be deceived by false teachings regarding marriage and dietary practices. He speaks about the importance of marriage and of receiving God's creations with thankfulness. Paul teaches Timothy how to deal with the false teachings of his day and those that would soon come.

1 Timothy 5–6 Paul gives Timothy guidelines to help him minister to the needs of the elderly, young people, widows, elders, and slaves. Paul gives Timothy a description of false teachers. He warns that "the love of money is the root of all evil" (1 Timothy 6:10) and instructs Timothy regarding how Saints can obtain eternal life.

LESSON 130

1 Timothy

Introduction

Paul wrote to Timothy, a priesthood leader in Ephesus, and counseled him to ensure that true doctrine was taught. He set forth the qualifications for bishops and deacons and counseled Timothy to be an example of the

believers. Paul admonished the Saints to care for the poor and widows. He closed his epistle by teaching that “the love of money is the root of all evil” (1 Timothy 6:10).

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Timothy 1–3

Paul instructs Timothy concerning his responsibilities in watching over the Church

Invite a student to read aloud the following account given by President Thomas S. Monson:



“I’m reminded of an experience I had many years ago when I served as a bishop. During the opening exercises of our priesthood meeting one Sunday morning, we were preparing to ordain a young man to the office of priest. Visiting our ward that day was a high councilor who also served as a temple worker. As I prepared to have the young man sit down to face the congregation so that we could proceed with the ordination, the high councilor stopped me and said, ‘Bishop, I always have those being ordained turned to face the temple.’ He repositioned the chair so that the young man would be facing in the direction of the temple. I immediately recognized an unauthorized practice” (“Opening Remarks” [worldwide leadership training meeting, Nov. 2010], [lds.org/broadcasts](https://www.lds.org/broadcasts)).

Explain that as bishop, President Monson, rather than the high councilor, was authorized to preside over the Lord’s work in his ward.

- What could be the potential danger of a bishop or branch president allowing such an unauthorized practice?

Explain that the Apostle Paul wrote an epistle to Timothy, a young priesthood leader in Ephesus. In the branch of the Church he presided over, Timothy faced challenges similar to those President Monson faced.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Timothy 1:3–7. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what responsibility Paul gave Timothy. Explain that the word *fables* (verse 4) refers to false teachings; heeding “endless genealogies” (verse 4) refers to the false tradition that salvation came only to those of the chosen seed of Abraham, who were often known by their lengthy or endless genealogies; and “vain jangling” (verse 6) refers to pointless discussion (see verse 6 footnote *c*).

- According to verses 3–4, what responsibility did Paul give Timothy?
- According to verses 6–7, why was it important for Timothy to fulfill this responsibility?
- What is a truth we can learn from Paul’s counsel to Timothy about the responsibility of priesthood leaders? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify a truth similar to the following: **Priesthood leaders have the responsibility to ensure that true doctrine and correct practices are taught.** Write this truth on the board.)

Remind students of the situation President Monson encountered as a bishop. Invite a student to read aloud the rest of his account. Ask the class to listen for how President Monson responded to the high councilor:

“I could see the potential for it to become more widespread in practice. Although much younger than the high councilor, I knew what needed to be done. I turned the chair back so that it was again facing the congregation and said to him, ‘In our ward, we face the congregation’” (“Opening Remarks,” [lds.org/broadcasts](https://www.lds.org/broadcasts)).

- How are we blessed by priesthood leaders who work to ensure that true doctrine and correct practices are taught in the Church?

Summarize 1 Timothy 1:8–11 by explaining that Paul warned against those who desired to be teachers of God’s law but did not have a correct understanding of it.

Invite a student to read 1 Timothy 1:12–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why Paul expressed gratitude toward Jesus Christ.

- Why did Paul express gratitude toward Jesus Christ?
- According to verses 15–16, how is Paul a “pattern” for all those who believe in Jesus Christ?

Summarize 1 Timothy 1:17–1 Timothy 3 by explaining that Paul counseled Timothy to hold to his faith. Paul taught that Jesus Christ is our mediator, and he counseled Church members regarding how to conduct themselves. He also set forth qualifications for bishops and deacons.

1 Timothy 4–5

Paul describes the characteristics of a faithful minister of Jesus Christ

Bring a paper clip, a piece of string, tape, and a magnet to class. Tie one end of the string to the paper clip, and then tape the other end of the string to a desk or table. Hold the magnet close to the paper clip without the magnet touching the paper clip. The magnetic force should cause the paper clip to move toward the magnet. Move the magnet around to show how it influences the movement of the paper clip.

- If the paper clip represents a person, what might the magnet represent?

Ask students to consider how they have been like the magnet and influenced others. Invite students to look for a principle as they study 1 Timothy 4 that teaches us how we can be a positive influence in the lives of others.

Summarize 1 Timothy 4:1–11 by explaining that Paul prophesied that in the “latter times” (verse 1) some Church members would depart from the faith and follow false teachings and practices, such as “forbidding to marry” (verse 3). Paul exhorted Timothy to nourish the Saints with true doctrine.

Invite students to read 1 Timothy 4:12 silently, looking for what Paul counseled Timothy to be. Explain that the word *conversation* in this verse refers to conduct or behavior (see verse 12, footnote c). Ask students to report what they find.

- What do you think it means to be an “example of the believers”? (You may want to suggest that students mark this phrase in their scriptures.)
- In what ways did Paul counsel Timothy to be an example of the believers? (List students’ responses on the board.)

Invite a student to read 1 Timothy 4:13–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for additional advice Paul gave that would help Timothy be an example of the believers.

- What additional counsel from Paul may have helped Timothy be an example of the believers?
- According to verse 15, why did Paul tell Timothy to meditate upon the doctrines Paul taught and to give himself completely to living them? (So that others could see how doing so profited Timothy.)
- Based on Paul’s teachings in verse 16, what can result as we strive to be examples of the believers of Jesus Christ? (Using students’ words, write a principle similar to the following on the board: **If we are examples of the believers of Jesus Christ, we can help bring salvation to ourselves and others.**)
- How can being an example of one who believes in and follows Jesus Christ help bring salvation to others?

Invite students to review the list on the board and consider the ways in which Timothy was to be an “example of the believers” (1 Timothy 4:12). Ask the class to describe ways someone can be an example in each of these areas.

- When has someone acted as an example of the believers for you in one of the ways Paul mentioned? (You may want to share an experience from your own life as well.)

Sharing personal experiences

Some of the most meaningful and impactful learning experiences occur when teachers invite students to share stories from their own lives that illustrate the truth of a gospel principle. By placing a gospel principle in a modern context alongside the scriptural context, students can better understand how it relates to their lives and feel a desire to apply it.

Invite students to write a goal in their class notebooks or scripture study journals regarding how they can be examples of the believers of Jesus Christ and thereby help bring salvation to themselves and others.

Summarize 1 Timothy 5 by explaining that Paul instructed Timothy about how the Saints were to care for those in need, including widows.

1 Timothy 6

Paul exhorts Timothy to help others seek for eternal riches

Display a piece of money to the class.

- Do you think money can lead to more evil or to more good? Why?

Explain that 1 Timothy 6 records that Paul counseled Timothy about money. Invite a student to read 1 Timothy 6:6–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught and warned about wealth.

- What teaching or warning from Paul stands out to you? Why?
- What do you think is meant by the phrase “the love of money is the root of all evil”? (1 Timothy 6:10).
- According to verses 9–10, what does the love of money lead to? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **The love of money leads to unrighteousness and apostasy.**)
- Why do you think the love of money leads to unrighteousness and apostasy?

To help students understand that it is a “love” of money rather than money itself that leads to unrighteousness, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“There is nothing inherently evil about money. The Good Samaritan used the same coinage to serve his fellowman that Judas used to betray the Master. It is ‘the *love of money* [which] is the root of all evil.’ (1 Tim. 6:10; italics added.) The critical difference is the degree of spirituality we exercise in viewing, evaluating, and managing the things of this world” (“Spirituality,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1985, 63).

Write the following scripture reference and questions on the board, or provide them as a handout:

1 Timothy 6:11–12, 17–19

What counsel did Paul give to Timothy and to those with riches?

How can this counsel help us have the right attitude toward seeking riches and using wealth?

Divide students into pairs. Invite students to read the references and discuss the questions with their partners. After sufficient time, invite several students to share what they discussed.

- If the Saints trusted God and were rich in good works, what did Paul say they could lay hold on according to verse 19?
- What principle can we learn from Paul’s teachings about what we can do to obtain eternal life? (Although students may use different words, make sure they identify a principle similar to the following: **If we trust in the living God and are rich in good works, then we can lay hold on eternal life.**)
- If trusting in God and following after righteousness are our greatest priorities, how can that affect the way we view, seek, and use wealth?

Conclude by testifying that obtaining eternal life makes someone truly rich. Encourage students to make following after righteousness their greatest priority so that they can obtain the true riches of eternal life.

Home-Study Lesson

Colossians–1 Timothy (Unit 26)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Colossians–1 Timothy (unit 26) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Colossians)

In his epistle to the Colossian Saints, Paul taught that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer, the firstborn of Heavenly Father's spirit children, the Creator of all things, the head of the Church, and the first to be resurrected. Students also learned that we can be reconciled to God through the Atonement of Jesus Christ if we continue to be grounded and settled in our faith. Furthermore, by being rooted and built up in Jesus Christ, we can avoid being led astray by worldly philosophies and traditions.

Day 2 (1 Thessalonians)

In this epistle to the Thessalonian Saints, Paul praised them for their faithfulness and taught them truths about the Lord's Second Coming. While studying this epistle, students learned the following truths: As we teach the gospel of Jesus Christ by the word and power of God, we can help others become followers of the Lord and His servants. We can share the gospel through our example. Faithful Saints who die before the Second Coming will be resurrected when Christ comes again. Faithful Saints who are alive at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ will be caught up to meet Him when He comes. If we are faithful and watch for the signs preceding the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, then we will be prepared when He comes again.

Day 3 (2 Thessalonians)

In studying this letter of Paul to the Thessalonian Saints, which clarified truths about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, students learned that if we faithfully endure opposition and tribulation with patience and faith, we may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God. Paul taught that at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the righteous will rest and the wicked will be destroyed. He also taught that before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, an apostasy would occur. Students also learned that we are commanded to strive to be self-reliant and to help others.

Day 4 (1 Timothy)

From this letter of Paul to Timothy, a young priesthood leader in Ephesus, students learned that priesthood leaders have the responsibility to ensure that true doctrine and correct practices are taught. They also learned that the love of money leads to unrighteousness and apostasy. On the other hand, if we trust in the living God and are rich in good works, then we can lay hold on eternal life.

Introduction

Paul wrote to Timothy, a priesthood leader in Ephesus, and counseled him to be an example of the believers.

Suggestions for Teaching

Note: In this unit, students studied the scripture mastery passage 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3. You could review this passage with students by asking them to summarize the truths it teaches. To help students memorize a portion of this passage, you may want to recite verse 3 a few times as a class.

1 Timothy 4

Paul describes the characteristics of a faithful minister of Jesus Christ

Bring a paper clip, a piece of string, tape, and a magnet to class. Tie one end of the string to the paper clip, and then tape the other end of the string to a desk or table. Hold the magnet close to the paper clip without the magnet touching the paper clip. The magnetic force should cause the paper clip to move toward the magnet. Move the magnet around to show how it influences the movement of the paper clip.

- If the paper clip represents a person, what might the magnet represent?

Ask students to think about how they have been like the magnet and influenced others. Invite them to look for a principle as they study 1 Timothy 4 that teaches us how we can be a positive influence in the lives of others.

Summarize 1 Timothy 4:1–11 by explaining that Paul prophesied that in the “latter times” (verse 1) some Church members would depart from the faith and follow false teachings and practices, such as “forbidding to marry” (verse 3). Paul exhorted Timothy to nourish the Saints with true doctrine.

Invite students to read 1 Timothy 4:12 silently, looking for what Paul counseled Timothy to be. Explain that the word *conversation* in this verse refers to conduct or behavior (see 1 Timothy 4:12, footnote c). Ask students to report what they find.

- What do you think it means to be “an example of the believers”? (You may want to suggest that students mark this phrase in their scriptures.)


- In what ways did Paul counsel Timothy to be an example of the believers? (List students' responses on the board.)

Invite a student to read 1 Timothy 4:13–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for additional advice Paul gave that would help Timothy be an example of the believers.

- What additional counsel from Paul may have helped Timothy be an example of the believers?
- According to verse 15, why did Paul tell Timothy to meditate upon the doctrines Paul taught and to give himself completely to living them? (So that others could see how doing so profited Timothy.)
- Based on Paul's teachings in verse 16, what can result as we strive to be examples of the believers of Jesus Christ? (Using students' words, write a principle similar to the following on the board: **If we are examples of the believers of Jesus Christ, we can help bring salvation to ourselves and others.**)
- How can being an example of one who believes in and follows Jesus Christ help bring salvation to others?

Invite students to review the list on the board and consider the ways in which Timothy was to be an "example of the believers"

(1 Timothy 4:12). Ask the class to describe ways someone can be an example in each of these areas.

 You might consider showing one of the following videos: "No Cussing Club" (4:57) or "The Lost Purse" (2:40). These videos are available on LDS.org. Ask students to watch for ways the young man or the young woman in the video is an example of the believers of Jesus Christ.

- When has someone acted as an example of the believers for you in one of the ways Paul mentioned? (You may want to share an experience from your own life as well.)

Invite students to write a goal in their class notebooks or scripture study journals regarding how they can be examples of the believers of Jesus Christ and thereby help bring salvation to themselves and others.

Next Unit (2 Timothy 1–Hebrews 4)

Invite students to consider some of the challenges of being a disciple of Jesus Christ today. Explain that as they continue to study Paul's teachings in the coming week, they will learn truths that will help them remain faithful despite hardships and persecutions.

The Second Epistle of Paul to Timothy

Why study this book?

Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy emphasizes the power that comes from having a testimony of Jesus Christ (see 2 Timothy 1:7–8). It also contains a prophecy of the “perilous times” that would exist in the days of Paul and Timothy as well as in the last days (see 2 Timothy 3:1–7). To help Timothy with the challenges he faced, Paul encouraged him to trust in the scriptures and in Church leaders (see 2 Timothy 3:14–17) and to rely on true doctrine (see 2 Timothy 4:2). By studying this book, students will learn doctrines and principles that can help them live faithfully as they experience the perilous times of the latter days.

Who wrote this book?

Paul wrote 2 Timothy (see 2 Timothy 1:1).

When and where was it written?

Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy was likely written sometime between A.D. 64 and 65 (see Guide to the Scriptures, “Pauline Epistles,” scriptures.lds.org). Paul wrote the epistle during his second imprisonment in Rome shortly before his martyrdom (see Bible Dictionary, “Pauline Epistles”).

During his imprisonment Paul was in chains (see 2 Timothy 1:16; 2:9), he was likely in a cell or dungeon and exposed to the elements (see 2 Timothy 4:13, 21), and his friends struggled to locate him (see 2 Timothy 1:17). Luke was apparently his only regular visitor (see 2 Timothy 4:11), and Paul expected that his life was coming to an end (see 2 Timothy 4:6–8).

To whom was it written and why?

In this letter, Paul encouraged Timothy and offered strength to help him carry on after Paul's impending death. Paul was aware that his time was short, and he desired to see Timothy, whom Paul figuratively called “my dearly beloved son” (2 Timothy 1:2).

At the end of his letter, Paul requested that Timothy and Mark visit him and bring him a few items that he had left behind (see 2 Timothy 4:9–13). Although Paul's letter was addressed specifically to Timothy, its counsel can be applied to those who live in “the last days” (2 Timothy 3:1) because Paul taught of challenges and solutions that are relevant to our day as well as his.

What are some distinctive features of this book?

This letter is one of the pastoral Epistles, along with 1 Timothy and Titus, and “contains the Apostle's last words and shows the wonderful courage and trust with which he faced death” (see Bible Dictionary, “Pauline Epistles”). Chronologically, 2 Timothy appears to be Paul's final letter in the New Testament (see 2 Timothy 4:6).

This letter contains some of Paul's reflections about the blessings and difficulties of serving as “a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles” (2 Timothy 1:11). Paul declared, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness” (2 Timothy 4:7–8), indicating that he had a personal assurance that he would inherit eternal life. As one who had ministered for Jesus Christ for over 30 years, Paul was in an excellent position to instruct Timothy on how to serve effectively in strengthening the faith of others (see 2 Timothy 2:15–17, 22–26; 4:1–2, 5).

Outline

2 Timothy 1 Paul speaks of the gift and power of God that is received through priesthood ordination. He teaches that the “spirit of fear” (2 Timothy 1:7) does not come from God and that we should not be ashamed of our testimony of Jesus Christ. Paul testifies that Jesus Christ called him to preach the gospel (see 2 Timothy 1:11).

2 Timothy 2 Paul uses the imagery of a good soldier, a victorious athlete, and a hardworking farmer to illustrate the need to endure hardships in order to receive eternal glory. He contrasts true and false teachers and honorable and dishonorable vessels. He warns Timothy to avoid controversies and to patiently teach those who need to repent.

2 Timothy 3–4 Paul describes the evil conditions of the last days and encourages Timothy to use the scriptures in his role as a priesthood leader. He writes of his impending death and declares, “I have kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7). Paul testifies that the Lord will deliver him to the “heavenly kingdom” (2 Timothy 4:18).

LESSON 131

2 Timothy 1–2

Introduction

In his Second Epistle to Timothy, Paul taught that fear does not come from God and counseled Timothy to be unashamed of his testimony of Jesus Christ. Paul

encouraged Timothy to faithfully endure trials and instructed him to teach the Saints to repent.

Suggestions for Teaching

2 Timothy 1

Paul counsels Timothy to be unashamed of the gospel

Write the word *Fear* on the board, and ask students to consider how fear can influence us. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley:



“Who among us can say that he or she has not felt fear? I know of no one who has been entirely spared. Some, of course, experience fear to a greater degree than do others. Some are able to rise above it quickly, but others are trapped and pulled down by it and even driven to defeat. We suffer from the fear of ridicule, the fear of failure, the fear of loneliness, the fear of ignorance. Some fear the present, some the future. Some carry the burden of sin and

would give almost anything to unshackle themselves from those burdens but fear to change their lives” (“God Hath Not Given Us the Spirit of Fear,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1984, 2).

- According to President Hinckley, how can fear influence us?
- How could fear affect our ability to live the gospel?

Invite students to look for a principle as they study 2 Timothy 1 that can help them overcome fear.

Explain that shortly before Paul died, he wrote his Second Epistle to Timothy while imprisoned in Rome. Summarize 2 Timothy 1:1–5 by explaining that Paul expressed his desire to see Timothy and recalled Timothy’s sincere faith.

Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 1:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul reminded Timothy to do.

- What did Paul remind Timothy to do?

Explain that “the gift of God” received by the laying on of hands likely refers to the Holy Ghost. To “stir up” means to rekindle or revive (see verse 6, footnote *a*). Paul admonished Timothy to rekindle the gift of the Holy Ghost, or to earnestly seek to have the Holy Ghost to be with him.

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *As we earnestly seek to have the Spirit to be with us, . . .*

Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 1:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the blessings that can come from having the Spirit with us.

- According to verse 7, what blessings can come from having the Spirit with us?
- What do these blessings help us overcome?

Explain that Paul referred to worldly fear, which creates anxiety, uncertainty, and alarm and differs from what the scriptures refer to as “the fear of the Lord” (Proverbs 9:10). To fear the Lord is “to feel reverence and awe for Him and to obey His commandments” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Fear,” scriptures.lds.org).

- According to verse 8, what did Paul invite Timothy to do with the understanding that the Spirit could help him overcome fear?

Ask students how they would complete the statement on the board using Paul's teachings in verses 7–8. Using students' words, complete the statement so that it conveys the following principle: **As we earnestly seek to have the Spirit to be with us, we can overcome fear and be unashamed of our testimony of Jesus Christ.**

- How can the divine power, love, and good judgment we receive through the Spirit help us overcome fear?
- What are ways in which we can show that we are unashamed of our testimony of Jesus Christ?
- When has the Spirit helped you overcome fear or given you courage to stand firm in your testimony of Jesus Christ?

Ask students to ponder what they can do to invite the Spirit to be with them so they can overcome fear and be unashamed of their testimony of Jesus Christ.

Summarize 2 Timothy 1:9–18 by explaining that Paul admonished Timothy to remain faithful to true doctrine. Paul also confirmed that widespread apostasy was occurring in the Church (see 2 Timothy 1:15).

2 Timothy 2

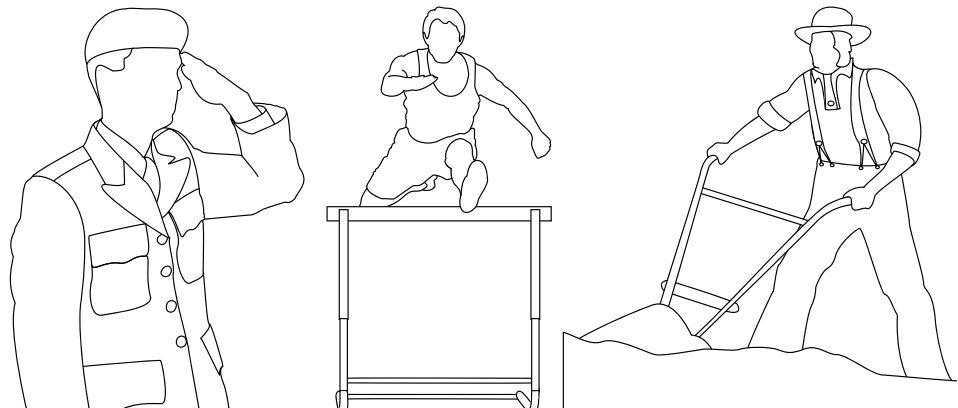
Paul instructs Timothy to faithfully endure hardships

Invite students to read 2 Timothy 2:1 silently, looking for Paul's counsel to Timothy.

- What was Paul's counsel to Timothy? (Explain that we access the grace or divine help of Jesus Christ through our faith [see Romans 5:2].)
- Why might someone find it difficult to remain strong in his or her faith in Jesus Christ?

Explain that Paul counseled Timothy to be strong through the grace of Jesus Christ because he knew Timothy would experience affliction and persecution as a disciple of Christ.

Display pictures of a soldier, an athlete, and a farmer. (Or you could invite students to draw pictures of these three people on the board.)



Explain that Paul used the metaphors of a soldier, an athlete, and a husbandman (or farmer) to teach Timothy how to remain strong in the faith despite hardship.

Copy the following chart on the board. Invite students to copy it into their class notebooks or scripture study journals, or provide it on a handout:

Metaphor	Description	What this metaphor teaches about remaining strong in the faith
Soldier		
Athlete		
Husbandman (farmer)		

Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 2:3–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul described a soldier, an athlete, and a farmer. Explain that the word *hardness* (verse 3) refers to afflictions or hardships (see verse 3, footnote *a*) and that the phrase “strive for masteries” (verse 5) refers to competing in an athletic contest (see verse 5, footnote *a*).

- According to Paul’s teachings in verses 3–4, what does a good soldier do? (Write the following in the first box under “Description” on the chart: *A good soldier dutifully endures hardships and sets aside other affairs to please his or her superior.*)
- What does it mean in verse 5 that an athlete will not be “crowned” unless he or she strives, or competes, “lawfully”? (Write the following in the second box under “Description”: *An athlete can be victorious only if he or she obeys the rules.*)
- According to verse 6, what is the reward for a farmer who works hard to harvest his or her crops? (Write the following in the third box under “Description”: *A farmer must work hard to enjoy the fruits of his or her labors.*)

Invite students to complete their charts by writing in the third column what each metaphor teaches about remaining strong in the faith. Ask a few students to report their responses.

Explain that Paul said he experienced many trials for being a disciple of Christ (see 2 Timothy 2:9). Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 2:10–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul said about why he endured such hardship. Explain that “the elect” (verse 10) refers to faithful Church members and that the word *suffer* in verse 12 refers to enduring and remaining constant (see verse 12, footnote *a*).

- According to Paul’s words in verses 10 and 12, why was he willing to endure hardship and remain faithful to Jesus Christ?
- What principle can we learn from Paul about what can happen as we endure hardships and remain faithful to the Lord? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we endure hardships and remain faithful to the Lord, we can help ourselves and others obtain salvation through Jesus Christ.** Write this principle on the board.)
- How can faithfully enduring our own trials help others obtain salvation through Jesus Christ?

Summarize 2 Timothy 2:13–19 by explaining that Paul counseled Timothy to remind the Saints to avoid contention and to “depart from iniquity” (verse 19).

Display pictures of various containers, such as a bowl, a cup, and a vase. Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 2:20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what kinds of vessels are “in a great house.”

- According to Paul, what kinds of vessels are “in a great house”?

Explain that Paul used different kinds of vessels, or containers, as a metaphor for members of the household, or Church, of Jesus Christ. Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 2:21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what makes someone a fitting “vessel . . . for the master’s use.”

Trust your students

Have faith that, with proper guidance and encouragement, students can understand the scriptures, identify doctrines and principles, explain the gospel to others, and apply gospel teachings in their lives.

- According to Paul, what can we do to be fit “for the master’s use”?

Point out that the phrase “purge himself from these” (verse 21) refers to becoming thoroughly clean from iniquity (see verse 19).

- Based on Paul’s use of vessels as a metaphor, what principle can we learn about what we can do to better serve the Lord? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we purge ourselves of iniquity, we can better serve the Lord.**)
- What can we do to purge ourselves of iniquity?

Invite students to read 2 Timothy 2:22 silently, looking for what else we can do to purge ourselves of iniquity. Ask students to report what they find.

- How can purging ourselves of iniquity help us better serve the Lord?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask students to listen for how this principle applies to those who serve the Lord as missionaries:



“No missionary can be unrepentant of sexual transgression or profane language or pornographic indulgence and then expect to challenge others to repent of those very things! You can’t do that. The Spirit will not be with you, and the words will choke in your throat as you speak them. You cannot travel down what Lehi called ‘forbidden paths’ [1 Nephi 8:28] and expect to guide others to the ‘strait and narrow’ [2 Nephi 31:18] one—it can’t be done.

“. . . Whoever you are and whatever you have done, you can be forgiven. . . . It is the miracle of forgiveness; it is the miracle of the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. But you cannot do it without an active commitment to the gospel, and you cannot do it without repentance where it is needed. I am asking you . . . to be active and be clean. If required, I am asking you to *get* active and *get* clean” (“We Are All Enlisted,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 45).

- Why is it essential to be clean from sin when proclaiming the gospel?

Conclude by testifying of the truthfulness of this principle. Invite students to ponder any sins they may need to repent of so they can better serve the Lord.

Commentary and Background Information

2 Timothy 1:7–8. “Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord”

Sister Bonnie L. Oscarson, Young Women general president, shared the following account of Marie Madeline Cardon, a young convert in Italy who demonstrated courage in defending her new faith:

“I recently read the story of Marie Madeline Cardon, who, with her family, received the message of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ from the first missionaries called to serve in Italy in 1850. She was a young woman of 17 or 18 years of age when they were baptized. One Sunday, while the family was holding a worship service in their home high in the Alps of northern Italy, an angry mob of men, including some of the local ministers, gathered around the house and began shouting, yelling, and calling for the missionaries to be brought outside. I don’t think they were anxious to be taught the gospel—they intended bodily harm. It was young Marie who marched out of the house to confront the mob.

“They continued their vicious yells and demands for the missionaries to be brought out. Marie raised her Bible up in her hand and commanded them to depart. She told them that the elders were under her protection and that they could not harm one hair of their heads. Listen to her own words: ‘All stood aghast. . . . God was with me. He placed those words in my mouth, or I could not have spoken them. All was calm, instantly. That strong ferocious body of men stood helpless before a weak, trembling, yet fearless girl.’ The ministers asked the mob to leave, which they did quietly in shame, fear, and remorse. The small flock completed their meeting in peace.

“Can’t you just picture that brave young woman, the same age as many of you, standing up to a mob and defending her newly found beliefs with courage and conviction?” (“Defenders of the Family Proclamation,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 14).

LESSON 132

2 Timothy 3–4

Introduction

Paul wrote to Timothy and explained that apostasy and wickedness would be prevalent in their day as well as in the last days. He instructed Timothy to remain faithful

to the truths he had already learned. Paul taught about the purposes of scriptures. Paul ended his letter by encouraging Timothy to diligently fulfill his ministry.

Suggestions for Teaching

2 Timothy 3

Paul describes the perilous times of the last days

Before class begins, ask the first two or three students who arrive to each draw a picture on the board of a dangerous or risky situation. After class begins, ask the class the following question:

- What words would you use to describe the situations drawn on the board?

Explain that as part of his Second Epistle to Timothy, Paul prophesied of conditions in his day and ours. Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 3:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul described the times we live in.

- How did Paul describe the times we live in? (If needed, explain that the word *perilous* means full of danger or risk.)
- What are some of the moral or spiritual perils or dangers you have seen in our day?

Divide students into pairs. Provide each pair with a copy of the following chart. Invite each pair to read 2 Timothy 3:2–7 and answer the questions on the chart. Instruct them to use the footnotes to help with difficult words.

2 Timothy 3:2–7

What are some examples of the latter-day conditions Paul described?	Which of these conditions have you seen in our day? (Identify two or three of them.) Why are these conditions so dangerous?

After sufficient time, invite students to report to the class what they discussed, including why these conditions are so dangerous.

Ask students to ponder whether they ever worry that they might be affected by some of the dangers Paul mentioned in the verses they studied.

- According to the end of 2 Timothy 3:5, what did Paul encourage Timothy to do that can also help us in our day? (We should turn away from wickedness.)

Summarize 2 Timothy 3:8–11 by explaining that Paul told Timothy that those who resist the truth will have their foolishness made known. He also wrote of the many perils and persecutions he had endured because of his efforts to live the gospel.

Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 3:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul prophesied would happen to those who live the gospel.

- What did Paul prophesy would happen to those who live the gospel?

2 Timothy

3:15–17 is a scripture mastery passage.

Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

For an explanation of scripture mastery and a list of additional activities to help students master these selected passages, see the appendix of this manual.

Explain that despite the seriousness of these disturbing conditions, we can find help and protection. Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 3:14–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught could help us turn away from these perils.

- What did Paul teach about resisting the perils he described?
- What do you think it means in verse 14 to “continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of”?

To help students understand what this phrase means, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“In moments of fear or doubt or troubling times, hold the ground you have already won. . . . When those moments come and issues surface, the resolution of which is not immediately forthcoming, *hold fast to what you already know and stand strong until additional knowledge comes*” (“Lord, I Believe,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 93–94).

Point out the phrase “knowing of whom thou hast learned them” in verse 14. Explain that we can learn and receive assurance of truth from trusted sources such as prophets, leaders, teachers, parents, and the Holy Ghost.

- What principle can we learn from verses 14–15 about how to overcome the spiritual perils of the last days? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we continue in the truths we have learned from trusted sources and in the scriptures, we can overcome the spiritual peril of the last days.**)
- How can relying on the scriptures and on the truths we have learned help us overcome the perils of our day?
- When have you chosen to rely on truths you have learned? How were you blessed for doing so? (You could first have students answer these questions in their scripture study journals or class notebooks and then invite a few students to share what they wrote.)

Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 3:16–17 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Paul taught about the scriptures. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What did Paul teach about studying the scriptures that can help us in our day? (Help the class identify the following principle: **As we study the scriptures, we can learn doctrine and receive correction and instruction that will help us grow toward perfection.** Write this principle on the board.)

Circle the words *doctrine*, *correction*, and *instruction* in the statement you have written on the board. Ask students to think of a time when the scriptures helped them in one of the following ways: (1) to understand a doctrine of the gospel; (2) by offering reproof or correction concerning something in their thinking, choices, or behavior that was not right; or (3) by providing an answer to a prayer or giving instruction on how they might solve a problem. Give students time to think of experiences, and then invite a few students to share what they thought of with the class. (Remind students not to share anything that is too personal or private, including past sins.)

- Given what we have learned about the value of the scriptures, why do you think we are encouraged to study them daily?

Provide students with a copy of the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite a student to read it aloud, and ask the class to look for Elder Scott’s counsel and promise with regard to studying the scriptures.



“Don’t yield to Satan’s lie that you don’t have time to study the scriptures. Choose to take time to study them. Feasting on the word of God each day is more important than sleep, school, work, television shows, video games, or social media. You may need to reorganize your priorities to provide time for the study of the word of God. If so, do it!

“. . . As you dedicate time every day, personally and with your family, to the study of God’s word, peace will prevail in your life” (“Make the Exercise of Faith Your First Priority,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 93).

Testify of the safety and peace that come to those who continue in the truths found in the scriptures. Invite students to consider how they feel they could apply these principles in their lives. Encourage students to set a goal based on the promptings they feel.

2 Timothy 4

Paul declares that he has fought a good fight and charges Timothy to continue preaching

Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever felt like giving up at a task that was difficult.

- What experiences have you had when you persevered even though you wanted to give up?

Explain that 2 Timothy is likely the last letter Paul wrote before his death. Invite half of the class to read 2 Timothy 4:1–5 silently, looking for Paul’s counsel to Timothy. Invite the other half to read the same passage, looking for Paul’s prophecy about the future of the ancient Christian Church. Encourage students to use the footnotes to help them understand what they read. After they have read, invite students from each group to report what they found.

Explain that verses 3–4 record Paul’s description of the apostasy that was beginning to happen in the Church. Behaviors like those Paul described led to the Great Apostasy, which made a restoration of the gospel necessary.

- Why do you think Paul encouraged Timothy to continue preaching and ministering to the people even though he knew that many would turn away from the truth?

Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 4:6–8 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Paul wrote about his own efforts to spread the gospel.

- What did Paul say about his efforts as a missionary? (Point out that Paul’s metaphors of fighting a good fight and finishing the course describe how he faithfully completed his mission.)
- According to verse 8, what did Paul know awaited him after death?
- What principle can we learn from these verses about our efforts to remain faithful in doing what the Lord requires of us? (Students should identify the following: **If we remain faithful in all the Lord requires of us, we will receive a crown of righteousness.** Write this principle on the board.)

Explain that receiving a “crown of righteousness” includes becoming like Heavenly Father. Invite students to list on the board some of the requirements the Lord has given to the youth of the Church to help them become more like their Father in Heaven.

- Why might youth choose to give up being faithful to some of these requirements?
- Whom do you know who, like Paul, is a good example of remaining faithful even when it is difficult? What have they done that exemplifies this principle?

Summarize 2 Timothy 4:9–22 by explaining that Paul concluded his letter by explaining that even though he had felt lonely at times in his work, the Lord was with him and strengthened him.

Encourage students to remain faithful in doing what the Lord requires of them.

Scripture Mastery—2 Timothy 3:15–17

Ask students to fold a paper into thirds, creating three columns. Have them unfold the paper and write *Doctrine* at the top of the first column, *Reproof and correction* at the top of the second column, and *Instruction in righteousness* at the top of the third column.

Invite students to use this paper as a bookmark in their scriptures for one week, writing in the appropriate section each time they read a scripture that fulfills one of these purposes. For example, under the heading *Doctrine*, students could write scripture references and the doctrines or principles they learn from the verses. Under the heading *Reproof and correction*, students could write scripture references and how the passages correct false ideas or their own choices and behaviors. And under *Instruction in righteousness*, students could record passages that give them insight into what good works they can do.

Encourage students to bring their papers to class in one week to report their experiences. You may want to place a reminder in your scriptures or manual to have a short discussion in one week to review this scripture mastery passage.

INTRODUCTION TO

The Epistle of Paul to Titus

Why study this book?

Paul's letter to Titus, like his letters to Timothy, contains timeless counsel from the Apostle Paul to a local Church leader. Paul wrote that the "hope of eternal life" was first promised by God in the pre-earth life "before the world began" (Titus 1:2). He taught that the Saints should look forward to "that blessed hope" of exaltation and to the Second Coming (Titus 2:13). Paul also wrote to Titus about the "washing of regeneration" and the "renewing of the Holy Ghost," alluding to the ordinance of baptism and the purifying effect of receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, both of which are preparatory to being "made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:5, 7). By studying Paul's inspired counsel to Titus, students can increase their faith that the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel bring hope for eternal life.

Who wrote this book?

The book of Titus was written by Paul (see Titus 1:1).

When and where was it written?

It is likely that Paul wrote the Epistle to Titus between his writing of 1 and 2 Timothy around A.D. 64–65 (see Guide to the Scriptures, "Pauline Epistles," scriptures.lds.org). Paul wrote the Epistle to Titus after Paul's first imprisonment in Rome. Paul did not indicate where he was when he wrote the Epistle to Titus.

To whom was it written and why?

This epistle was written by Paul to Titus, whom Paul referred to as "mine own son after the common faith" (Titus 1:4). Titus was Greek (Galatians 2:3) and had been converted to the gospel by Paul himself (see Bible Dictionary, "Titus"). After his conversion, Titus labored with Paul to spread the gospel and organize the Church (see Bible Dictionary, "Titus"). He helped gather donations for the poor in Jerusalem (see 2 Corinthians 8:6, 16–23) and also accompanied Paul to the Jerusalem council (see Galatians 2:1). Paul entrusted Titus to take to Corinth Paul's first epistle to the Saints living there (see 2 Corinthians 7:5–15). Paul wrote to

Titus to strengthen him in his assignment to lead and care for the branch of the Church in Crete in spite of opposition (see Titus 1:5, 10–11; 2:15; 3:10).

What are some distinctive features of this book?

This letter is one of the pastoral Epistles (to a pastor, or leader, in the Church), along with 1 and 2 Timothy (see Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles"). The Epistle of Titus provides the earliest evidence that the Church had been established on the Greek island of Crete in the Mediterranean Sea (see Titus 1:5). Titus had the responsibility of calling new bishops on the island. Paul listed some of the spiritual qualifications for bishops (see Titus 1:6–9). In addition, Paul gave specific advice to men, women, and servants on proper behavior for Saints (see Titus 2:2–10).

Outline

Titus 1 Paul instructs Titus to ordain Church leaders and then lists some qualifications for bishops. He instructs Titus to correct heresies and to rebuke false teachers who "profess that they know God; but in works . . . deny him" (Titus 1:16).

Titus 2 Paul encourages Titus to instruct elderly Church members to set examples for the younger Saints. He also asks Titus to teach servants to submit to their masters. Paul explains the manner in which disciples should live as they prepare for the Lord's return. He describes the redemption brought about through Jesus Christ.

Titus 3 Paul teaches that Church members are to be good citizens and righteous followers of Jesus Christ. Through baptism, we may receive eternal life through the Lord's grace.

LESSON 133

Titus

Introduction

In Paul's epistle to Titus, a local leader of the Church in Crete, Paul exhorted him to use sound doctrine to teach and correct others. Paul also counseled Titus to teach the Saints to be righteous examples, to have hope of

redemption through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and to continue in good works. (Note: In preparation for this lesson, it might be helpful to review the principles at seektruth.lds.org.)

Suggestions for Teaching

Titus 1

Paul exhorts Titus to use sound doctrine to teach and correct the Saints and others in Crete

Invite students to think of a time when they heard someone speak against the Church or its doctrine.

- What is an appropriate way to defend the Church and its doctrine when someone speaks against it?

Invite students to look for truths as they study the book of Titus that can help them know how to appropriately defend the Church and its doctrine when someone speaks against it.

Invite students to locate the island of Crete on Bible Maps, no. 13, "The Missionary Journeys of the Apostle Paul." Explain that near the end of Paul's life, Paul wrote a letter to Titus, who was serving as a Church leader in Crete. Titus had been converted by Paul several years earlier, and after his baptism he had served with Paul in various assignments. In his epistle, Paul encouraged Titus and counseled him about his calling.

Summarize Titus 1:1–6 by explaining that Paul testified of the hope he had for eternal life because of God's promises in our premortal existence. Paul also explained that he had sent Titus to the island of Crete to set the Church in order there. One duty Titus had was to call men to serve as bishops.

Invite students to read Titus 1:7–8 silently, looking for characteristics that a bishop should have. You may want to encourage students to mark what they find.

- According to these verses, what characteristics should a bishop have? (You may need to explain that *self-willed* means obstinate or arrogant and that "filthy lucre" refers to money that is obtained through dishonest or otherwise unrighteous means.)
- Why do you think these characteristics are necessary for bishops to have?

Invite a student to read Titus 1:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for another characteristic bishops should have. Explain that "sound doctrine" refers to true doctrine.

- What is another characteristic that bishops should have?
- What do you think it means to "[hold] fast" to the word of God?
- According to verse 9, why is it important for bishops to hold fast to the word of God? (To be able to use true doctrine to encourage others to live the gospel and to refute "gainsayers." A gainsayer is someone who speaks against or denies an idea [in this case, the truthfulness of the gospel]. Gainsayers can be both members and non-members of the Church.)
- What can we, like bishops, do as we hold fast to the word of God? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **As we hold fast to the word of God, we will be able to use true doctrine to encourage others to live the gospel of Jesus Christ and to refute those who oppose it.** Write this principle on the board.)

Discussions in small groups

It is sometimes helpful to divide the class into small groups so students can participate in a discussion together. Discussions in small groups can effectively involve those who seem to be losing interest and concentration and can enable students to develop communication skills and strengthen appropriate social and spiritual relationships.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for the power that true doctrine has in helping individuals live the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“True doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior.

“The study of the doctrines of the gospel will improve behavior quicker than a study of behavior will improve behavior. . . . That is why we stress so forcefully the study of the doctrines of the gospel” (“Little Children,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 17).

- According to President Packer, why is it so important to study and learn true doctrine?

Divide the class into groups of two or three. Invite each group to work together to answer the following questions and to write their answers in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Consider writing the questions on the board.

1. *What can we do to be ready to teach true doctrine so we can encourage others to live the gospel? (See Alma 17:2–4.)*
2. *What are some examples from the scriptures of times when someone taught true doctrine to a person who expressed doubt or animosity toward the Church or its doctrine? (Include at least one example of a time when someone repented because he or she was taught true doctrine.)*
3. *When has learning true doctrine helped convince you or someone you know to more fully live the gospel of Jesus Christ?*

After sufficient time, invite several students to report their answers to the class. After they report, explain that while true doctrine can help us to encourage others to live the gospel and refute those who oppose the Church, not all people will receive the truth. Because all individuals have agency, they can choose to accept or reject the true doctrine of Jesus Christ.

Invite students to think about the scripture mastery passages they have learned so far this year.

- Which scripture mastery passages could be especially helpful to encourage others to live the gospel?
- Which scripture mastery passages could help refute those who oppose the Church?

Encourage students to continue to master key scripture passages so they will be prepared to teach true doctrine to others.

Summarize Titus 1:10–16 by explaining that Paul taught Titus that bishops needed to rely on true doctrine because there were many deceivers and false teachers among them. He counseled Titus to rebuke the false teachers so they would forsake their errors and “be sound in the faith” (verse 13). Paul also explained that those who are defiled profess that they know God but deny Him by their works.

Titus 2

Paul counsels Titus to teach the Saints in Crete to live true doctrine

Invite a student to read Titus 2:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else Paul instructed Titus to do with true doctrine.

- What else did Paul instruct Titus to do with true doctrine? (Teach it to the Saints in Crete.)

Write the following words on the board: *Men, Women, Young Women, and Young Men.*

Invite the young women in the class to read Titus 2:3–5 silently, looking for Paul’s counsel about how older women should live and what they should teach younger women. Invite the young men to read Titus 2:2, 6–8 silently, looking for Paul’s counsel about how older and younger men should live.

Note: If questions arise about the meaning of women being “obedient to their own husbands” (verse 5), you could refer to the material in the lesson for Ephesians 5–6.

- According to Paul, how should older men live? older women? young women? young men? (Write students’ responses on the board under the corresponding heading, or ask students to come to the board to write their answers. You may need to help students understand what some words mean. For example, *sober* means calm or serious, *temperate* means self-controlled, and to have *gravity* means to be respectful.)
- What is the meaning of the phrase “in all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works”? (verse 7). (To be a good example of living the gospel.)

- Based on Paul’s counsel to Titus, what are followers of Jesus Christ supposed to do? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Followers of Jesus Christ are to be good examples for others.**)

Invite students to think of an older member of their ward or branch who has been a good example of living the gospel and being dedicated to it. Ask a few students to share about the person they thought of and to explain how that person’s example has helped them.

Invite students to select one of the behaviors listed on the board and to set a goal to better incorporate that behavior into their lives so their good example can bless others.

Summarize Titus 2:9–10 by explaining that Paul counseled Titus to teach Church members who worked as servants to be honest and agreeable in their dealings with their masters. By being honest and agreeable, these Church members would honor the Lord and set a good example for their masters.

Invite a student to read Titus 2:11–15 aloud. Ask this student to also read Joseph Smith Translation, Titus 2:11 (in Titus 2:11, footnote *b*). Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the grace of God makes possible for all people and what Christ did for all of us.

- What does the grace of God make possible for all people?
- According to verse 12, what should the Saints do to access the grace of God?
- What do we learn from Paul’s teachings in verse 14 about what Jesus Christ did for us? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **Jesus Christ gave Himself for us so that He could redeem us and purify us.** Consider inviting students to mark the phrases in verse 14 that teach this truth.)

Point out that “a peculiar people” (verse 14) refers to the Lord’s treasured people, whom He has purchased or redeemed (see 1 Peter 1:18–19; 2:9) and who covenant to keep His commandments (see Exodus 19:5–6).

Titus 3

Paul tells Titus what the Saints in Crete must do after they are baptized

Summarize Titus 3:1–2 by explaining that Paul counseled Titus to teach the Saints in Crete to obey the law of the land and to be gentle and meek in all their relationships with others.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Titus 3:3–8. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul said about how the gospel of Jesus Christ had changed him and the Saints in Crete.

- According to verse 3, how did Paul describe himself and the other Church members before they learned about the gospel of Jesus Christ?
- According to verses 5–6, what changed the people?
- According to verse 7, what would happen to the people as a result of the change brought about by the grace of Jesus Christ?

Invite students to consider how they have been changed because of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- According to verse 8, what did Paul counsel the Saints to do after they were changed and baptized?

Summarize Titus 3:9–15 by explaining that Paul advised the Saints to avoid contending with divisive people. Paul also requested that Titus come visit him in Macedonia.

Conclude by testifying of the truths identified in this lesson.

INTRODUCTION TO

The Epistle of Paul to Philemon

Why study this book?

The Epistle to Philemon contains personal counsel from Paul regarding a situation with Philemon's slave Onesimus. As students study this epistle, they can learn that when people join the Church of Jesus Christ, they become brothers and sisters in the gospel (see Philemon 1:16). Students can also come to feel the importance of the duty that disciples of Jesus Christ have to extend mercy and forgiveness to others (see Philemon 1:16–17).

Who wrote this book?

Paul wrote the Epistle to Philemon (see Philemon 1:1).

When and where was it written?

The Epistle to Philemon was prepared by Paul during the Apostle's first imprisonment in Rome, around A.D. 60–62 (see Philemon 1:1, 9; Guide to the Scriptures, "Pauline Epistles," scriptures.lds.org).

To whom was it written and why?

"This epistle is a private letter about Onesimus, a slave who had robbed his master, Philemon, and run away to Rome" (Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles"). Philemon was probably a Greek convert and was a resident of Colossae (see Colossians 4:9). He allowed a Church congregation to meet in his home (see Philemon 1:2, 5). After running away, Onesimus joined the Church and became "a brother beloved . . . in the Lord" (Philemon 1:16; see also Philemon 1:10–12).

Paul wrote to Philemon to encourage him to receive Onesimus back as a brother in the gospel without the severe punishments that would usually be inflicted on runaway slaves (see Philemon 1:17). Paul even offered to make up any financial loss Onesimus had caused Philemon to suffer (see Philemon 1:18–19).

What are some distinctive features of this book?

Philemon is the shortest and perhaps the most personal of Paul's epistles. It is a letter addressed to a private individual; as such, it does not include much doctrinal content. Nevertheless, Paul's plea for Philemon to reconcile with the slave Onesimus illustrates how the doctrines of the gospel apply to daily life—in this case, showing that our relationship with Jesus Christ brings us into a familial relationship with all other followers of Christ and highlighting the importance of mercy and forgiveness.

Outline

Philemon 1 Paul commends Philemon for the love he has shown to the Saints. Paul tells Philemon that his runaway slave, Onesimus, has converted to the gospel. Paul asks Philemon to receive Onesimus back as a brother in the Lord. Paul offers to repay Philemon for any financial loss Onesimus has caused him to suffer.

LESSON 134

Philemon

Introduction

Paul commended Philemon for his faith and his love for the Savior and fellow Church members. Paul counseled

Philemon to receive his runaway slave Onesimus back as a brother in the gospel.

Suggestions for Teaching

Philemon 1

Paul counsels Philemon to receive his runaway slave Onesimus back as a brother in the gospel

Ask students to visualize the youth in their ward or branch. Point out that as members of the Church we have the opportunity to interact closely with people who are different from us.

- How are the youth in your ward or branch different from each other? (Remind students to speak respectfully of one another.)

Point out that as members of the Church we also often encounter new people. Ask students to imagine that someone new joins their ward or branch.

- What social challenges might someone experience when joining the Church or moving into a new ward or branch? (If any students have joined the Church or moved into a new ward or branch in recent years, invite them to describe any social challenges they experienced.)

Ask students to ponder the following questions:

- How do you treat Church members who behave differently, have different interests, or belong to different social groups than you do?
- How do you treat new members of your ward or branch?

Invite students to look for a truth as they study Paul's Epistle to Philemon that can guide them in their interactions with fellow Church members.

Explain that Paul was in prison when he wrote to Philemon, who was probably a Greek convert to the Church. Summarize Philemon 1:1–3 by explaining that Paul began his epistle by greeting Philemon and others, including the congregation that met in Philemon's home.

Invite a student to read Philemon 1:4–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why Paul praised Philemon. Explain that in this context the word *communication* refers to participation and fellowship (see verse 6, footnote *a*) and the phrase "become effectual" means to become active or take effect (see verse 6, footnote *b*).

- Why did Paul praise Philemon? (Because of Philemon's faith and his love for the Savior and his fellow Church members. You may need to explain that when Paul said that "the bowels of the Saints [had been] refreshed" [verse 7], he meant that their hearts had been enlivened by Philemon.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following information about a situation that Paul addressed in this epistle:

Philemon had a servant, or slave, named Onesimus who had run away and may have stolen something from Philemon (see Philemon 1:18). Slavery was not viewed as evil within the New Testament Judeo-Christian culture and was supported by Roman law. Punishments for runaway slaves included being severely beaten, branded on the forehead, or even killed. After running away, Onesimus had encountered the Apostle Paul.

Invite a student to read Philemon 1:8–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul beseeched, or petitioned, Philemon to do. If needed, explain that in verse 8 the word *enjoin* means to command and *convenient* means proper or fitting.

- What did Paul ask Philemon to do?
- If you had been in Philemon's position, what might you have thought or felt when you received Paul's request?

Point out the phrase "whom I have begotten in my bonds" (verse 10). Explain that one meaning of the verb *beget* is to give life to someone.

- What do you think Paul meant by this phrase? (While Paul was in prison, he had helped Onesimus begin a new life as a follower of Jesus Christ.)

Summarize Philemon 1:13–14 by explaining that Paul wanted to keep Onesimus with him so that Onesimus could assist him, but Paul did not want to do so without Philemon's consent.

Invite a student to read Philemon 1:15–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul encouraged Philemon to view his relationship with the newly converted Onesimus.

- According to verse 16, how was Philemon to view Onesimus?
- Why might viewing Onesimus as a "brother beloved" have been difficult for Philemon? (Possible answers might include that they belonged to different social and economic classes and that Onesimus may have wronged Philemon according to the customs of the day.)
- What truth can we learn from verse 16 about our relationships with each other because of the gospel? (Help students identify a truth similar to the following: **We are brothers and sisters in the gospel.** Write this truth on the board.)
- What makes us brothers and sisters in the gospel?

If necessary, explain that we are all spirit children of Heavenly Father (see Hebrews 12:9) and thus are all brothers and sisters. In addition, through the ordinances of baptism and confirmation, the continual exercise of faith in Jesus Christ, obedience, and consistent repentance, we are spiritually reborn. In this way we become sons and daughters of Jesus Christ (see Mosiah 5:7) and therefore brothers and sisters in His covenant family. Regardless of our gender, age, background, or social status, we become equal in God's kingdom.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball. Ask the class to listen for how the truth they just identified can influence the way we treat one another, particularly new members of the Church.



"I have always been uplifted by reading the short epistle of Paul to Philemon; it teaches us a principle and a spirit concerning gospel brotherhood. . . .

"It is an inspiration and joy to see this same spirit at work throughout the Church, to see the Saints embrace and help and assist and pray for those who daily enter the kingdom of our Lord. Continue to reach out to each other—and the many more who will enter the Church. Welcome them and love and fellowship them.

fellowship them.

"Sadly, there have been occasional incidents where some among us have not done so, accounts of some who have rejected those whom the Lord has accepted by baptism. If the Lord was 'not ashamed to call them brethren' (Heb. 2:11), let us, therefore, . . . take our brothers and sisters by the hand and lift them up into our circles of concern and love" ("Always a Convert Church: Some Lessons to Learn and Apply This Year," *Ensign*, Sept. 1975, 4).

- According to President Kimball, how should brothers and sisters in the gospel treat each other?

Remind students of the questions they were invited to ponder earlier in the lesson regarding how they treat Church members who are different from them or who are new to their ward or branch.

- Why do you think it is important to understand that we are brothers and sisters in the gospel?
- When have you seen someone treat others as brothers and sisters in the gospel?

To prepare students to identify an additional truth illustrated in Paul's epistle to Philemon, ask them to think about a time when someone offended or wronged them. Invite a student to read Philemon 1:17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul counseled Philemon to do.

- What did Paul counsel Philemon to do?

Explain that Paul was asking Philemon to receive Onesimus in the same way that Philemon would receive Paul. In following this instruction, Philemon would forgo the severe punishments that runaway slaves normally received.

- As illustrated in Paul’s instruction to Philemon, what responsibility do all disciples of Jesus Christ have toward those who offend or wrong them? (Help students identify the following truth: **Disciples of Jesus Christ extend mercy and forgiveness to others.** Write this truth on the board.)
- Why can it sometimes be difficult to extend mercy and forgiveness to others?

Point out that extending mercy and forgiveness to those who have wronged us does not necessarily mean allowing them to avoid the consequences of their actions, nor does it mean immediately restoring our trust in them. Instead, it means that we show compassion toward others and let go of any resentment, anger, or hurt we may be harboring. When appropriate, we may also allow those who have wronged us to regain our trust. Although forgiving others may be difficult, we can pray to Heavenly Father for help, and He will help us.

Invite a student to read Philemon 1:18–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul offered to do on Onesimus’s behalf.

- What did Paul offer to do on Onesimus’s behalf? (Repay Philemon for any financial loss Philemon had suffered as a result of Onesimus’s actions.)
- How are Paul’s efforts on Onesimus’s behalf similar to the Savior’s actions on our behalf? (Just as Paul interceded on Onesimus’s behalf, Jesus Christ intercedes on our behalf and pleads our cause before Heavenly Father [see D&C 45:3–5]. Jesus Christ has also paid the spiritual debt we owe for our sins.)
- How can remembering what Jesus Christ has done on our behalf help us extend mercy and forgiveness to others?

Divide students into groups of three or four (or complete this activity as a class if you do not have enough students to divide into groups). Give each group a copy of the following instructions as a handout:

Philemon 1

Discuss the following questions together in your group. In your responses, be sure to not share anything that is too personal or private.

- When have you, like Philemon, needed to extend mercy and forgiveness to someone else? How were you able to extend mercy to and forgive this person? How were you blessed in doing so?
- When have you, like Onesimus, hoped to receive mercy and forgiveness from another person? How did you seek this person’s mercy and forgiveness? How were you blessed by doing so?
- When have you, like Paul, served as a mediator between someone who was seeking forgiveness and the person who needed to extend forgiveness and mercy? How were you able to help the wrongdoer receive forgiveness and the injured person forgive the wrongdoer?

After students have discussed these questions in their groups, invite a student from each group to share with the class his or her own experience in one of these situations or the experience of one of the members of their group (with the group member’s consent). (An alternative approach is to provide each student with a copy of the questions or display the questions on the board and invite students to answer one of the questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. After sufficient time, invite several students who are willing to do so to share with the class what they wrote.)

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they can do to extend mercy and forgiveness to others. Encourage students to apply what they wrote.

Choose learning activities carefully

Be aware that different learning activities encourage different moods and attitudes in students. Some classes may benefit from the energy generated through small group discussions, while other classes may benefit more from individual pondering and writing. Consider the content of the scripture block, seek the Spirit’s direction, and properly assess your students’ needs as you determine which learning activities will best serve them.

INTRODUCTION TO

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews

Why study this book?

The book of Hebrews testifies of the superiority of Jesus Christ. He is greater than the angels and has a more excellent name and a higher calling. Angels are servants of God, but Jesus Christ is His Son. This book also teaches that Jesus is greater than Moses and that His ministry brought a new covenant superior to the old covenant under the law of Moses. As the Great High Priest of the Melchizedek Priesthood, His priesthood is greater than that of the high priests under the law of Moses.

While the scriptures are filled with references to Jesus Christ's atoning sacrifice, His Resurrection, and His Ascension into heaven, Hebrews emphasizes the ongoing work of the Redeemer in the lives of all who turn to Him in obedience and faith. Studying the book of Hebrews can help students to better understand the doctrine of the Atonement and inspire them to live with faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

Who wrote this book?

Most Latter-day Saints accept Paul as the author of Hebrews (see Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles"). However, there are some who question whether Paul wrote this epistle because its style and language are different from Paul's other letters. It is generally agreed that even if the pen was not Paul's, the ideas were his because the doctrines in Hebrews agree with those found in Paul's other letters. The Prophet Joseph Smith attributed statements from Hebrews to the Apostle Paul (see *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 105). For the purposes of this manual, we accept Paul as the author.

When and where was it written?

We do not know where Paul's letter to the Hebrews was written. We also do not know exactly when it was written. However, most assume that it was written around A.D. 60–62, near the same time as Paul's letters to the Philippians, the Colossians, the Ephesians, and Philemon (see Guide to the Scriptures, "Pauline Epistles," scriptures.lds.org).

To whom was it written and why?

Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews to encourage Jewish members of the Church to maintain their faith in Jesus Christ and not to return to their former ways (see Hebrews 10:32–38).

Under the pressure of various afflictions, many of these Jewish Christians were apparently withdrawing from the Church and returning to the relative safety of Jewish worship at the synagogue (see Hebrews 10:25, 38–39). Paul desired to show these Jewish Christians that the law of Moses itself pointed to Jesus Christ and His Atonement as the true source of salvation.

What are some distinctive features of this book?

Rather than being strictly an epistle, Hebrews is more of an extended sermon that repeatedly refers to Israel's scriptures and practices. It is the longest sermon in scripture about why and how Jesus Christ is superior to all things.

Hebrews teaches that Jesus Christ is greater than the law because He gave the law. Hebrews also teaches that the prophets received power through faith in Him, that He was the great High Priest in whom the sacrifices of Old Testament times were fulfilled, that He is greater than the angels, and that it is through His atoning sacrifice that we may receive a remission of sins.

The book of Hebrews is one of the few places in the Bible where we can read about the prophet Melchizedek (see Hebrews 7:1–4) and the priesthood named after him (see Hebrews 5:5–6, 10; 6:20; 7:11–17). Hebrews teaches that the Melchizedek Priesthood is greater than the Aaronic Priesthood, and it shows that salvation is found not in the law of Moses or in the ordinances administered by Levitical priests but in Jesus Christ and the ordinances of the Melchizedek Priesthood (see Hebrews 7:5–28). Hebrews 11:1–12:4 provides a notable discourse on faith and teaches how individuals can trust in Jesus Christ. (See Bible Dictionary, "Pauline Epistles: Epistle to the Hebrews.")

Outline

Hebrews 1–6 Jesus Christ is in the express image of the Father. He is greater than the angels and all the prophets who preceded Him, including Moses. The ancient Israelites who were brought out of Egypt failed to enter the Lord's rest because they hardened their hearts against Jesus Christ and His servant Moses. As the Great High Priest, Jesus is superior to all the Mosaic high priests. Through His suffering, Christ was perfected. We can enter the Lord's rest and "go on unto perfection" through the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel (Hebrews 6:1).

Hebrews 7–13 The Melchizedek Priesthood administers the gospel and is greater than the Aaronic Priesthood. The tabernacle and the Mosaic ordinances foreshadowed Christ's ministry. Jesus Christ fulfilled the law of Moses through the shedding of His blood, through which we may obtain salvation and a remission of our sins. By faith, the prophets and other men and women performed righteous works and miracles.

LESSON 135

Hebrews 1–4

Introduction

Paul taught the Saints about the true nature of Jesus Christ. He also taught them about the Atonement of Jesus Christ and about some of the blessings that come as a result of the Atonement. Paul shared the experience

of the ancient Israelites wandering in the wilderness to teach the Saints what they must do to enter into the rest of the Lord.

Suggestions for Teaching

Hebrews 1

Paul teaches about the nature of Jesus Christ

Read aloud the following scenarios:

1. A young woman is tired of always being the “good girl” because she doesn’t participate with her friends in some of their activities. She is considering relaxing her standards to be part of the group.
 2. A young man serving a full-time mission realizes that missionary work is more difficult than he anticipated, and he is thinking of returning home.
- What do these scenarios have in common?
 - What are some reasons people may think about giving up in their efforts to do what they know is right?

Briefly introduce the book of Hebrews by explaining that, under the pressure of various afflictions, some Jewish converts (referred to as Hebrews) were withdrawing from Church meetings and returning to the relative safety of traditional Jewish worship, which did not include a belief in Jesus Christ (see Hebrews 10:25, 38–39). Paul wrote this epistle to encourage these Church members to remain faithful to Jesus Christ.

Invite students to look for truths as they study Hebrews that can help them remain faithful to Jesus Christ when they may feel like giving up.

Invite students to read Hebrews 1:1–3, 10 silently, looking for doctrines Paul taught the Jewish Saints about Jesus Christ.

After sufficient time, invite several students to write on the board the truths they found. Students may use different words, but make sure statements similar to the following truths are written on the board:

Jesus Christ created the heavens and the earth (see Hebrews 1:2, 10).

Jesus Christ speaks for the Father (see Hebrews 1:2).

Jesus Christ is the heir of the Father (see Hebrews 1:2).

Jesus Christ is in the express image of the Father (see Hebrews 1:3).

Jesus Christ upholds all things by the word of His power (see Hebrews 1:3).

Jesus Christ purges our sins (see Hebrews 1:3).

Jesus Christ reigns at the right hand of the Father (see Hebrews 1:3).

You may need to explain that the phrase “express image of the Father” means that Jesus Christ both physically and spiritually personifies Heavenly Father and shares His divine character, and the phrase “upholding all things by the word of His power” indicates that Jesus Christ is all powerful.

- How might knowing these truths help someone who is struggling to remain faithful to Jesus Christ and His gospel?

Invite students to ponder which of these truths might be helpful to them if they are tempted to turn away from doing the Lord’s will.

Identify doctrines and principles

One central purpose of the scriptures is to teach doctrines and principles of the gospel. Identifying doctrines and principles as they are found in the scriptures is one of the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning. Learning how to identify them takes thoughtful effort and practice. It is important that when they are identified, they are clearly and simply stated to ensure these truths are clear in students’ minds.

Explain that a theme in the book of Hebrews is the superiority of Jesus Christ. For example, as recorded in Hebrews 1:4–14, Paul showed that Jesus Christ is greater than the angels. Later in his epistle, he continued to show the excellency and superiority of Christ.

- How would knowing that Jesus Christ is greater than all things help someone who is struggling to remain faithful to Him?

Encourage students to continue looking for this theme as they study the remainder of Hebrews.

Hebrews 2

Paul teaches that Jesus Christ is the Captain of our salvation

Ask students to consider how they go about selecting a captain or leader for different teams or groups they may participate in (for example, athletics, debate, drama, or school clubs).

- What qualifications do you look for when selecting a captain or leader?

Explain that in Hebrews 2, Paul explained more about the nature and identity of Jesus Christ to the Jewish converts to help them see why they should continue to follow Jesus Christ. Invite a student to read Hebrews 2:10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul referred to Jesus Christ.

- What is Jesus Christ the captain of? (Write the following truth on the board: **Jesus Christ is the Captain of our salvation.**)
- In what way is Jesus Christ the Captain of our salvation?

Divide students into pairs, and assign one student in each pair to read Hebrews 2:8–13 and the other student to read Hebrews 2:14–18. Invite students to look for phrases that describe why the Savior was qualified to be the Captain of our salvation. (Explain that the phrase “to make reconciliation for the sins of the people” in verse 17 means that Christ atoned for our sins, allowing us to be reconciled, or brought into a harmonious relationship, with Heavenly Father.)

After sufficient time, ask students to report what they found to their partners. Then ask the class:

- According to verse 9, what did Jesus Christ do for all people?
- According to verse 14, who did the Savior conquer through His Atonement?

Point out that Paul not only referred to the Savior as the Captain of our salvation, but he also called Him “a merciful and faithful high priest” (verse 17). Paul likened Jesus Christ to a Jewish high priest because the high priest was viewed as a mediator between the people and God.

- According to verse 17, what enabled Jesus to be such a merciful and faithful high priest?
- According to verse 18, why is the Savior able to succor (help) us? (See also Alma 7:11–13.)

Explain that in Hebrews 4:14–16 Paul provided additional insight to his teaching about how the Savior is a merciful and faithful high priest. Invite a student to read these verses aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what makes Jesus Christ such a great high priest. Invite students to report what they find.

- Based on what you learned from Hebrews 2:14–18 and 4:14–16, why is Jesus Christ able to understand us perfectly and sympathize with all our frailties and imperfections? (Help students identify the following truth: **Because Jesus Christ suffered and was tempted in all things, He understands us perfectly and can help us in times of need.** Write this truth on the board.)
- According to Hebrews 4:16, what can understanding this truth help us do?
- What do you think it means to come boldly to the throne of grace?

Invite students to share their feelings about how the truths in Hebrews 2 can help them be confident in their decision to follow Jesus Christ as their leader.

Hebrews 3–4

Paul teaches how we can enter into the Lord's rest

Invite students to write in their scripture study journals or class notebooks something that causes them temporal or spiritual anxiety or concern.

- How can we find peace and rest from these and other sources of turmoil and anxiety?

Remind students that the Jewish Saints were experiencing persecutions for living the gospel. Explain that in Hebrews 3 and 4, Paul referred to an experience recorded in the Old Testament to teach the Saints how to find rest in this life and the next.

Explain that after being freed from Egypt, the people of ancient Israel provoked the Lord to anger and were therefore not allowed to enter into the Lord's rest (see Numbers 14; Jacob 1:7–8; Alma 12:33–37; 13:6, 12–13, 28–29). Invite students to mark the phrase “my rest” in Hebrews 3:11.

Point out that Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained what it means to enter into the Lord's rest. Invite a student to read the following statement by Elder McConkie aloud, and ask students to listen for what it means to enter the rest of the Lord.



“True saints enter into the rest of the Lord while in this life, and by abiding in the truth, they continue in that blessed state until they rest with the Lord in heaven. . . . The rest of the Lord, where mortals are concerned, is to gain a perfect knowledge of the divinity of the great latter-day work. . . . The rest of the Lord, in eternity, is to inherit eternal life, to gain the fulness of the Lord's glory. (D. & C. 84:24.)” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 633).

- What does it mean for us to enter into the Lord's rest in this life? After we die?

Read Hebrews 4:1 aloud and ask students to follow along, looking for what Paul was concerned that some members of the Church would fail to do.

- What was Paul's concern? (That some Church members would fail to enter into the Lord's rest.)

Write the following scriptures on the board: *Hebrews 3:7–8, 12–15, 18–19; 4:2–3, 6–7, 11.*

Ask the class to silently read these verses, looking for what Paul taught about how we can enter into the rest of the Lord. (Encourage students to read the Joseph Smith Translation for Hebrews 4:3 in the Bible appendix.) After sufficient time, ask students to report what they found.

- What do you think the phrase “if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end” (Hebrews 3:14) means?
- What do you think it means to “harden not your hearts”? (Hebrews 3:15; 4:7). (To keep your heart open, willing, and obedient to God and His commandments.)
- What did Paul teach about how to enter the Lord's rest? (From students' responses, write the following principle on the board: **If we remain faithful to the Savior and harden not our hearts, we will enter into the rest of the Lord.**)
- How does keeping our hearts open to God's purpose and plan for us prepare us to enter into the rest of the Lord?
- How might we be blessed in this life by seeking to enter into the rest of the Lord?

Ask students to ponder how being faithful to the Savior and keeping their hearts open to Him has helped them find rest in spite of problems or anxieties they may be experiencing. Invite a few students to share their thoughts with the class.

Invite students to write in their scripture study journals what they will do to remain faithful to Jesus Christ and keep their hearts open to Him.

Home-Study Lesson

2 Timothy 1—Hebrews 4 (Unit 27)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles your students learned as they studied 2 Timothy 1–Hebrews 4 (unit 27) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (2 Timothy)

In this epistle of Paul to Timothy, students learned the following truths: As we earnestly seek to have the Spirit to be with us, we can overcome fear and be unashamed of our testimony of Jesus Christ. As we endure hardships and remain faithful to the Lord, we can help ourselves and others obtain salvation through Jesus Christ. If we purge ourselves of iniquity, we can better serve the Lord. If we remain faithful in all the Lord requires of us, we will receive a crown of righteousness. Students also learned about the perils of our day and the value of the scriptures.

Day 2 (Titus)

As students studied Paul's epistle to Titus, a Church leader in Crete, they learned that as we hold fast to the word of God, we will be able to use true doctrine to encourage others to live the gospel of Jesus Christ and to refute those who oppose it. Paul encouraged followers of Jesus Christ to be good examples to others. He also testified that Jesus Christ gave Himself for us so that He could redeem us and purify us.

Day 3 (Philemon)

In studying Paul's plea to Philemon to regard a newly converted escaped slave as a brother in the gospel, students learned that we are brothers and sisters in the gospel. They also learned that disciples of Jesus Christ extend mercy and forgiveness to others.

Day 4 (Hebrews 1–4)

As students studied Paul's letter to the Hebrews, they learned a number of doctrines about the Savior, including His role as the Creator and His likeness to Heavenly Father. These doctrines led students to identify the truth that Jesus Christ is the Captain of our salvation. They also learned that because Jesus Christ suffered and was tempted in all things, He understands us perfectly and can help us in times of need.

Introduction

This lesson explores Paul's prophecies of peril found in the last days as well as his own day. Paul instructed Timothy and future readers to remain faithful, amidst these perils, to the truths they have already learned and to use the scriptures as a source of understanding, correction, and instruction.

Suggestions for Teaching

2 Timothy 3

Paul describes the perilous times of the last days

Before class begins, ask the first two or three students who arrive to each draw a picture on the board of a dangerous or risky situation. After class begins, ask the class the following question:

- What words would you use to describe the situations drawn on the board?

Explain that as part of his Second Epistle to Timothy, Paul prophesied of conditions in his day and ours. Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 3:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Paul described the times we live in.

- How did Paul describe the times we live in? (If needed, explain that the word *perilous* means full of danger or risk.)
- What are some of the moral or spiritual perils or dangers you have seen in our day?

Divide students into pairs. Provide each pair with a copy of the following chart. Invite each pair to read 2 Timothy 3:2–7 and answer the questions on the chart. Instruct them to use the footnotes to help with difficult words.

2 Timothy 3:2–7

What are some examples of the latter-day conditions Paul described?	Which of these conditions have you seen in our day? (Identify two or three of them.) Why are these conditions so dangerous?

After sufficient time, invite students to report to the class how they answered the questions in the chart, including why these conditions are so dangerous.

Ask students to ponder if they ever worry that they might be affected by some of the dangers Paul mentioned in the verses they studied.

- According to the end of 2 Timothy 3:5, what did Paul encourage Timothy to do that can also help us in our day? (To turn away from wickedness.)

Explain that despite the seriousness of these disturbing conditions, we can find help and protection. Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 3:14–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught could help us turn away from these perils.

- What did Paul teach about resisting the perils he described?
- What do you think it means in verse 14 to “continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of”?

Invite students to identify a principle in 2 Timothy 3:14–15 that will help us overcome the spiritual perils of the last days. (After students respond, write the following on the board: **If we continue in the truths we have learned from trusted sources and in the scriptures, we can overcome the spiritual peril of the last days.**)

- How can relying on the scriptures and on the truths we have learned help us overcome the perils of our day?
- When have you chosen to rely on truths you have learned? How were you blessed for doing so? (You could have students answer these questions first in their class notebooks or scripture study journals, and then invite a few students to share with the class what they wrote.)

Remind students that 2 Timothy 3:15–17 is a scripture mastery passage. Invite a student to read 2 Timothy 3:15–17 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Paul taught about the scriptures. You might want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What did Paul teach about studying the scriptures that can help us in our day? (Help the class identify the following principle: **As we study the scriptures, we can learn doctrine and receive correction and instruction that will help us grow toward perfection.** Write this principle on the board.)

Ask students to think of a time when the scriptures—perhaps a passage they have studied in the New Testament—helped them in one of the following ways:

1. By helping them understand a doctrine of the gospel
2. By offering reproof or correction concerning something in their thinking, choices, or behavior that was not right
3. By providing an answer to a prayer or giving instruction on how to solve a problem

Give students time to think of experiences, and then invite a few students to share what they thought of with the class.

- Considering what we have learned about the value of the scriptures, why do you think we are encouraged to study them daily?

Provide students with a copy of the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite a student to read it aloud, and ask the class to look for Elder Scott’s counsel and promise with regard to scripture study.



“Don’t yield to Satan’s lie that you don’t have time to study the scriptures. Choose to take time to study them. Feasting on the word of God each day is more important than sleep, school, work, television shows, video games, or social media.

You may need to reorganize your priorities to provide time for the study of the word of God. If so, do it!

“. . . As you dedicate time every day, personally and with your family, to the study of God’s word, peace will prevail in your life” (“Make the Exercise of Faith Your First Priority,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 93).

Testify of the safety and peace that come to those who continue in the truths found in the scriptures.

Invite students to fold a piece of paper into thirds, creating three columns. Ask them to unfold the paper and write *Doctrine* at the top of the first column, *Reproof and correction* at the top of the second column, and *Instruction in righteousness* at the top of the third column.

Invite students to use this paper as a bookmark in their scriptures for one week, writing in the appropriate section each time they read a scripture that fulfills one of these purposes. For example, under the heading “Doctrine,” students could write a scripture reference and the doctrine or principle they learn from that reference. Under the heading “Reproof and correction,” they could write the scripture reference and how the passage corrects false ideas. And under “Instruction in righteousness,” they could record passages that give them insight into what good works they can do.

Encourage students to bring their papers to class in one week to report on their experiences. You may want to place a reminder in your scriptures or manual to have a short discussion reviewing how they applied this scripture mastery passage.

Next Unit (Hebrews 5–James 1)

Encourage students to find answers to the following questions as they study the next unit: How are young men called to the priesthood? Who is mentioned in Hebrews as having great faith? Do you recognize any of the men and women you learn about in this unit? What verse of scripture did Joseph Smith read that led him to “ask of God,” which resulted in the First Vision? What is pure religion?

Hebrews 5–6

Introduction

Paul taught that those who receive the priesthood must be called of God and that Jesus Christ was “called of God [to be] an high priest after the order of Melchisedec”

(Hebrews 5:10). Paul encouraged Church members to have diligence, faith, patience, and hope in obtaining God’s promises.

Foster a climate of love and respect

When students feel loved, trusted, and valued by you and their fellow classmates, they will come to class more open to the influence of the Spirit and with a stronger desire to participate. Showing genuine interest in students’ lives and giving each student an opportunity to participate can help them feel your love and respect for them.

Suggestions for Teaching

Hebrews 5

Paul teaches that those who receive the priesthood must be called of God

Before class, write each of the following titles on a separate sheet of paper: *Doctor* and *Law Enforcement Officer*. Invite two students to come to the front of the class and take one of the papers. Then ask the following questions:

- Even though these students hold papers displaying the proper titles, what concerns would you have if [use the name of the student holding the “Doctor” paper] attempted to operate on you after you had been in an accident?
- How would you respond if [use the name of the student holding the “Law Enforcement Officer” paper] tried to give you a ticket?
- Why would you be reluctant to allow these students to perform the tasks associated with the titles they took upon themselves? (These students lack the authority and ability to perform those tasks.)

Explain that just as society has established necessary qualifications and ways to obtain authority to carry out certain responsibilities, God has established necessary qualifications (such as faithfulness and worthiness) and ways to obtain authority to carry out certain responsibilities in His Church. Invite students as they study Hebrews 5 to look for the pattern God has established for obtaining this authority.

Remind students that, as recorded in Hebrews 4:14–16, Paul described the Savior as “a great high priest” (verse 14). Invite a student to read Hebrews 5:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about the role of the high priest among the Israelites.

- What was the role of the high priest among the Israelites?

Explain that the office of high priest referred to in these verses was, under the law of Moses, the presiding office in the Aaronic Priesthood. Aaron, Moses’s brother, was “the first high priest of the Aaronic order.” The office was hereditary; after the time of Aaron, the high priest was selected from among the firstborn descendants of Aaron and his sons. The high priest usually served for the remainder of his life, but this office was eventually seized by wicked men. “High priests were inappropriately appointed and deposed at pleasure by Herod and the Romans alike. The office was filled by 28 different men between 37 B.C. and A.D. 68” (Bible Dictionary, “High priest”).

Invite a student to read Hebrews 5:4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the high priest was to be chosen.

- How was the high priest to be chosen?

To help students understand how Aaron was “called of God” (verse 4), invite a student to read Exodus 28:1 aloud. Before the student reads this verse, explain that this interaction took place between God and Moses on Mount Sinai.

- How was Aaron called of God to be ordained to the priesthood?
- Why is it significant that the Lord gave this instruction to Moses rather than to someone else? (Moses was the prophet and was therefore authorized to receive such revelation and to govern the use of the priesthood on earth.)

- What must occur in order for someone to be ordained to the priesthood? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Those who are ordained to the priesthood must be called of God by revelation through His authorized servants.** You may want to explain that in the Church today, authorized priesthood leaders are to interview each candidate for ordination and seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost to determine a candidate’s readiness and worthiness to be ordained to the priesthood. See also John 15:16.)
- How does this truth relate to the process of calling people to serve in positions in the Church?

Invite a student to read the fifth article of faith aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the truth they identified in Hebrews 5:4 is reflected in the fifth article of faith. Explain that *prophecy* refers to revelation.

- According to this article of faith, what else must occur in order for someone to be authorized “to preach the Gospel and administer in [its] ordinances”?

Display the picture *Moses Gives Aaron the Priesthood* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 15; see also LDS.org). Point out that both the Old and New Testaments record that prophets, priesthood holders, and gospel teachers received their callings by the laying on of hands by an authorized priesthood holder (see Numbers 27:18–23; Acts 6:6; 13:2–3; 1 Timothy 4:14).

- How does the process of calling people to positions in the Church today reflect the pattern that was established in the scriptures?
- Why is it important to know that priesthood authority can be received only in this way?

Invite a student to read Hebrews 5:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who gave the Savior His authority. Point out that verse 5 quotes Psalm 2:7 and that verse 6 quotes Psalm 110:4.

- Who gave the Savior His authority? (Heavenly Father.)
- What priesthood does Jesus Christ hold? (The Melchizedek Priesthood. Point out that this priesthood was originally named after the Savior [see D&C 107:2–4].)

Invite a student to read Hebrews 5:7–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus Christ became. Explain that Hebrews 5:7–8 refers to Melchizedek, a prophet and king who lived during the time of Abraham. However, because Melchizedek was a type of Christ, these verses also relate to the Savior (see Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 3:157).

- According to Hebrews 5:9, what did the Savior become?
- How is Jesus Christ “the author of eternal salvation” to all who obey Him?

Summarize Hebrews 5:11–14 by explaining that Paul expressed a desire to teach more on this subject but said the people lacked the spiritual understanding and maturity to understand more advanced teachings.

Hebrews 6

The Saints are encouraged to have diligence, faith, patience, and hope in obtaining God’s promises

- What are examples of blessings that God has promised to His children? (Possible answers include peace, happiness, forgiveness, answers to prayer, blessings included in patriarchal blessings, resurrection, and eternal life. Point out that some blessings are conditional upon our choices.)
- What are examples of circumstances in which we might wonder whether we will ever receive a particular promised blessing?

Ask students to write in their scripture study journals or on a piece of paper a promised blessing they are looking forward to receiving. Invite them to look for truths in Hebrews 6 that can help them receive blessings God has promised.

Invite a student to read Hebrews 6:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught the Saints to work toward. Point out that Joseph Smith Translation, Hebrews 6:1 (in Hebrews 6:1, footnote *a*) states, “Therefore *not* leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ” (italics added) and that Joseph Smith Translation, Hebrews 6:3 (in the Bible appendix) states, “And we will go on unto perfection if God permit.”



- According to verse 1, what did Paul teach the Saints to work toward? (Explain that perfection refers to the state of being “complete, whole, or fully developed. . . . True followers of Christ may become perfect through His grace and Atonement” [Guide to the Scriptures, “Perfect,” scriptures.lds.org].)
- What doctrines mentioned in these verses form the foundation we should build upon as we work toward perfection?

Summarize Hebrews 6:4–8 by explaining that Paul described those who are sons of perdition, who have a perfect knowledge of God and then turn away from this truth, rebel against the Savior, and refuse to repent (see also D&C 29:44–45; 76:31–38). Paul contrasted these individuals with the faithful Saints that he was addressing in this epistle.

Invite students to read Hebrews 6:9–10 silently, looking for what Paul commended the Hebrew Saints for. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Hebrews 6:11–15. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul desired of the Saints.

- What did Paul desire of the Saints?

Explain that the phrase “shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope” (verse 11) refers to being diligent until we receive God’s promised blessings.

- How was Abraham an example of diligence, faith, and patience in seeking God’s promised blessings?
- What principle can we learn about what we must do to inherit the blessings God has promised? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **Through diligence to the end, faith in Jesus Christ, and patience, we can inherit the blessings God has promised.** Write this principle on the board.)

Underline the words *diligence*, *faith*, and *patience* on the board. Ask students to define these words in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. After sufficient time, ask several students to report what they wrote.

- What can be challenging about demonstrating these attributes?
- Why do you think we need these attributes in order to “go on unto perfection”? (Hebrews 6:1).
- When have you received a promised blessing through diligence, faith in Jesus Christ, and patience?

Invite a student to read Hebrews 6:16–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about hope and God’s promises. You may need to explain that *immutable* (verse 18) means unchangeable.

- What truth can we learn from Paul’s teachings about hope? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Our hope in God’s promises is a spiritual anchor for our souls.** Write this truth on the board.)

Explain that as used in the scriptures, *hope* means “the confident expectation of and longing for the promised blessings of righteousness” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Hope,” scriptures.lds.org).

- Based on Paul’s teachings about God in verses 17–18, why can we have confidence in God’s promises?
- How can our hope in God’s promises help us to be diligent and patient and to have faith, particularly when we experience challenges?

Invite a student to draw a picture of an anchor on the board.

- What does an anchor do for a ship?
- How has your hope in God’s promises been a spiritual anchor for you?

Invite students to write a goal to more fully develop diligence, faith, patience, and hope. You might encourage them to begin by writing a plan for developing one of these attributes and then to focus on developing another one. Encourage them to apply what they wrote.



LESSON 137

Hebrews 7–10

Introduction

Paul taught that Jesus Christ is the Mediator of the “new covenant” (Hebrews 8:8). He explained that Christ’s sacrifice is superior to the Mosaic sacrifices and that the Mosaic

ordinances were meant to point the people to the Savior and His Atonement.

Suggestions for Teaching

Hebrews 7–8

Paul taught that Jesus Christ is the Mediator of the new covenant

Using a flashlight, create a shadow of a small object (such as keys or scissors) on the board. Ask students if they can identify the object by looking only at its shadow. Point out that we can often determine what an object is by looking at its shadow.

Display the picture *Jesus Praying in Gethsemane* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 56; see also LDS.org). Explain that the Old Testament records ceremonies and ordinances that functioned as types and shadows, or that symbolized and foreshadowed the Savior and His Atonement.

- What are examples recorded in the Old Testament of types and shadows of Jesus Christ and His Atonement?

Explain that every aspect of the law of Moses was intended to function as a type or shadow that pointed the Israelites to Jesus Christ and His atoning sacrifice (see 2 Nephi 11:4; Jacob 4:4–5). Paul explained how several parts of the law did this. He wanted to help the Jewish Saints remain faithful to Jesus Christ instead of reverting to following the law of Moses.

Summarize Hebrews 7:1–22 by explaining that Paul cited an Old Testament prophecy about the coming of a priest “after the order of Melchizedek” (Psalm 110:4; see also Hebrews 7:1). He taught that Jesus Christ fulfilled this prophecy. Melchizedek was a righteous king and the high priest who presided over Abraham (see Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 14:25–40 [in the Bible appendix]; Alma 13:14–19; Bible Dictionary, “Melchizedek”). Paul used Melchizedek as a type and shadow of Jesus Christ. He taught that Jesus Christ and His priesthood were necessary because the Levitical Priesthood, along with the law of Moses it administered, could not perfect God’s children (see Hebrews 7:11). You may want to explain that the Levitical Priesthood refers to the authority of the Aaronic Priesthood held by members of the tribe of Levi (see Bible Dictionary, “Aaronic Priesthood”).

Display the picture *Moses Gives Aaron the Priesthood* (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 15; see also LDS.org) alongside the picture *Jesus Praying in Gethsemane*. Explain that as recorded in Hebrews 7, Paul compared the Levitical priests to Jesus Christ. You might explain that one role of a Levitical priest was to act as a mediator, symbolically standing between the people and God to resolve their differences.

Write *Hebrews 7:23–28* on the board. Divide students into pairs, and invite each pair to read these verses aloud together. Ask them to also read Joseph Smith Translation, Hebrews 7:25–26. This scripture is located in the Bible appendix. Invite one student in each pair to look for phrases that describe the Levitical priests, and ask the other student in the pair to look for phrases that describe Jesus Christ. Explain that the word *they* in Hebrews 7:23 refers to the priests.

After sufficient time, invite the students who looked for phrases describing the priests to report what they found. Write their responses on the board under the picture of Moses and Aaron. (Their answers may include the following: the priests needed to be replaced by other priests when they died [see Hebrews 7:23]; they offered sacrifices daily for their own sins and for the people’s sins [see Hebrews 7:27]; and the priests had infirmities [see Hebrews 7:28].)



Help students understand scriptural symbolism

“The scriptures are rich in symbolism and figurative expression. Ceremonies and ordinances are symbolic in their performance, and all bear record of Jesus Christ. . . . The tabernacle ceremony was symbolic of eternal things (Heb. 8–10), as was the entire law of Moses, containing types and shadows of Christ” (Bible Dictionary, “Symbolism”). As you help students understand these types and shadows, their understanding and love of the gospel will deepen.



Invite the students who looked for phrases describing Jesus Christ to report what they found. Write their responses on the board under the picture of Jesus Christ. (Their answers should include statements like the following: Jesus Christ and His priesthood are “unchangeable,” or eternal [Hebrews 7:24]; He can save those who “come unto God by him” [Hebrews 7:25]; He lives to “make intercession for [us]” [Hebrews 7:25]; He was sinless and therefore “needeth not offer sacrifice for his own sins” [Joseph Smith Translation, Hebrews 7:26]; He only had to offer one sacrifice, which was “for the sins of the people” [Joseph Smith Translation, Hebrews 7:26]; and He is “consecrated for evermore” [Hebrews 7:28].)

Explain that the phrase “he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25) means that the Savior’s mission is to intervene on our behalf to help us return to God.

- How would you explain the differences between Jesus Christ and the Levitical priests?

Invite a student to read Hebrews 8:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what all high priests, including Jesus Christ, were ordained, or called, to do.

- What were the high priests ordained to do?

Invite a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, Hebrews 8:4 (in Hebrews 8:4, footnote *a*). Ask the class to follow along, looking for the sacrifice Jesus Christ offered.

- What truth can we learn from this verse about what Jesus Christ did for us? (Using their own words, students should identify the following truth: **Jesus Christ offered His own life as a sacrifice for our sins.**)
- What phrases listed on the board help us understand why Jesus Christ was able to offer His own life as a sacrifice for our sins?

Invite students to ponder what the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ means to them. Ask them to complete one of the following statements in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

1. I am grateful for my Savior because . . .
2. I know my Savior loves me because . . .
3. I have been blessed by the Atonement because . . .

After sufficient time, invite a few students to share what they wrote if they feel it is not too personal.

Summarize Hebrews 8:5–13 by explaining that because of His sacrifice, Jesus Christ became “the mediator of a better covenant” (verse 6), a covenant which, if accepted by the people, would help them come to “know the Lord” (verse 11) and be cleansed from their iniquities.

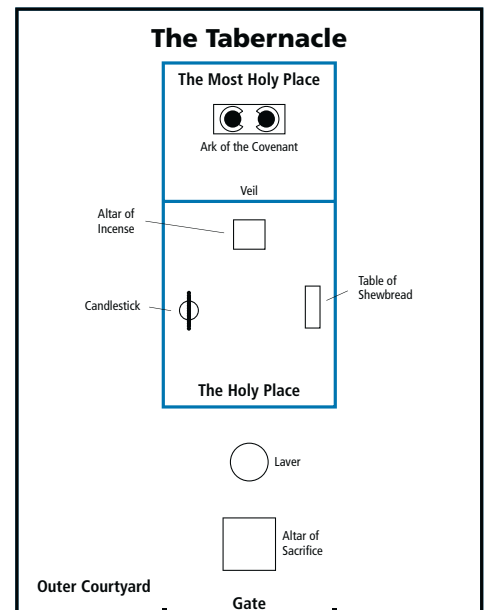
Hebrews 9–10

Paul shows how the Mosaic ordinances pointed to the Atonement

Before class, draw the accompanying diagram on the board.

Explain that as recorded in Hebrews 9–10, Paul continued to compare the Levitical high priests to Jesus Christ by discussing the duties the priests performed on the Day of Atonement. Invite a student to read aloud the following paragraph:

Once a year on the Jewish holy day called the Day of Atonement (also called Yom Kippur), the high priest was allowed to enter the Most Holy Place (also called the Holy of Holies) in the tabernacle or, later, the Jerusalem temple. There, the high priest sacrificed a bullock and a he-goat. He sprinkled the animals’ blood in designated places in the Most Holy Place to symbolize Christ’s Atonement for the priest’s sins and for the people’s sins. The



high priest then symbolically transferred the people's sins onto another he-goat (called the scapegoat), which was then driven into the wilderness, signifying the removal of the people's sins. He also sacrificed two rams as burnt offerings for himself and the people. (See Bible Dictionary, "Fasts"; see also Leviticus 16:22.)

Assign half of the class to read Hebrews 9:11, 12, 24, 28 and the other half to read Hebrews 10:1, 4, 10–12. Ask each group to read their assigned verses silently, looking for how the events on the Day of Atonement were types and shadows of Jesus Christ's sacrifice. After sufficient time, invite students from each group to report what they found. Then ask:

- Just as the high priests entered the Most Holy Place of the tabernacle on the Day of Atonement, what "holy place" (Hebrews 9:12) could the Savior enter because of His Atonement? (Heavenly Father's presence, or celestial glory.)
- What could Jesus Christ's sacrifice do that the "blood of bulls and of goats" (Hebrews 10:4) could not?
- Why, then, did the high priests perform these sacrifices on the Day of Atonement? (To demonstrate "a shadow of the good things to come" [Hebrews 10:1], or to point to the Savior's Atonement.)

Invite a student to read Hebrews 10:17–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Atonement makes possible.

- According to verse 19, where can we enter because of Jesus's sacrifice? (The "holiest" place, or God's presence in the celestial kingdom.)
- According to verse 20, how do we enter God's presence?

Explain that the "new and living way" refers to the gospel of Jesus Christ, or the plan by which we can be forgiven and sanctified through His Atonement and thereby become worthy to return to God's presence.

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *Because of Jesus Christ's Atonement, we can enter the celestial kingdom if . . .*

Invite a student to read Hebrews 10:22–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what we must do to enter the celestial kingdom. Invite students to report what they find.

Complete the statement on the board so that it reads as follows: **Because of Jesus Christ's Atonement, we can enter the celestial kingdom if we hold fast to our faith in Him.**

- What do you think it means to "hold fast" (verse 23) to our faith in Jesus Christ?

Invite a student to read Hebrews 10:35–38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the counsel Paul gave that can help us hold fast to our faith in Jesus Christ.

- What can we do to hold fast to our faith in Jesus Christ?
- What does it mean to "cast not away . . . your confidence"? (verse 35).

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, in which he explains what it means to "cast not away [our] confidence":



"In Latter-day Saint talk that is to say, Sure it is tough—before you join the Church, while you are trying to join, and after you have joined. That is the way it has always been, Paul says, but don't draw back. Don't panic and retreat. Don't lose your confidence. Don't forget how you once felt. Don't distrust the experience you had. That tenacity is what saved Moses and Joseph Smith when the adversary confronted them, and it is what will save you" ("Cast Not Away Therefore Your Confidence," *Ensign*, Mar. 2000, 8).

- Whom do you know who is a good example of holding fast to his or her faith in Jesus Christ?

Invite students to ponder their commitment to hold fast to their faith in Jesus Christ. Ask them to write down how they will increase their commitment and ability to do this.

Hebrews 11

Introduction

Paul taught Church members about faith. He cited examples of righteous men and women from the Old Testament who exercised faith in Jesus Christ and thereby


performed miracles, endured hardships, and received great blessings.

Suggestions for Teaching

Hebrews 11:1–6

Paul teaches Church members about faith

Read the following account of a young woman in the Philippines. Invite students to listen for how the young woman exercised faith.

 Instead of reading the account, you could show the video “Pure and Simple Faith” (5:22), from which the following account is adapted. This video is available on LDS.org. Stop the video after the young woman has the impression to buy the things she needs (time code 2:36).

A young woman in the Philippines explained that one summer her father had to go away to work. When he received his pay he would send it home to his family. One Saturday, the family had used all the money except for two bills worth 20 pesos each. As the young woman looked at the list of items her family needed, she knew they would not have enough money to buy all of the items and pay the fare to transport her family to church the next day. She asked her mother what she should do. Her mother told her to buy the items and that God would provide the means for the fare.

The young woman prayed that she could buy the items on the list and still have enough money to pay for transportation to church the next day. She first had to buy charcoal so her family would have fuel to cook. She was shocked when she found out that the price of a bag of charcoal had doubled from 5 pesos to 10 pesos. Knowing that her family needed the fuel to cook their food, she bought two bags of charcoal for a total of 20 pesos. This young woman prayed even more fervently that her family would still be able to go to church. As she prayed, something whispered to her: “Go on and buy the things you need. It’s all right.” So she continued on her way with only 20 pesos. (Adapted from the video “Pure and Simple Faith,” LDS.org.)

- In what ways did this young woman exercise faith?

Invite a student to read Hebrews 11:1 aloud as well as Joseph Smith Translation, Hebrews 11:1 (in Hebrews 11:1, footnote *b*). Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught about faith.

- According to verse 1, what is faith? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**)

Explain that Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles used Hebrews 11:1 as well as other sources (Alma 32:21; *Lectures on Faith*) to explain three basic elements of faith in Jesus Christ. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bednar:



“These teachings highlight three basic elements of faith: (1) faith as the *assurance* of things hoped for that are true, (2) faith as the *evidence* of things not seen, and (3) faith as the principle of *action* in all intelligent beings. I describe these three components of faith in the Savior as simultaneously facing the future, looking to the past, and initiating action in the present” (“Seek Learning by Faith,” *Ensign*, Sept. 2007, 62).

Write the following on the board: *Assurance—facing the future; Evidence—looking to the past; Action—initiating action in the present.* Explain that Elder Bednar taught that these three

elements of faith—assurance, evidence, and action—work together as we face the future, look to the past, and take action in the present.

- How is exercising faith in Jesus Christ different from merely believing in Him?
- How does the Filipino young woman’s account illustrate the three elements of faith Elder Bednar described?
- What can happen when we exercise faith in Christ?

Invite a student to read Hebrews 11:2–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for examples Paul used to illustrate what can happen when people exercise faith in Jesus Christ.

- What happened because these people exercised faith in Jesus Christ?

Invite students to read Hebrews 11:6 silently, looking for what Paul taught about faith.

- What did Paul teach about faith?
- Based on what Paul taught, what must we do to please God? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **to please God we must exercise our faith by coming unto Him, believing in Him, and believing that He rewards those who diligently seek Him.** You may want to suggest that students mark this truth in verse 6.)

Invite a student to read aloud the conclusion of the Filipino young woman’s account. Ask the class to listen for what happened because the young woman exercised faith in Jesus Christ.

 If you chose to show the video instead, play the rest of “Pure and Simple Faith” (time code 2:36 to the end).

As the young woman went to pay for the other items, she reached into her pocket and felt a big lump of paper. When she opened it she found an additional five bills worth 20 pesos each wrapped in her one remaining 20-peso bill. At that moment she knew she had enough to purchase the things her family needed and pay the fare for her family to go to church. This young woman explained that during this experience she felt God’s help and God’s love for her. When she got home she thanked Heavenly Father for the miracle. (Adapted from “Pure and Simple Faith,” LDS.org.)

- What happened because this young woman exercised faith in Jesus Christ?
- How might this experience help the young woman exercise faith in the future? (Because she recognized the evidence that God was helping her during this experience, she can be assured that God will help her again in the future. Because of the evidence and assurance she received, she may have faith to take action in the present. If she continues to act, then this process of acting in faith will continue and her faith will grow stronger.)

Ask students to think of a time when they exercised faith. Invite a few students to share their experiences.

- How did that experience provide you with evidence that God will help you in the future?

Hebrews 11:7–40

Paul cites examples of righteous people from the Old Testament who exercised faith

- What are some situations that you face now or will face in the future that require you to exercise faith in Jesus Christ?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Hebrews 11:7–40 that can help them know the blessings they can receive as they exercise faith in Jesus Christ.

Write the words *by faith* and *through faith* on the board, and explain that Paul cited examples of righteous people in the Old Testament who exercised faith to assure his audience that they too would be blessed by exercising faith. Invite students to quickly scan Hebrews 11, looking for the phrases “by faith” and “through faith.” You may want to suggest that students mark these phrases.

Invite a student to read Hebrews 11:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Noah exercised faith in God. (You may want to explain that the phrase “moved with fear” means that Noah acted with hope and assurance based on God’s guidance [see footnotes *b* and *c*].)

- How did Noah exercise faith in God?

Marking and annotating scriptures

One of the most helpful ways for teachers and students to retain the things they learn is by marking and annotating scriptures. Consider inviting students to mark important words, passages, or verses in their scriptures. You could also invite them to mark doctrines and principles. As you invite students to mark their scriptures, do not promote any particular system of marking scriptures. Remember that students should not be compelled to mark their scriptures.

- Which elements of faith described by Elder Bednar (assurance, evidence, and action) are manifest in this account of Noah?
- In what ways are they manifested?

Write the following scripture references on the board: *Hebrews 11:8–10, 11–12, 17–19, 20–22, 23–28, 29–31*. Divide the class into six groups, and assign each group one of the references. (If you have a small class, assign each student one of the references, or divide the students into pairs and assign each pair more than one reference.) Invite each group to read their assigned reference together, looking for answers to the following questions (you may want to write these questions on the board):

Who exercised faith?

In what ways were the three elements of faith (assurance, evidence, and action) exemplified?

What situations do we face today that require similar faith?

After sufficient time, invite a student from each group to report their answers to the class.

Invite a student to read Hebrews 11:13–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what we can learn from the examples of Abraham, Sarah, and others about exercising faith. Explain that “better country” (verse 16) refers to eternal life.

- According to verse 13, what happened to Abraham and his wife Sarah as well as other faithful people?
- Why did they stay faithful even though they did not receive all of God’s promises in this life? (You may want to explain that to see the promised blessings “afar off” means to have hope and confidence to receive the blessings after they die.)
- How can their examples help us to remain faithful?

Write the following phrase on the board: *As we exercise faith in Jesus Christ, we can . . .* Invite students to write this phrase in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Hebrews 11:32–40. Ask a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, Hebrews 11:35 (in Hebrews 11:35, footnote *b*), and invite another student to read Joseph Smith Translation, Hebrews 11:40 (in Hebrews 11:40, footnote *a*). Ask the class to follow along, looking for how they can complete the phrase they wrote down. You may want to suggest that students mark words or phrases in their scriptures that stand out to them.

Ask students to complete the phrase based on verses 32–40. After sufficient time, invite several willing students to report what they wrote. Summarize students’ responses by writing the following principle on the board: **As we exercise faith in Jesus Christ, we can endure suffering, accomplish miracles, receive divine promises, strengthen our testimony of Him, and move toward perfection.**

- What are some ways we can exercise faith in Jesus Christ?
- What blessings have you seen come into someone’s life because that person exercised faith?

Invite students to think again about situations that require them or will require them to exercise faith in Jesus Christ.

Encourage them to set a goal to exercise faith in the Lord in those situations. Invite students to write down the goal by completing the phrase “By faith I will . . .”

LESSON 139

Hebrews 12–13

Introduction

Paul counseled the Jewish members of the Church to run the race of discipleship by following the example of Jesus Christ. He also explained the blessings of receiving the Lord's chastisement. Paul exhorted the Saints to do the will of God so they can be made perfect through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Note: Lesson 140 provides an opportunity for two students to teach. Select two students in advance and give them copies of the designated portions of lesson 140 so they can prepare. Encourage them to study the lesson material prayerfully and to seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost in their preparation and teaching.

Suggestions for Teaching

Hebrews 12

Paul counsels the Saints to run the race of life with faith and patience

On the board, draw a simple line drawing of a runner. Ask the class to describe what difficulties a runner might encounter as he or she runs a long-distance race. (You could also ask if any students in the class have run long-distance races and then ask a student who has what difficulties he or she has experienced when running a long-distance race.)

- What can motivate a runner to keep running even when he or she faces fatigue or other difficulties?
- In what ways is life as a disciple of Jesus Christ like an endurance race?
- What difficulties might we face as disciples of Jesus Christ?

Ask students to think about what difficulties they face (or have faced) as followers of Jesus Christ. Invite students to look for truths as they study Hebrews 12 that can help them to keep following Jesus Christ even when it becomes difficult.

Invite a student to read Hebrews 12:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul told the Saints they needed to do to successfully run the race of discipleship.

- What did Paul tell the Saints they needed to do to successfully run the race of discipleship?

Invite a student to the front of class, and give him or her a backpack to put on. Fill the backpack with rocks, then ask students to explain how wearing a backpack filled with rocks would affect a runner.

- In what ways are our sins like a backpack filled with rocks?

Ask the student to remove the backpack, and invite him or her to be seated.

- What does it mean to run the race of discipleship with patience?

Invite a student to read Hebrews 12:2–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul told the Saints to do that would help them put aside their sins and patiently endure opposition. Explain that the word *contradiction* in verse 3 refers to opposition (see verse 3, footnote *a*).

- Based on what Paul taught the Saints, what can help us put aside our sins and patiently endure opposition? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify a principle similar to the following: **As we look to the example of Jesus Christ, we can find strength to put aside our sins and patiently endure opposition.**)
- According to verse 2, what did Jesus Christ do that Paul told the Saints to look to as an example?

Display the picture *The Crucifixion* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 57; see also LDS.org), and explain that Paul told the Saints that Jesus Christ was willing to suffer death on the cross and endure the shame of the world because He knew the joy that He would receive if He remained faithful to Heavenly Father.



- How do you think looking to the example of Jesus Christ can help us when we are faced with suffering and obstacles?

Ask students to think about their present challenges and how looking to the example of Jesus Christ can help them with those challenges.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for how the example of Jesus Christ can help us put aside our sins and continue with patience.



“For His Atonement to be infinite and eternal, He had to feel what it was like to die not only physically but spiritually, to sense what it was like to have the divine Spirit withdraw, leaving one feeling totally, abjectly, hopelessly alone.

“But Jesus held on. He pressed on. The goodness in Him allowed faith to triumph even in a state of complete anguish. The trust He lived by told Him in spite of His feelings that divine compassion is never absent, that God is always faithful, that He never flees nor fails us” (“None Were with Him,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2009, 88).

Encourage students to set aside time each day, perhaps as part of their scripture study, to look to the example of Jesus Christ so they can find strength to put aside their sins and patiently endure opposition.

To prepare students to identify another principle Paul taught in Hebrews 12, invite them to think about a time when someone corrected them. Ask them to recall how they reacted to that correction.

- Why can it be difficult to receive correction from someone?
- What are some reasons you think people might seek to correct us, especially when those people know we may not like their correction?

Explain that as we run the race of discipleship, we can expect to be chastened, or corrected. Invite a student to read Hebrews 12:6–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who will correct us and why. In this context, the word *bastards* in verse 8 means those born out of wedlock, who were not considered legal heirs.

- Who will correct us as we run the race of discipleship?
- According to Paul, why does Heavenly Father chasten, or correct, us?
- In what ways is Heavenly Father’s chastening an indication of His love for His children?

Invite students to take 30 seconds to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals some of the ways Heavenly Father might correct us. Ask several students to report to the class what they wrote. Make sure students understand that although chastening can come in many ways, not every trial or suffering we experience comes from God.

- In verse 9, what did Paul say we should do when Heavenly Father corrects and chastens us?
- What does it mean to “be in subjection,” or submit, to Heavenly Father? (To be humble, teachable, and willing to make changes in our lives to align with His will.)

Write the following incomplete phrase on the board: *If we submit to chastening from Heavenly Father, we will . . .*

Explain that in verse 10, Paul acknowledged that our earthly fathers may sometimes chastise us in an imperfect way, but Heavenly Father’s chastening is perfect and is designed for our benefit. Invite a student to read Hebrews 12:10–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Paul taught will happen if we submit to chastening from Heavenly Father. Explain that the phrase “partakers of his holiness” in verse 10 refers to becoming more like God.

- How do Paul’s words in verse 11 describe how we might initially feel when we are chastened?
- According to verses 10–11, what will happen if we submit to chastening from Heavenly Father? (After students respond, complete the statement on the board as follows: **If we submit to chastening from Heavenly Father, we will become more like Him and have the peace that comes from righteousness.**)

Consider sharing an experience when you submitted to chastening from Heavenly Father and felt blessed for doing so. (Be sure not to share anything that is too sacred or personal.)

Hebrews 12:9

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

Invite students to ponder a time when they felt they were chastened by Heavenly Father. Ask them to think about how they responded to that correction. Encourage students to decide now to submit to Heavenly Father’s chastening that they may receive in the future. Summarize Hebrews 12:12–29 by explaining that Paul encouraged the Saints to strengthen other Church members in the faith. He exhorted them to refrain from sin so that they would not forfeit God’s blessings like Esau did and like the children of Israel did at Mount Sinai. Paul explained that the Saints who remain faithful and serve God will receive incomparable glory and a place in His kingdom.

Hebrews 13

Paul gives various counsel to the Saints

Explain that Paul concluded his letter to the Hebrew Saints by giving them counsel on various subjects. Divide students into small groups of two or three. Invite them to read Hebrews 13:1–9, 17 together, looking for the counsel Paul gave the Saints. Instruct students to discuss the following questions in their groups when they have finished reading. You may want to write these questions on the board.

- Which counsel do you think is most needed in our day? Why?

After sufficient time, invite several students to report how they answered the questions. Invite students to consider which portions of Paul’s counsel they could better implement in their own lives.

Summarize Hebrews 13:10–12 by explaining that Paul taught that in the time of the Old Testament, animals sacrificed as sin offerings were burned outside the camp of Israel. Similarly, Jesus Christ was sacrificed outside the city of Jerusalem. Explain that after Jesus Christ completed the Atonement, animal sacrifices were no longer required (see 3 Nephi 9:18–20).

Invite a student to read Hebrews 13:13–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what sacrifice Paul said the Saints should offer instead of animals. Consider inviting students to mark what they find.

- What sacrifices did Paul say we should make?
- Why do you think such offerings will please God?

Summarize Hebrews 13:17–25 by explaining that Paul counseled the Saints to obey their spiritual leaders and to pray for them. Paul prayed that God would give the Saints everything necessary for them to accomplish His will.

You may want to conclude by testifying of the truths students identified in Hebrews 12–13.

Scripture Mastery—Hebrews 12:9

Help students memorize Hebrews 12:9 by inviting them to write the first letter of each word of the verse on a piece of paper. Review the scripture numerous times with your students until they can recite the verse using the first letter of each word.

- What doctrine can we learn from this verse about our relationship to our Heavenly Father? (Students should identify the following doctrine: **Heavenly Father is the father of our spirits.**)
- Why is it important to believe that we are children of God?

Testify that we are literal children of God.

The General Epistle of James

Why study this book?

The General Epistle of James is well known among members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for the significant passage in James 1:5 that led young Joseph Smith to seek for truth from God. Throughout his epistle, James emphasized that we are to be “doers of the word, and not hearers only” (James 1:22). Studying this book can help students understand the importance of manifesting their faith through their “works,” or actions (see James 2:14–26), and inspire them to seek a “crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him” (James 1:12).

Who wrote this book?

The epistle states that it was authored by “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ” (James 1:1).

Christian tradition has held that this James, like Jude, is one of the sons of Joseph and Mary and hence a half brother of Jesus Christ (see Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3; Galatians 1:19). The fact that James is mentioned first in the list of Jesus’s brothers in Matthew 13:55 may indicate that he was the oldest of the half brothers. Like the Lord’s other half brothers, James did not initially become a disciple of Jesus (see John 7:3–5). However, after Jesus was resurrected, James was one of the individuals to whom Christ appeared as a resurrected being (see 1 Corinthians 15:7).

Later James became an Apostle and, according to early Christian writers, the first bishop of the Church in Jerusalem (see Acts 12:17; 21:18; Galatians 1:18–19; 2:9). As a leader in the Church, he played a prominent role in the council held in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13). His influence in the Church was no doubt strengthened by his kinship to Jesus, yet James showed humility in introducing himself not as the *brother* of Jesus but as a *servant* of the Lord (see James 1:1).

When and where was it written?

It is unknown when James wrote this letter. Since James lived in Jerusalem and watched over the affairs of the Church there, he likely wrote his epistle from that area.

The fact that James did not mention the Jerusalem conference of about A.D. 50 (see Acts 15) could indicate that this letter was written before it took place. If this letter was indeed written before the Jerusalem conference, it is one of the first epistles in the New Testament to have been written.

To whom was it written and why?

James addressed his letter “to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad” (James 1:1), meaning all the house of Israel; he was inviting them to “receive the gospel . . . [and] come into the fold of Christ” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 3:243). James instructed Church members to live their lives as expressions of their faith in Jesus Christ.

What are some distinctive features of this book?

The General Epistle of James has sometimes been classified as wisdom literature similar to the Old Testament book of Proverbs. The text of the letter consists of short explanations of principles for Christian living. In addition, there are close parallels between the Savior’s Sermon on the Mount recorded in Matthew 5–7 and the words of James. Some similar themes include enduring persecution (see James 1:2–3, 12; Matthew 5:10–12); becoming “perfect,” or spiritually mature (see James 1:4; 2:22; Matthew 5:48); asking God (see James 1:5; Matthew 7:7–8); doing the will of God (see James 1:22; Matthew 7:21–25); loving others (see James 2:8; Matthew 5:43–44; 7:12); knowing good and evil by their fruits (see James 3:11–12; Matthew 7:15–20); being a peacemaker (see James 3:18; Matthew 5:9); and not swearing oaths (see James 5:12; Matthew 5:34–37).

Outline

James 1–2 James greets his readers and introduces some major themes of his epistle, including enduring trials, seeking wisdom, and living in a way that is consistent with one’s professed faith. Hearers of God’s word are also to be doers of the word. James defines “pure religion” as caring for the fatherless and widows and seeking to live free from sin (see James 1:27). Saints are to love their neighbors and to manifest their faith through their works.

James 3–4 James illustrates the destructive nature of uncontrolled speech and contrasts it with the fruit of righteousness of those who make peace. He cautions his readers not to become friends with the world but to resist the devil and draw close to God.

James 5 James warns the rich who are wicked. He concludes his epistle with brief items of counsel about the Saints’ responsibilities toward other members of the Church. He counsels the Saints to patiently endure until the coming of the Lord and be truthful in all their conversations. James encourages the sick to call on the elders to anoint them with oil.

LESSON 140

James 1

Introduction

James wrote an epistle to the scattered house of Israel, encouraging them to be patient in their afflictions and to seek wisdom from Heavenly Father. James also taught

them to resist temptation, to be doers of the word, to serve others, and to stay spiritually clean.

Suggestions for Teaching

James 1:1–11

James encourages scattered Israel to be patient in their afflictions and to seek wisdom from God

Before class, write the following statement on the board: *I wish I were wiser!* As class begins, ask students to consider the statement on the board. Invite them to use their class notebooks or scripture study journals to write about topics or personal situations they seek wisdom for. You might suggest that they include gospel topics and pressing life questions in their lists. Ask a few students to share some of the topics or questions they wrote down. (Remind them not to share anything that is too private.)

Display the picture Joseph Smith Seeks Wisdom in the Bible (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 89; see also LDS.org).

- What pressing questions did Joseph Smith struggle with when he was young? (If students need help, refer them to Joseph Smith—History 1:9–10.)

Explain that Joseph was reading in the Epistle of James when he discovered how to find answers to his questions. James was an Apostle of Jesus Christ and a bishop in Jerusalem. Christian tradition also holds that James was the son of Mary and Joseph and therefore a half brother to Jesus.

Invite a student to read James 1:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what James taught the house of Israel about their struggles and afflictions. Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation of verse 2 (in James 1:2, footnote *a*) changes the phrase “divers temptations” to “many afflictions.”

- What did James teach the house of Israel about their struggles and afflictions?
- Why is patience important to have during struggles and afflictions?

Invite a student to read James 1:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Joseph Smith discovered that helped him find answers to his questions.

- What did James advise his readers to do to find answers to their questions?
- What does it mean that God gives “liberally” and “upbraideth not”? (verse 5). (*Liberally* means freely and generously. *Upbraideth* means to rebuke or criticize.)

Invite a student to come to the board to write a principle we can learn from James 1:5–6. The student may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **God generously gives wisdom to those who ask of Him in faith.**

- What does it mean to “ask in faith, nothing wavering”? (verse 6).

Invite a student to explain how James 1:5–6 affected young Joseph Smith as he searched for answers (see Joseph Smith—History 1:12). Ask another student to summarize the result of Joseph Smith’s faithful prayer in the grove of trees near his home.

- When has Heavenly Father generously answered your prayers after you prayed to Him in faith?

Testify that God generously gives wisdom to those who ask of Him in faith. Invite students to follow Joseph Smith’s example by applying this principle in their lives so they can receive the wisdom they need from Heavenly Father.



James 1:5–6

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

Summarize James 1:7–11 by explaining that James warned against being double-minded, or wavering in loyalty and commitment to the Lord. James also wrote that the rich should become humble because earthly riches are only temporary and will soon pass away.

Note: Consider inviting two students to teach the following two scripture blocks. It would be helpful to give this assignment to the student teachers a day or two before this lesson so they can prepare. You could invite each student teacher to teach the entire class. Or, you could divide the class in half, invite each student teacher to teach his or her scripture block to one half of the class, and then ask the student teachers (or the class) to rotate so they can teach the other half of the class.

Student Teacher 1—James 1:12–21

James teaches about temptation

Ask students:

- What temptations do youth today face? (You may want to list students' answers on the board.)
- Why is it sometimes difficult to resist temptation?

Invite a student to read James 1:12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the blessing promised to those who love the Lord and resist temptation. Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation of this verse (in James 1:12, footnote *b*) changes “endureth temptation” to “resisteth temptation.”

- What blessing will come to those who love the Lord and resist temptation? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **We show our love for the Lord by resisting temptation, which is one of the requirements for receiving the crown of eternal life.**)

Invite a student to read James 1:13–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for where temptation does and does not come from.

- According to verse 13, who is *not* the source of our temptations?

Explain that the term *lust* in verse 14 refers to unholy desires we may have because of our fallen nature. Satan entices us to give in to these unholy desires.

Invite students to consider the temptations they struggle with.

- How can we gain spiritual power to resist temptation?
- In what ways is resisting temptation showing our love for the Lord?

Testify of the truthfulness of the principle students identified in James 1:12. Invite them to ponder what they will do to resist the temptations they struggle with.

Summarize James 1:17–21 by explaining that James taught that all good gifts come from God and that the Saints should give up “all filthiness” and receive the Lord’s words “with meekness” (verse 21).

Student Teacher 2—James 1:22–25

James invites his readers to be hearers and doers of the word

Invite a student to read aloud the following account by Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“I recently met a fine teenage young man. His goals were to go on a mission, obtain an education, marry in the temple, and have a faithful happy family. . . . I felt he genuinely wanted to go on a mission and was avoiding serious transgressions that would prohibit a mission, but his day-to-day conduct was not preparing him for the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual challenges he would face. He had not learned to work hard. He was not serious about school or seminary. He attended church, but he had not read the Book of Mormon. He was spending a large amount of time on video games and social media. He seemed to think that showing up for his mission would be sufficient” (“Choose Wisely,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 47).

- If you had been in Elder Cook’s situation, what concerns might you have had with this young man’s lack of mission preparation?

Invite a student to read James 1:22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what James taught that could help the young man described in Elder Cook’s account.

- What did James teach that could help that young man?

Explain that, as recorded in James 1:23–24, James likened someone who is a hearer but not a doer to a man who sees himself in a mirror but then forgets what he looks like as he goes his way.

Invite a student to read James 1:25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happens to those who choose to act on the truths they hear.

- What happens to those who are not only hearers but are also doers? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **As we hear and act on the word of God, He will bless us in our deeds.**)

Invite students to assess themselves as hearers and doers of God’s word by pondering the following questions. You may want to read these questions aloud or write them on the board.

1. How fully do I believe the truths I am learning in the scriptures, at home, at church, and at seminary?
2. How often do I set spiritual goals to act on the truths I am learning? How often do I achieve them? How often do I forget them?
3. What can I do better to be a doer of the word and not just a hearer?

Testify of the blessings that come as we act on what we learn.

James 1:26–27

James counsels the Saints to care for others

After the two students have taught their scripture blocks, ask several other students to summarize what they learned.

Invite a student to read James 1:26–27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for James’s suggestions regarding how we can live our religion.

- According to James, what are some ways in which we can live our religion, or show our devotion to God?

Explain that James used the idea of “visit[ing] the fatherless and widows” in need as one example of caring for others. To “keep [oneself] unspotted from the world” (verse 27) means to remain spiritually clean, even in a world where wickedness can be prominent.

- What truth can we learn from verse 27? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **We demonstrate pure religion when we care for others and keep ourselves spiritually clean.** Write this truth on the board.)
- In what ways might caring for others and keeping ourselves spiritually clean be important expressions of our devotion to God?
- Whom do you know who is a good example of demonstrating “pure religion” in his or her daily life? What does this person do that inspires you?

Invite students to write on a piece of paper one or two deeds they will do during the next week to care for someone in need or to keep themselves “unspotted from the world.”

Invite them to be doers of God’s words by applying this principle in their lives.

Scripture Mastery—James 1:5–6

Explain that memorizing James 1:5–6 will help students throughout their lives as they have questions about the gospel, as they seek the Lord’s help in making decisions, and as they teach the gospel to others.

Use one of the memorization activities in the appendix, or develop one of your own activities to help students memorize this passage. Remember to frequently review memorized scripture mastery passages with students to help them retain what they have learned. Consider planning moments in future lessons to review this scripture and to invite students to recite it.

Home-Study Lesson

Hebrews 5–James 1 (Unit 28)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Hebrews 5–James 1 (unit 28) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Hebrews 5–6)

From Paul's writings about priesthood authority, students learned that those who are ordained to the priesthood must be called of God by revelation through His authorized servants. Students also learned the following truths: Through diligence to the end, faith in Jesus Christ, and patience, we can inherit the blessings God has promised. Our hope in God's promises is a spiritual anchor for our souls.

Day 2 (Hebrews 7–10)

As students studied Hebrews 7–10, they learned that Jesus Christ offered His own life as a sacrifice for our sins and that because of Jesus Christ's Atonement, we can enter the celestial kingdom if we hold fast to our faith in Him.

Day 3 (Hebrews 11)

In their study of Paul's discourse on faith, students learned that faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. They also learned the following: To please God we must exercise our faith by coming unto Him, believing in Him, and believing that He rewards those who diligently seek Him. As we exercise faith in Jesus Christ, we can endure suffering, accomplish miracles, receive divine promises, strengthen our testimony of Him, and move toward perfection.

Day 4 (Hebrews 12–James 1)

As students studied the end of Paul's letter to the Hebrews, they learned that as we look to the example of Jesus Christ, we can find strength to put aside our sins and patiently endure opposition. They also learned that if we submit to chastening from Heavenly Father, we will become more like Him and have the peace that comes from righteousness. In their study of James 1, students learned that God generously gives wisdom to those who ask of Him in faith.

Introduction

The Apostle James counseled the scattered Israelites to be doers of the word, to serve others, and to stay spiritually clean.

Suggestions for Teaching

Note: Students learned two scripture mastery passages in this unit—Hebrews 12:9 and James 1:5–6. You might want to read or recite these passages together as a class and invite students to explain the doctrines and principles the passages teach.

James 1:22–27

James invites his readers to be hearers and doers of the word and to serve others

Invite a student to read aloud the following account by Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"I recently met a fine teenage young man. His goals were to go on a mission, obtain an education, marry in the temple, and have a faithful happy family. I was very pleased with his goals. But during further conversation, it became evident that his conduct and the choices he was making were not consistent with his goals. I felt he genuinely wanted to go on a mission and was avoiding serious transgressions that would prohibit a mission, but his day-to-day conduct was not preparing him for the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual challenges he would face. He had not learned to work hard. He was not serious about school or seminary. He attended church, but he had not read the Book of Mormon. He was spending a large amount of time on video games and social media. He seemed to think that showing up for his mission would be sufficient" ("Choose Wisely," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 47).

- If you had been in Elder Cook's situation, what concerns might you have had with this young man's lack of mission preparation?

Invite a student to read James 1:22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what James taught that could help the young man described in Elder Cook's account.

- What did James teach that could help that young man?

Explain that, as recorded in James 1:23–24, James likened someone who is a hearer but not a doer to a man who sees himself in a mirror but then forgets what he looks like as he goes his way.

Invite a student to read James 1:25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happens to those who choose to act on the truths they hear.

- What happens to those who are not only hearers but are also doers? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **As we hear and act on the word of God, He will bless us in our deeds.**)

Invite students to assess themselves as hearers and doers of God's word by pondering the following questions. You may want to read these questions aloud or write them on the board.

- How fully do I believe the truths I am learning in the scriptures, at home, at church, and at seminary?
- How often do I set spiritual goals to act on the truths I am learning? How often do I achieve them? How often do I forget them?
- What can I do better to be a doer of the word and not just a hearer?

Testify of the blessings that come as we act on what we learn.

Invite a student to read James 1:26–27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for James's suggestions regarding how we can live our religion.

- According to James, what are some ways in which we can live our religion, or show our devotion to God?

Explain that in verse 27 James used the idea of "visit[ing] the fatherless and widows" in need as one example of caring for others and that to "keep [oneself] unspotted from the world" means to remain spiritually clean, even in a world where wickedness can be prominent.

- What truth can we learn from James 1:27? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **We demonstrate pure religion when we care for**

others and keep ourselves spiritually clean. Write this truth on the board.)

- In what ways might caring for others and keeping ourselves spiritually clean be important expressions of our devotion to God?
- Whom do you know who is a good example of demonstrating "pure religion" in his or her daily life? What does this person do that inspires you?

Invite students to write on a piece of paper one or two deeds they will do during the next week to care for someone in need or to keep themselves "unspotted from the world." Invite them to be doers of God's words by applying this principle in their lives.

Next Unit (James 2–1 Peter 5)

Explain to students that as they study James 2–1 Peter 5, they will learn the answers to the following questions: What did James counsel the Saints to do if they saw a brother or sister who was "naked, and destitute of daily food"? (James 2:15). What if we do nothing to help the needy? Why did James say that "faith without works is dead"? (James 2:26). What part of the body did James say is "a fire" and can "[defile] the whole body"? (James 3:6). What blessing awaits those who help convert a sinner "from the error of his [or her] way"? (James 5:20). What reasons did Peter give for preaching the gospel to the dead? Invite students to look for answers to these questions as they study the next block of scripture.

James 2

Introduction

James encouraged the Saints to reach out to the down-trodden and taught that true followers of Jesus Christ are not to give preference to the rich over the poor.

James also taught about the relationship between faith and works.

Suggestions for Teaching

James 2:1–13

James teaches followers of Christ not to show favoritism toward the rich

Randomly select a student, and give him or her a small treat. Tell the class that you gave this student a treat for some reason that you have arbitrarily chosen (for example, because that student wore your favorite color or because he or she brought a certain object to class).

- How did my treatment of this student make the rest of you feel?
- Why do people sometimes show favoritism?

Ask students to think of other times when they have seen someone being treated better than others and to consider how it made them feel.

Invite a student to read James 2:1–4 aloud. Ask this student to also read footnote *a* in James 2:1, which includes an alternative translation from the Greek as well as the Joseph Smith Translation of James 2:1. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what James warned the Saints about.

- What did James warn the Saints about?

Point out that to “have respect to persons” (Joseph Smith Translation, James 2:1) means to show favoritism for one person or a group of people while mistreating others because of their circumstances or characteristics.

- What example of favoritism did James share?
- What are some examples in our day of individuals showing favoritism toward some people while mistreating others because of their circumstances or characteristics?

Summarize James 2:5–7 by explaining that James continued to reprove the Saints who showed favoritism to the rich. He taught them that God had chosen the poor to be rich in faith and heirs to His kingdom. James also reminded the Saints that it had been the rich who oppressed them and blasphemed against the Lord.

Invite students to read James 2:8 silently, looking for what James reminded the Saints to do that would help them eliminate favoritism.

- What did James remind the Saints to do?
- Why do you think this commandment was referred to as “the royal law”? (James 2:8).
- What principle can we learn from these verses about how faithful disciples of Jesus Christ treat people? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **Faithful disciples of Jesus Christ love all people regardless of their circumstances.** Write this principle on the board.)
- During His mortal ministry, how was the Savior an example of loving others regardless of their circumstances?

Ask students to think of someone who strives to love all people. Invite a few students to share with the class who they thought of and why.

Ask students to consider how they treat others. Encourage them to look for opportunities to follow the Savior’s example of loving others.

Invite students to imagine that, after hearing James’s teachings about loving all people, they hear someone say that it is not a big deal if we show favoritism to some people while mistreating others. This person also says that there are far worse things we could do.

- What problems can come from having this mindset?

Invite a student to read James 2:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why it is a serious matter to not love all people regardless of their circumstances.

- Why is it a serious matter to not love all people regardless of their circumstances?
- What truth can we learn from James’s teachings in these verses? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify a truth similar to the following: **If we commit even one sin, we become guilty before God.**)
- According to James 2:10, what is the eternal consequence of breaking even one of God’s commandments? (We become as if we were “guilty of all” in that we are unclean and therefore unable to dwell with God [see also 1 Nephi 10:21].)
- Why can we still have hope, even though disobedience to God makes us unclean and therefore unable to live with God?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:



“All is not lost.

“The grace of God is our great and everlasting hope.

“Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the plan of mercy appeases the demands of justice [see Alma 42:15] ‘and [brings] about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance’ [Alma 34:15].

“Our sins, though they may be as scarlet, can become white as snow [see Isaiah 1:18]. Because our beloved Savior ‘gave himself a ransom for all,’ [1 Timothy 2:6] an entrance into His everlasting kingdom is provided unto us [see 2 Peter 1:11]” (“The Gift of Grace,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 108).

- What do we need to do to be worthy of entering the Lord’s kingdom through the Atonement of Jesus Christ?
- How might the principle we identified in verse 10 help us more fully appreciate the Atonement of Jesus Christ?

Summarize James 2:11–13 by explaining that James provided an example of the principle taught in verse 10. He then encouraged believers to treat others mercifully, for those who treat others without mercy will be judged without mercy.

James 2:14–26

James teaches about the roles of faith and works in our salvation

Invite students to suppose that a young man has recognized that he has sinned. He believes in the Atonement of Jesus Christ and in the Savior’s ability to save him. He says that all he has to do is believe and the Lord will forgive him, with no other effort on his part.

Ask students to consider whether this young man’s belief alone is sufficient for him to be forgiven for his sins.

Invite a student to read James 2:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what James asked the Saints about faith.

- What did James ask the Saints about faith?
- What type of works do you think James was referring to?

Explain that James was correcting a false idea about faith. Some people had misunderstood faith to be simply a verbal expression of belief. In the context of James 2:14, James used the term *works* differently than the way the Apostle Paul had used it. When Paul used the term *works*, he referred to the works of the law of Moses. When James used the term *works*, he referred to acts of devotion or works of righteousness.

As recorded in James 2:15–16, James used an analogy to illustrate the answer to his question in verse 14. Invite two students to come to the front of the class. Ask one of the students to act as a beggar who is pleading for the food, clothing, and shelter he or she needs to survive. Invite the other student to act as someone who can help the beggar. Invite a third student to read James 2:15–16 aloud while the two other students act out what is described in these verses.

 **James 2:17–18**

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

- What is wrong with the response that was given to the begging student? Would the other student's response be enough to save a beggar?

Invite a student to read James 2:17–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what James taught about faith.

- What do you think the phrase “faith, if it hath not works, is dead” (verse 17) means?
- How does James's analogy of the beggar help us understand what this phrase means?
- According to verse 17, what truth did James teach about true faith in Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **True faith in Jesus Christ is made manifest by our righteous works.** Write this truth on the board.)

Invite a student to read James 2:19–20 aloud. Make sure the student also reads the Joseph Smith Translation of James 2:19 (in James 2:19, footnote *a*). Ask the class to follow along, looking for the example James used to show that believing in God does not necessarily include having faith in God.

- What example did James use to show that believing in God does not necessarily include having faith in God?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“True faith is focused in and on the Lord Jesus Christ and always leads to righteous action. . . . Action alone is not faith in the Savior, but acting in accordance with correct principles is a central component of faith” (“Ask in Faith,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2008, 95).

- According to Elder Bednar, what is “a central component of faith”?
- Why is it important to understand that faith in Jesus Christ means both believing in Him and acting according to correct principles?

Remind students of the young man in the scenario at the beginning of this section of the lesson.

- How might understanding that faith includes both belief and action help someone who seeks forgiveness for his or her sins?

Summarize James 2:21–26 by explaining that James referred to Abraham and Rahab as two examples of people whose faith in God was made manifest by their works. (The account of the courageous woman Rahab is found in Joshua 2:1–22.)

Invite students to use their class notebooks or scripture study journals to write about a time when they demonstrated faith in Jesus Christ through their works and how they were blessed for doing so. Encourage students to include their testimonies of the Savior and how they will demonstrate that belief through their actions. Ask a few students to share with the class what they wrote.

Invite students to prayerfully consider how they can more fully exercise faith in Jesus Christ by obeying Him. Encourage them to follow any promptings they receive.

 **Scripture Mastery—James 2:17–18**

To help students apply the truths taught in this scripture mastery passage, provide each of them with a small piece of paper. Invite them to write down the words of this passage on one side of the paper. Then ask them to complete the following sentence on the other side of the paper: *I will show the Lord my faith in Him by . . .* Encourage students to keep this piece of paper in their pockets throughout the day and to keep a running list of ideas for demonstrating their faith to the Lord. As they add to their lists, they can review the scripture mastery passage. Encourage them to place the piece of paper where they will see it often and be reminded of their goals.

LESSON 142

James 3

Introduction

James taught the Saints the importance of controlling their speech. He then contrasted the world's wisdom with the wisdom that comes from God.

Suggestions for Teaching

James 3:1–12

James teaches the Saints the importance of controlling their speech

Bring a tube of toothpaste to class. Invite a student to squeeze all of the toothpaste out of the tube (or ask students to imagine this scenario). Ask another student to try to put all of the toothpaste back into the tube. After the second student struggles to do so, ask:

- How can the toothpaste in this exercise be likened to the words we speak?

Invite students to ponder whether they have ever said anything they later regretted. Invite students to look for truths as they study James 3:1–12 that will help them choose their words wisely.

Invite a student to read aloud James 3:2–4 and the first sentence of James 3:5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how James described those who do not offend others with their words. Explain that the phrase “we offend all” in verse 2 means that we all make mistakes, and explain that James used the word *tongue* to refer to the words we speak.

- How did James describe those who could control their words?

Consider displaying or drawing on the board pictures of a horse's bit and a ship's rudder. You may need to explain that a *bit* (verse 3) is a small piece of metal placed in a horse's mouth that connects to the reins, allowing a rider to direct the horse. In this verse, the word *helm* (verse 4) refers to a ship's rudder, which helps someone to steer or turn the ship.

- According to James, what do a horse's bit and a ship's helm have in common? (Both are relatively small, and both steer or control the larger entities to which they are attached.)
- How can James's comparison of these objects to a tongue, or the words we speak, help us understand the power of our words?
- What principle can we identify from these verses about what can happen as we learn to control our speech? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we learn to control our speech, we can learn to control the rest of our actions.**)
- Why might controlling our speech help us to control the rest of our actions?

Invite a student to read aloud the last sentence of James 3:5 and also James 3:6. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else James compared our speech to. Explain that the word *matter* refers to a forest (see verse 5, footnote b).

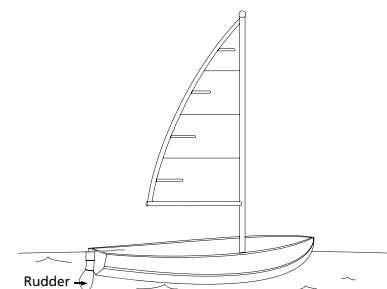
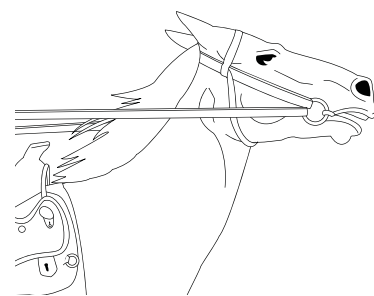
- What else did James compare our speech to?
- What aspects of our lives could be “set on fire” (verse 6), or jeopardized, by our unwise use of words?

Explain that the phrase “course of nature” in verse 6 can refer to the course of someone's life.

- In what ways can the words we speak influence the course of our lives?
- How can making small changes in the words we speak affect the course of our lives in positive ways? the lives of others?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from James 3:7–12. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else James compared our speech to.

- What else did James compare our speech to? (An animal that must be tamed [see verses 7–8], “deadly poison” [verse 8], a fountain that “yield[s] salt water and fresh”



water “at the same place” [verses 11–12], a fig tree that bears olives instead of figs, and a vine that bears figs [see verse 12].)

To help students understand the content of these verses, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“Obviously James doesn’t mean our tongues are *always* iniquitous, nor that *everything* we say is ‘full of deadly poison.’ But he clearly means that at least some things we say can be destructive, even venomous—and that is a chilling indictment for a Latter-day Saint! The voice that bears profound testimony, utters fervent prayer, and sings the hymns of Zion *can be* the same voice that berates and criticizes, embarrasses and demeans, inflicts pain and destroys the spirit of oneself and of others in the process. . . .

“. . . May we try to be ‘perfect’ men and women in at least this one way now—by offending not in word, or more positively put, by speaking with a new tongue, the tongue of angels. Our words, like our deeds, should be filled with faith and hope and charity, the three great Christian imperatives so desperately needed in the world today. With such words, spoken under the influence of the Spirit, tears can be dried, hearts can be healed, lives can be elevated, hope can return, confidence can prevail” (“The Tongue of Angels,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 16, 18).

- What truth can we identify from these verses about how followers of God should speak? (Using their own words, students should identify a truth similar to the following: **Followers of God strive to use their language for righteous purposes, not to spread evil.**)
- Why is it a serious problem if Latter-day Saints use their language for evil purposes or to hurt or tear down others?
- What are some things we can do to be a little more “perfect” (James 3:2) in choosing our words?

Invite students to explain how living the truth they identified in James 3:9–10 would guide their actions in the following situations:

1. You are texting or using social media.
2. You are a priest who blesses the sacrament on Sundays. At school, your friends begin making fun of another student.
3. You are a young woman who in the past has spoken unkindly about another young woman in your ward or branch.
4. Your teammates use foul language.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement from *For the Strength of Youth*:

“How you communicate should reflect who you are as a son or daughter of God. Clean and intelligent language is evidence of a bright and wholesome mind. Good language that uplifts, encourages, and compliments others invites the Spirit to be with you. Our words, like our deeds, should be filled with faith, hope, and charity” (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 20).

- When have another person’s words uplifted or encouraged you?
- How have you been blessed as you have tried to uplift or encourage others with your words?

Invite students to write a goal in their class notebooks or scripture study journals concerning what they will do to better control their speech and use their language for righteous purposes. Invite them to act during the next week on what they wrote.

James 3:13–18

James contrasts the world’s wisdom with the wisdom that comes from God

Summarize James 3:13–18 by explaining that James contrasted the world’s wisdom with wisdom that comes from God. The world’s wisdom leads to “confusion” (verse 16) and “strife” (verse 14), while wisdom “from above” is “pure” and “full of mercy” (verse 17).

Testify of the principles taught in today’s lesson.

Follow up on invitations to act

You can encourage students to apply gospel principles by following up on invitations to act. Make a note to follow up with students regarding the goals they set in this lesson. You may also want to invite them to report on the experiences they had as they acted on their goals.

LESSON 143

James 4–5

Introduction

James counseled the Saints to resist the devil, to draw closer to God, and to patiently endure affliction while awaiting the Second Coming of the Savior. He taught

that the sick should “call for the elders of the church” (James 5:14) to administer to them. James also taught about the importance of helping sinners repent.

Suggestions for Teaching

James 4

James counsels the Saints to draw closer to God and to resist the devil

Invite students to think of a family member or friend they feel close to.

- Who did you think of? Why do you feel close to this person?
- How did you become close to this person?

Ask students to ponder how close they feel to God.

- How will our lives be blessed by having a strong relationship with God?

Invite students as they study James 4 to look for truths that can help them strengthen their relationship with God.

Summarize James 4:1–3 by explaining that James rebuked the Saints for giving in to worldly desires.

Invite a student to read James 4:4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the type of friendship James warned the Saints about. Explain that *enmity* means hostility or hatred.

- What type of friendship did James warn the Saints about?
- What do you think it means to “be a friend of the world”? (If necessary, explain that James’s counsel in verse 4 does not mean we should avoid associating with individuals who are not members of the Church. Rather, we should avoid embracing the false teachings and unrighteous desires, standards, and practices of the world.)
- According to James, what happens to someone who befriends the world?

Invite students to read James 4:6–8 silently, looking for what James counseled the Saints to do.

- What did James counsel the Saints to do?
- How can submitting ourselves to God help us resist the devil?
- According to verse 8, what must we do if we want to be closer to God? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **As we draw near to God, He will draw near to us.**)
- What can we do to draw near to God? (List students’ answers on the board.)

To help students understand one way in which we can draw near to God, point out James’s instruction to “cleanse your hands” and “purify your hearts” (James 4:8). Explain that as used in the scriptures, hands can represent our actions and the heart can represent our desires.

- How do you think having clean hands and a pure heart helps us draw closer to God?

Invite a student to read James 4:9–12, 17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for additional counsel James gave the Saints to help them draw closer to God. Explain that the phrase “let your laughter be turned to mourning” (verse 9) refers to having godly sorrow for sin.

- What additional counsel did James give that could help someone draw closer to God?
- According to verse 17, what did James teach is a sin? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we know to do good but choose not to do it, we commit sin.**)

Interesting, relevant, and edifying lessons

When you consistently present edifying lessons, students will develop an expectation that they will learn something valuable each time they attend class. President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that students “will not return with any enthusiasm unless they are being taught something. They must learn something to want to return. They will come willingly, even eagerly, to a class . . . in which they are fed” (*Teach Ye Diligently* [1975], 153–54).

- Why do you think it is a sin to know the good things we should do but choose not to do them?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President James E. Faust, who served in the First Presidency:



"I fear that some of our greatest sins are sins of omission. These are some of the weightier matters of the law the Savior said we should not leave undone [see Matthew 23:23]. These are the thoughtful, caring deeds we fail to do and feel so guilty for having neglected them.

"As a small boy on the farm during the searing heat of the summer, I remember my grandmother Mary Finlinson cooking our delicious meals on a hot woodstove. When the wood box next to the stove became empty, Grandmother would silently pick up the box, go out to refill it from the pile of cedar wood outside, and bring the heavily laden box back into the house. I was so insensitive and interested in the conversation in the kitchen, I sat there and let my beloved grandmother refill the kitchen wood box. I feel ashamed of myself and have regretted my omission for all of my life. I hope someday to ask for her forgiveness" ("The Weightier Matters of the Law: Judgment, Mercy, and Faith," *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 59).

- What good act did President Faust neglect to do as a young boy? How did he feel as a result?
- What are examples of sins of omission that can prevent us from drawing closer to God?
- What can prevent us from doing the good acts that the gospel of Jesus Christ teaches us to do?
- When have you drawn closer to God by doing the good things you have been taught to do?

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they will do to draw closer to God. Encourage them to act on any promptings they receive.

James 5

James teaches the Saints to patiently endure affliction and instructs the sick to call for the elders

Summarize James 5:1–6 by explaining that James condemned the rich who misused their wealth and persecuted the just. He warned that misery and judgment awaited them.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from James 5:7–11. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what James instructed the Saints to do as they faced affliction while awaiting the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

- According to verses 7–8, what did James counsel the Saints to do as they awaited the Savior's Second Coming?
- According to verse 10, whom could the Saints look to for examples of people who patiently endured affliction?
- What are examples from the scriptures of prophets who patiently endured affliction?

Explain that James 5:13–16 records James's counsel to the sick and afflicted. Invite a student to read aloud the following scenario:

A friend says: "I feel awful. I have been sick for over a week. I have visited a doctor and have been taking medication, but I still do not feel any better. I do not know what else to do."

Ask students to ponder what they would say to this friend. Invite a student to read James 5:13–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what James counseled the sick and afflicted to do.

- What did James counsel the sick and afflicted to do?
- What did James instruct elders to do for the sick? (To administer to the sick by the authority of the priesthood and to anoint them with oil.)

Explain that Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that "when elders anoint a sick person and seal the anointing, they open the windows of heaven for the Lord to pour forth the blessing He wills for the person afflicted" ("Healing the Sick," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2010, 48).

- In addition to the power of the priesthood, what else did James say would save or heal the sick? (“The prayer of faith” [James 5:15].)
- What truth can we learn from James about how the sick can be healed? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Through the prayer of faith and the power of the priesthood, the sick can be healed.** Write this truth on the board.)

To help students understand this truth, provide the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks as a handout. Divide students into pairs, and invite each pair to read the statement aloud together. Ask them to look for what Elder Oaks taught about the prayer of faith and the healing power of the priesthood.



“As we exercise the undoubted power of the priesthood of God and as we treasure His promise that He will hear and answer the prayer of faith, we must always remember that faith and the healing power of the priesthood cannot produce a result contrary to the will of Him whose priesthood it is. . . .

“ . . . Even the servants of the Lord, exercising His divine power in a circumstance where there is sufficient faith to be healed, cannot give a priesthood blessing that will cause a person to be healed if that healing is not the will of the Lord.

“As children of God, knowing of His great love and His ultimate knowledge of what is best for our eternal welfare, we trust in Him. The first principle of the gospel is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and faith means trust. . . . I felt that same trust in the words of the father of [a] choice girl whose life was taken by cancer in her teen years. He declared, ‘Our family’s faith is in Jesus Christ and is not dependent on outcomes.’ Those teachings ring true to me. We do all that we can for the healing of a loved one, and then we trust in the Lord for the outcome” (“Healing the Sick,” 50).

- How do Elder Oaks’s teachings help us understand the healing power of the priesthood?
- Why is it important for our faith in Jesus Christ to not depend on the outcome of a priesthood blessing?

Invite students to ponder experiences in which they or people they know have been blessed through prayers of faith and the power of the priesthood. Ask students to share how these experiences have strengthened their faith and testimonies. (Remind them not to share anything too personal or sacred.)

Point out in verse 15 the relationship between the healing of the sick and forgiveness of sin. The kind of humility and faith required for us to be healed physically is the same kind of humility and faith required for us to receive forgiveness (see Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 297–98).

Summarize James 5:17–20 by explaining that James referred to the prophet Elijah as an example of someone who used the power of fervent prayer. He also counseled the Saints to help sinners repent.

Conclude by testifying of the truths taught in this lesson.

Commentary and Background Information

James 4:8. “Cleanse your hands . . . and purify your hearts”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained how we can have clean hands and a pure heart:

“Hands are made clean through the process of putting off the natural man and by overcoming sin and the evil influences in our lives through the Savior’s Atonement. Hearts are purified as we receive His strengthening power to do good and become better” (“Clean Hands and a Pure Heart,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 82).

The First Epistle General of Peter

Why study this book?

A theme found throughout the First Epistle of Peter is that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, the Savior's disciples can faithfully endure and respond to suffering and persecution. Every chapter of 1 Peter speaks of trials or suffering, and Peter taught that patiently enduring trials is "more precious than . . . gold" and would help believers gain "the salvation of [their] souls" (1 Peter 1:7, 9). Peter also reminded the Saints of their identity as "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Peter 2:9). By studying the counsel Peter gave in this epistle, students can receive hope, encouragement, and strength that can help them with the challenges they face.

Who wrote this book?

The author of this epistle is "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:1). "Peter was originally known as Simeon or Simon (2 Pet. 1:1), a fisherman of Bethsaida living at Capernaum with his wife. . . . Peter was called with his brother Andrew to be a disciple of Jesus Christ (Matt. 4:18–22; Mark 1:16–18; Luke 5:1–11). . . . " . . . The Lord selected [Peter] to hold the keys of the kingdom on earth (Matt. 16:13–18). . . .

"Peter was the chief Apostle of his day" (Guide to the Scriptures, "Peter," scriptures.lds.org).

Peter's writings demonstrate his growth from a simple fisherman to a mighty Apostle.

When and where was it written?

Peter likely wrote his First Epistle between A.D. 62 and 64. He wrote from "Babylon" (1 Peter 5:13), probably a symbolic reference to Rome.

It is generally accepted that Peter died during the reign of the Roman emperor Nero—likely after A.D. 64, when Nero began to persecute Christians (see Bible Dictionary, "Peter, Epistles of").

To whom was it written and why?

Peter addressed this epistle to Church members living in the five Roman provinces of Asia Minor, located in modern-

day Turkey (see 1 Peter 1:1). Peter considered his readers to be the "elect" of God (1 Peter 1:2). He wrote to strengthen and encourage the Saints in the "trial of [their] faith" (1 Peter 1:7) and to prepare them for a future "fiery trial" (1 Peter 4:12). Peter's message also taught them how to respond to persecution (see 1 Peter 2:19–23; 3:14–15; 4:13).

Peter's counsel was very timely because Church members were about to enter a period of heightened persecution. Until approximately A.D. 64, about the time when Peter wrote this epistle, the Roman government generally tolerated Christianity. In July of that year, a fire destroyed much of Rome, and it was rumored that Emperor Nero himself had ordered the fire to be started. In an effort to divert blame for the disaster, some prominent Romans accused the Christians of starting the fire. This led to intense persecution of Christians throughout the Roman Empire. Peter indicated that when the Saints "suffer as a Christian" (1 Peter 4:16), they can feel joy knowing that they are following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ (see 1 Peter 2:19–23; 3:15–18; 4:12–19).

What are some distinctive features of this book?

In the midst of the affliction and persecution faced by the Saints of his time, Peter exhorted them to turn to one another in love and tenderness (see 1 Peter 1:22; 3:8–9). Furthermore, we read in 1 Peter 5 that Peter explained how Church leaders should strengthen their congregations.

This epistle contains perhaps the clearest biblical references to the spirit world and the work of salvation that takes place there. Peter briefly mentioned that Jesus Christ visited the spirit world to preach to the disobedient spirits who had lived in Noah's day (see 1 Peter 3:18–20). He added that the gospel was preached to the dead to give deceased individuals the opportunity to be judged on equal terms with the living (see 1 Peter 4:5–6). In our dispensation, President Joseph F. Smith was pondering the meaning of 1 Peter 3:18–20 and 1 Peter 4:6 when he received a revelation clarifying doctrines regarding the spirit world (see D&C 138).

Outline

1 Peter 1:1–2:10 Peter writes of the need for the Saints to grow spiritually in order to receive eternal rewards. The promise of salvation is made possible through the precious blood of Jesus Christ. The Saints are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Peter 2:9) who have obtained God's mercy.

1 Peter 2:11–3:12 Disciples of Jesus Christ seek to honor all men and submit to civil authorities and laws. Peter addresses specific groups of Saints: free citizens, servants, wives, and husbands.

1 Peter 3:13–5:14 When persecution causes the Saints to suffer, they are to remember the example of Jesus Christ, who suffered and then gained exaltation. Jesus Christ preached the gospel to the dead so that they might receive a fair judgment. Church leaders follow the example of Jesus Christ in caring for the flock of God. The Saints are to humble themselves and cast their cares upon God.

LESSON 144

1 Peter 1–2

Introduction

Peter wrote to strengthen the faith of the Saints as they were suffering intense persecution from the Roman Empire. He emphasized that they had been redeemed through the precious blood of Jesus Christ and reminded them of their divine heritage as God's peculiar people.

Peter instructed the Saints to glorify God among men and endure suffering as Jesus Christ did.

Note: See the sidebar "Advance preparation" to prepare for lesson 149.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Peter 1

Peter teaches the Saints of their potential inheritance and the necessity of trials

Display or draw a picture of a crucible, and explain that a crucible is a container in which metals or other substances are refined, which means they are heated and melted in order to remove impurities and strengthen the final product.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"As I travel throughout the Church, I see members being tried in the crucible of affliction" ("Hyrum Smith: 'Firm As the Pillars of Heaven,'" *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 9).

- What do you think Elder Ballard meant by the term "crucible of affliction"? (The challenging trials or adversities of life.)

Explain that Peter wrote his First Epistle to strengthen and encourage the Saints as they experienced a crucible of affliction. Explain that until approximately A.D. 64, about the time when Peter wrote this epistle, the Roman government displayed a general tolerance for Christianity. In July of that year a fire destroyed much of Rome. Some prominent Romans accused the Christians of starting the fire. This led to the intense persecution of Christians throughout the Roman Empire. Some of the mistreatment experienced by Christians came from their former friends and neighbors.

Invite students to look for truths as they study 1 Peter 1–2 that can help us remain faithful when we are tried in our crucibles of affliction.

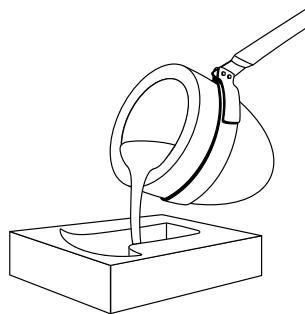
Summarize 1 Peter 1:1–2 by explaining that Peter greeted the Saints in the Roman provinces of Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey) and reminded them that they were an elect people, meaning that they were chosen to receive special blessings as they lived faithfully.

Invite a student to read 1 Peter 1:3–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter reminded Saints that Christ had done and looking for future blessings promised to the Saints.

- What future blessings would the Saints receive if they remained faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Invite a student to read 1 Peter 1:6 aloud, and ask the class to look for how the Saints responded to the promise of these future blessings. Explain that the word *temptations* in verse 6 refers to trials and afflictions (see footnote *b*).

- How did the Saints respond to the promise of these future blessings? (They greatly rejoiced.)
- What principle can we learn from verses 3–6? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **Although we experience trials, we can rejoice in Jesus Christ's Atonement and in the future blessings God has promised to give us.**)



Advance preparation

Lesson 149 includes a teaching suggestion that involves students receiving letters. If you use this teaching suggestion, you will need to prepare several days in advance. Contact each student's parents or local Church leaders, and invite them to write a short letter to the student expressing their joy at seeing the student's efforts to live the gospel. Collect the letters, and ensure that each student has a letter when you teach lesson 149.

- How can remembering the future blessings God has promised to give us help us rejoice even when we are experiencing trials?

Invite a student to read 1 Peter 1:7–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter taught about the Saints’ trial of faith.

- According to 1 Peter 1:7, what did Peter compare the Saints’ tried, or tested, faith to?
- In what ways might tried faith be like gold? (Faith that has been tried, like gold, is precious. However, faith is more precious than gold because gold “perisheth” [verse 7], while faith in Jesus Christ leads to salvation [see verse 9], which is eternal. In addition, gold is refined by fire. Similarly, **our faith in Jesus Christ is tested and refined as we faithfully endure trials.** Write this truth on the board.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who explained how we can remain steadfast and immovable during a trial of faith:



“How do you remain ‘steadfast and immovable’ [Alma 1:25] during a trial of faith? You immerse yourself in the very things that helped build your core of faith: you exercise faith in Christ, you pray, you ponder the scriptures, you repent, you keep the commandments, and you serve others.

“When faced with a trial of faith—whatever you do, you don’t step away from the Church! Distancing yourself from the kingdom of God during a trial of faith is like leaving the safety of a secure storm cellar just as the tornado comes into view” (“Trial of Your Faith,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 40).

- What did Elder Andersen encourage us to do in our trials of faith?
- Why do you think it is important to do these things when our faith is tested?

Point out that some of the Saints whom Paul wrote to may have been tempted to abandon their faith as they experienced religious persecution. Invite students to read 1 Peter 1:13–17 silently, looking for exhortations Peter gave to help the Saints faithfully endure their trials. Consider inviting students to mark what they find.

- What did Peter exhort the Saints to do?
- How might Peter’s counsel have helped them faithfully endure their trials?

Invite a student to read 1 Peter 1:18–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for additional truths Peter taught the Saints to help them faithfully endure their trials rather than abandon their faith.

- What truths did Peter teach the Saints in these verses? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify one or more of the following truths: **We are redeemed through the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Because Jesus Christ lived a sinless life, He could offer Himself as a perfect sacrifice for us. Jesus Christ was foreordained to be our Redeemer.**)
- How might remembering these truths have helped the Saints faithfully endure their trials?

To help students feel the importance of the truths they have identified in 1 Peter 1, invite them to think of a time when they or someone they know chose to endure a trial with faith in Jesus Christ. Ask a few students to share their experiences with the class.

Encourage students to ponder what they will do to remain faithful when they are tested in the crucible of affliction.

Summarize 1 Peter 1:22–25 by explaining that Peter encouraged the Saints to love one another and to remember that they had been born again by embracing the word of God, which endures forever.

1 Peter 2:1–12

Peter emphasizes the Saints’ responsibilities

- What are some ways Church members are different from the world?
- What are some challenges we might face because we are different?

Invite students to look for a principle as they study 1 Peter 2 that will strengthen their desire to be different from the world as members of the Lord’s Church.

Give students time to answer

Students might not respond to a question immediately, but do not be troubled by this silence. Sometimes students simply need an opportunity to reflect on the question and how to respond. This reflection can facilitate instruction by the Holy Ghost.

Summarize 1 Peter 2:1–8 by explaining that Peter taught that the Saints are like living stones and that Jesus Christ is like a cornerstone or foundation to the faithful. But to those who are disobedient, He is “a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense” (verse 8), meaning that they are offended by Him.

Invite a student to read 1 Peter 2:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Peter described the faithful Saints.

- How did Peter describe the faithful Saints?

Point out that the word *peculiar* in verse 9 was translated from a Greek word that means purchased or preserved and corresponds with a Hebrew word in Exodus 19:5 that indicates that God’s covenant people are a special possession or valued treasure to Him (see 1 Peter 2:9, footnote *f*).

- How might the words Peter used to describe the Saints in verses 9–10 have helped them take courage as they experienced religious persecution?

Invite a student to read 1 Peter 2:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter pleaded with the Saints to do as the Lord’s peculiar people. Explain that Peter may have called the Saints “strangers” and “pilgrims” either because they lived among people who were culturally and religiously different from the Saints or because they were away from their heavenly home, living as mortals temporarily.

- According to verse 11, what did Peter say that the Saints must do to be separate from the world?
- According to verse 12, what influence did Peter say the Saints could have on others as God’s chosen and peculiar people?
- What truth do we learn from Peter about what God calls His Saints to do? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **God calls His Saints to be separate and distinct from the world so that others can see their example and glorify Him.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Sister Elaine S. Dalton, who served as general president of the Young Women organization:

“If you desire to make a difference in the world, *you must be different from the world*” (“Now Is the Time to Arise and Shine!” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 124).

- How has your choice to be separate and distinct from the world impacted others for good or helped lead them to God?

Encourage students to consider what they can do better to be separate and distinct from the world so they can be an example. Invite them to act upon any impressions they may receive.

1 Peter 2:13–25

Peter counsels the Saints to endure suffering as the Savior did

Summarize 1 Peter 2:13–18 by explaining that Peter taught the Saints to submit themselves to the laws and civil authorities that governed them (including the Roman emperor who promoted persecution against them; see also D&C 58:21–22). He encouraged those who suffered hardship as servants to bear their suffering with patience and to remember that God was aware of them.

Invite a student to read 1 Peter 2:19–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Peter’s counsel to the Saints on how they should endure sufferings.

- What was Peter’s counsel on how the Saints should endure their sufferings?

Ask students to read 1 Peter 2:21–25 silently, looking for Peter’s description of how Jesus Christ responded to persecution.

- How did Christ respond to persecution?
- According to verse 21, what was one reason the Savior suffered for us?
- What truth can we identify from verses 21–25 about enduring trials? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **We can follow the Savior’s example in patiently enduring trials.**)

Share your testimony of the Savior, and invite students to consider what they can do better to follow His example in enduring trials patiently.

1 Peter 3–5

Introduction

Peter encouraged the Saints to be ready always to testify of Jesus Christ and to live righteously so they could dispel false accusations made against them. He taught that Jesus Christ preached the gospel in the spirit world

after His death. Peter also admonished the elders of the Church to watch over God's flock with the same care as Jesus Christ, the Chief Shepherd.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Peter 3:1–17

Peter counsels Saints to be united in righteousness and to be ready always to testify of Christ

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:



“We will have opportunities throughout our lives to share our beliefs, although we don’t always know when we will be called upon to do so. Such an opportunity came to me in 1957, when I worked in the publishing business and was asked to go to Dallas, Texas, [USA,] sometimes called ‘the city of churches,’ to address a business convention. Following the conclusion of the convention, I took a sightseeing bus ride through the city’s suburbs. As we passed the various churches, our driver would comment, ‘On the left you see the Methodist church’ or ‘There on the right is the Catholic cathedral.’

“As we passed a beautiful red brick building situated upon a hill, the driver exclaimed, ‘That building is where the Mormons meet.’ A lady in the rear of the bus called out, ‘Driver, can you tell us something more about the Mormons?’

“The driver pulled the bus over to the side of the road, turned around in his seat, and replied, ‘Lady, all I know about the Mormons is that they meet in that red brick building. Is there anyone on this bus who knows anything more about the Mormons?’” (“Dare to Stand Alone,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 67).

- If you had been on that bus, what would you have done?
- Why can it sometimes be challenging to tell other people about our beliefs?

Invite students to look for a principle as they study 1 Peter 3:1–17 that will help guide them when they are presented with opportunities to share the gospel with others.

Summarize 1 Peter 3:1–11 by explaining that Peter exhorted wives to help bring unbelieving husbands to Christ through their righteous conduct. He counseled husbands to honor their wives. He also counseled members to live according to gospel standards.

Invite a student to read 1 Peter 3:14–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter counseled the Saints to do when they suffered persecution because they were living righteously.

- What did Peter counsel the Saints to do when they suffered persecution because they were living righteously?
- According to verse 15, what did Peter say followers of Jesus Christ should always be ready to do?
- What aspects of the gospel do you think give people hope?

Explain that the word *answer* in verse 15 can also be translated as “defense” (see verse 15, footnote *b*). Peter admonished the Saints to share and defend their religious beliefs.

- What words in verse 15 describe how we should share and defend the gospel of Jesus Christ? (You may want to explain that *fear* means reverence or awe in this context.)
- What truth can we learn from 1 Peter 3:15 about what we as followers of Jesus Christ should strive to always be ready to do? (Students should identify a truth similar to the

following: **As followers of Jesus Christ, we should strive to always be ready to share and defend our beliefs with meekness and reverence.** Write this truth on the board.)

- Why do you think it is important to share our beliefs with meekness and reverence?

To illustrate the truth on the board, invite a student to read aloud the rest of President Monson’s account of his experience on the bus:



“I waited for someone to respond. I gazed at the expression on each person’s face for some sign of recognition, some desire to comment. Nothing. I realized it was up to me to do as the Apostle Peter suggested, to ‘be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.’ I also realized the truth of the adage ‘When the time for decision arrives, the time for preparation is past.’

“For the next 15 or so minutes, I had the privilege of sharing with those on the bus my testimony concerning the Church and our beliefs. I was grateful for my testimony and grateful that I was prepared to share it” (“Dare to Stand Alone,” 67).

- What are some things we can do to always be ready to share our beliefs?

Invite students to think of a time when they were grateful that they were prepared to share their beliefs or testimony. Ask a few students to share their experiences with the class.

Invite students to ponder what they will do to prepare to always be ready to share and defend their beliefs. Encourage them to act on any promptings they may receive.

1 Peter 3:18–4:19

Jesus Christ preached the gospel in the spirit world after His death

Invite students to imagine that they are missionaries teaching a person who says the following:

“I believe what you are teaching me is true, but I wonder about people who die without having the chance to hear the truth. It doesn’t seem fair for God to punish them or prevent them from living with Him again if they never had the chance to learn about His plan of salvation.”

Ask students to ponder how they would respond.

Invite half the class to read 1 Peter 3:18–20 silently, including the Joseph Smith Translation in verse 20, footnote *a*. Ask the other half to read 1 Peter 4:5–6 silently, including the Joseph Smith Translation in verse 6, footnote *a*. Ask students to look for truths Peter taught that they could share with the person in the scenario. Explain that the phrase “the spirits in prison” in 1 Peter 3:19 refers to those in the spirit world who did not accept the gospel or have the opportunity to hear it while in mortality.

After sufficient time, ask:

- What do we learn from these verses about those in the spirit world who did not accept the gospel or have the opportunity to receive it in this life?



Display a picture of President Joseph F. Smith (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 127; see also LDS.org). Explain that President Joseph F. Smith was pondering the meaning of 1 Peter 3:18–20 and 1 Peter 4:6 when he received a revelation and vision of the Savior’s visit to the spirit world. He saw that Jesus Christ, between the time of His death and Resurrection, preached the gospel and personally ministered to the righteous spirits. Jesus Christ then organized and authorized righteous servants to teach the gospel to the spirits in spirit prison (see D&C 138:1–11, 29–30).

- According to 1 Peter 4:6, why is the gospel preached to those who are dead? (To bring about a righteous and fair judgment by giving all Heavenly Father’s children an opportunity to hear and live according to God’s laws.)
- What truth can we identify from Peter’s teachings about the gospel being preached to the dead? (Students may use their own words, but make sure they identify a truth similar to the following: **The gospel is preached to those who have died so that they may have the same opportunities as those who hear the gospel in mortality.**)

Briefly review the scenario presented at the beginning of this scripture block and ask:



1 Peter 4:6

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

- How is the doctrine of salvation for the dead evidence of God’s mercy and compassion for His children?

Summarize 1 Peter 4:7–19 by explaining that Peter admonished the Saints to have fervent charity because charity covers, or prevents, a multitude of sins (see Joseph Smith Translation, 1 Peter 4:8 [in 1 Peter 4:8, footnote *a*]). Peter also taught the Saints to rejoice when they suffer trials and reproach because of their belief in Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 5

Peter counseled elders to watch over God’s flock and encouraged Saints to remain steadfast in the faith

Explain that to help prepare the Saints for the trials they would experience, Peter taught the elders of the Church about their responsibilities as Church leaders. Invite a student to read 1 Peter 5:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Peter’s counsel to the elders of the Church.

- What counsel did Peter give to the elders of the Church?

Explain that to “feed the flock of God” (verse 2) means to take care of and watch over the members of the Church. Church leaders were to serve willingly and with love rather than grudgingly or out of a desire for reward. They were to be examples to the members instead of “lords” (verse 3) over them.

- From Peter’s counsel to the elders of the Church, what truth can we learn about the responsibility of Church leaders? (Help students identify a truth similar to the following: **Church leaders have the responsibility to care for and watch over God’s flock in love and by example.** Write this truth on the board.)

Invite students to read 1 Peter 5:4 silently, looking for how Peter referred to the Savior. Ask students to report what they find.

Display the picture Jesus Carrying a Lost Lamb (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 64; see also LDS.org), and ask:

- Why do you think the Savior is often depicted as a shepherd?
- What Christlike qualities and attributes can help Church leaders watch over and care for the members of the Church?
- How have you been blessed by the Christlike love or example of a Church leader?

Summarize 1 Peter 5:7–14 by explaining that Peter taught the Saints to cast their care (meaning anxiety) upon the Savior Jesus Christ and to remain steadfast in their faith, despite afflictions. Peter assured them that if they did so, God would perfect and strengthen them.

Conclude by encouraging students to trust in and follow those whom the Lord has called to help shepherd and care for them spiritually.



Scripture Mastery—1 Peter 4:6

To encourage students to participate in the work of salvation for their ancestors, review with them 1 Peter 4:6, and then ask:

- What can we do to help our ancestors who have received the gospel in the spirit world and are waiting to be freed from spirit prison?
- How do you feel you have been blessed by doing family history and temple work for your ancestors?

Invite students to seek opportunities to do family history research about their ancestors and to participate in temple ordinances in behalf of those ancestors.

Home-Study Lesson

James 2–1 Peter 5 (Unit 29)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles your students learned as they studied James 2–1 Peter 5 (unit 29) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (James 2–3)

From James's teachings in these chapters, students learned that faithful disciples of Jesus Christ love all people regardless of their circumstances and that if we commit even one sin, we become guilty before God. They also learned that true faith in Jesus Christ is made manifest by our righteous works. As they studied James's teachings about controlling our words, students discovered that learning to control what we say can have a great effect on our lives and that followers of God strive to use their language for righteous purposes, not to spread evil.

Day 2 (James 4–5)

As students studied these chapters in James, they learned the following truths: As we draw near to God, He will draw near to us. If we know to do good but choose not to do it, we commit sin. Through the prayer of faith and the power of the priesthood, the sick can be healed.

Day 3 (1 Peter 1–2)

In their study of Peter's teachings, students learned the following truths: Although we experience trials, we can rejoice in Jesus Christ's Atonement and in the future blessings God has promised to give us. Our faith in Jesus Christ is tested and refined as we faithfully endure trials. We are redeemed through the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Because Jesus Christ lived a sinless life, He could offer Himself as a perfect sacrifice for us. Jesus Christ was foreordained to be our Redeemer. God calls His Saints to be separate and distinct from the world so that others can see their example and glorify Him. We can follow the Savior's example in patiently enduring trials.

Day 4 (1 Peter 3–5)

From Peter's encouragement to the Saints of his day, students learned that as followers of Jesus Christ, we should strive to always be ready to share and defend our beliefs with meekness and reverence. Students also learned that the gospel is preached to those who have died so that they may have the same opportunities as those who hear the gospel in mortality. Peter taught that Church leaders have the responsibility to care for and watch over God's flock with love and by example.

Introduction

The Apostle James clarified some misunderstanding among the Saints about what true faith is. He also taught about the relationship between faith and works.

Suggestions for Teaching

James 2:14–26

James teaches the role of faith and works in our salvation

Invite students to suppose that a young man has recognized that he has sinned. He believes in the Atonement of Jesus Christ and in the Savior's ability to save him. He says that all he has to do is believe and the Lord will forgive him, with no other effort on his part.

Ask students to consider whether this young man's belief alone is sufficient for him to be forgiven for his sins.

Invite a student to read James 2:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what James asked the Saints about faith.

- What did James ask the Saints about faith?
- What type of works do you think James was referring to?

Remind students that as they studied the lesson on James 2, they learned that the Apostle James was correcting a false idea about faith. Some people had misunderstood faith to be simply a verbal expression of belief. In the context of James 2:14, James used the term *works* differently than the Apostle Paul had used it. When Paul used the word *works*, he referred to the works of the law of Moses. When James used the word *works*, he referred to acts of devotion or works of righteousness.

Explain that James used an analogy to illustrate the answer to his question in verse 14.

Invite two students to come to the front of the class. Ask one of the students to act as a beggar who is pleading for the food, clothing, and shelter he or she needs to survive. Invite the other student to act as someone who can help the beggar. Invite a third student to read James 2:15–16 aloud while the two other students act out what is described in these verses.

- What is wrong with the response that was given to the begging student?
- Would the other student's response be enough to help a beggar?

Invite the class to read aloud or recite James 2:17–18 together, looking for what James taught about faith. Remind them that James 2:17–18 is a scripture mastery passage.

- What do you think the phrase “faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone” (verse 17) means?
- How does James's analogy of the beggar help us understand what this phrase means?
- According to verse 17, what truth did James teach about true faith in Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **True faith in Jesus Christ is made manifest by our righteous works.** Write this truth on the board.)

Invite a student to read James 2:19–20 aloud. Make sure the student also reads the Joseph Smith Translation of James 2:19 (in James 2:19, footnote a) aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the example James used to show that believing in God does not necessarily include having faith in God.

- What example did James use to show that believing in God does not necessarily include having faith in God?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“True faith is focused in and on the Lord Jesus Christ and always leads to righteous action. . . . Action alone is not faith in the Savior, but acting in accordance with correct principles is a central component of faith. Thus, ‘faith without works is dead’ (James 2:20)” (“Ask in Faith,” *Ensign* or

Liahona, May 2008, 95).

- According to Elder Bednar, what is “a central component of faith”?
- Why is it important to understand that faith in Jesus Christ means both believing in Him and acting according to correct principles?

Remind students of the young man in the scenario at the beginning of the lesson.

- How might understanding that faith includes both belief and action help someone who seeks forgiveness for his or her sins?

Summarize James 2:21–26 by explaining that James referred to Abraham and Rahab as two examples of people whose faith in Jesus Christ was made manifest by their works. (The account of the courageous woman Rahab is found in Joshua 2:1–22.)

Invite students to use their class notebooks or scripture study journals to write about a time when they demonstrated faith in Jesus Christ through their works and how they were blessed for doing so. Encourage students to include their testimonies of the Savior and how they will demonstrate that belief through their actions. Ask a few students to share what they wrote with the class.

Invite students to prayerfully consider how they can more fully exercise faith in Jesus Christ by obeying Him. Encourage them to follow any promptings they receive.

Next Unit (2 Peter–Jude)

Ask students why they think people choose to sin even though they know it is wrong. Invite them to look for truths, as they study 2 Peter through Jude during the next week, that can help them answer the following questions: How can we avoid being deceived by false doctrine? What did John say will cast out fear? How should we express our love for God? What godly attributes must we develop to inherit eternal life? What warning was given about those we choose to associate with?

INTRODUCTION TO

The Second Epistle General of Peter

Why study this book?

The Prophet Joseph Smith remarked, “Peter penned the most sublime language of any of the apostles” (in *History of the Church*, 5:392). *Sublime* means exalted in thought, of outstanding worth, and tending to inspire admiration.

As an eyewitness of Jesus Christ’s transfiguration (see 2 Peter 1:16–18), Peter exhorted his readers to grow in their knowledge of Jesus Christ and to seek to obtain godly attributes so they can partake of the “divine nature” (see 2 Peter 1:4–8). He assured his readers that this spiritual growth would help them make their “calling and election sure” (2 Peter 1:10). “Peter reaffirms that the Lord will come from heaven in great glory and in judgment upon the earth” (Bible Dictionary, “Peter, Epistles of”). By studying Peter’s Second Epistle, students can develop greater faith in Jesus Christ and receive instruction and inspiration that can help them to become more like Him.

Who wrote this book?

The author of the Second Epistle of Peter is Simon Peter, the chief Apostle of Jesus Christ (see 2 Peter 1:1).

When and where was it written?

We do not know exactly when and where this epistle was written. It is commonly assumed that Peter wrote this epistle in Rome, after the epistle known as 1 Peter, which was likely written around A.D. 64 (see Bible Dictionary, “Peter, Epistles of”).

To whom was it written and why?

Peter stated that he was writing “to them that have obtained like precious faith with us” (2 Peter 1:1). This may indicate that Peter’s audience was the same Gentile Christians who received Peter’s First Epistle (see 2 Peter 3:1). The content of 2 Peter 1:12–15 shows that Peter meant this letter to be a farewell message to his readers.

Unlike the First Epistle of Peter, which helped the Saints deal with external persecution, Peter’s Second Epistle addressed the internal apostasy that threatened the future of the Church. False prophets and teachers were spreading “damnable

heresies [false teachings], even denying the Lord that bought them” (2 Peter 2:1). Peter wrote the letter to encourage the Saints to grow in their knowledge of the Lord and to make their “calling and election sure” (2 Peter 1:10).

What are some distinctive features of this book?

“The second epistle was apparently addressed to the same churches as the first ([2 Peter] 3:1). It was written in the near prospect of death ([2 Peter] 1:14)” (Bible Dictionary, “Peter, Epistles of”). It also contains some of Peter’s most forceful words and last testimonies.

A dominant theme in 2 Peter is the importance of gaining knowledge about Jesus Christ. Peter promised his readers that if they would seek godly attributes and develop a divine nature, they would “neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:8) and would make their “calling and election sure” (2 Peter 1:10).

Peter contrasted the true knowledge of Jesus Christ with the false knowledge and teachings spread by apostates (see 2 Peter 2). At the close of this epistle, Peter gave a final invitation for the Saints to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).

Outline

2 Peter 1 Peter explains that Jesus Christ’s promises allow the Saints to become “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4). He encourages them to make their “calling and election sure” (2 Peter 1:10). Peter recalls his experience on the Mount of Transfiguration, when he witnessed the glorified Christ and heard the voice of the Father. Peter says that he has “a more sure word of prophecy” (2 Peter 1:19).

2 Peter 2 Peter warns Church members of false prophets and false teachers who will come among them and seek to lead the Saints astray. These wicked teachers will deny the Lord and speak evil of the “way of truth” (2 Peter 2:2). Peter teaches that it is better not to accept the gospel than to make covenants and not live up to them.

2 Peter 3 Peter affirms the certainty that Christ will come in His own time, cleanse the earth by fire, destroy the wicked, and save the diligent and faithful. Peter encourages the Saints to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of . . . Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).

2 Peter 1

Introduction

Peter encouraged the Saints to seek to become like Jesus Christ. Peter assured them that this spiritual growth could help make their “calling and election sure”

(2 Peter 1:10). Peter also spoke of his experience on the Mount of Transfiguration and emphasized that scripture is inspired by God.

Strive to help students become converted

President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency taught: “The pure gospel of Jesus Christ must go down into the hearts of students by the power of the Holy Ghost. . . . Our aim must be for them to become truly converted to the restored gospel of Jesus Christ while they are with us” (“We Must Raise Our Sights” [CES conference on the Book of Mormon, Aug. 14, 2001], 2).

Suggestions for Teaching

2 Peter 1:1–11

Peter teaches how to partake of the divine nature of Jesus Christ

Before class begins, write the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson on the board. (This statement is found in “The Will Within,” *Ensign*, May 1987, 68.)

“Our task is to become our best selves” (President Thomas S. Monson).

Divide students into pairs. Invite them to read the statement on the board and discuss the following questions with their partners:

- What do you think President Monson meant by becoming “our best selves”?
- Why do you think it is important to become our best selves?
- What can prevent us from becoming our best selves?

Invite students to look for a truth as they study 2 Peter 1 that can help them know how they can become their best selves.

Summarize 2 Peter 1:1–2 by explaining that Peter wrote to Church members who had obtained faith in Jesus Christ.

Invite a student to read 2 Peter 1:3–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter taught to help the Saints stay true to their testimonies of the Savior.

- According to these verses, what did Peter teach the Saints?
- What does it mean to “be partakers of the divine nature”? (verse 4).

Invite students to read 2 Peter 1:5–7 silently, looking for attributes of Jesus Christ that Peter invited the Saints to develop. Ask students to list on the board the attributes they find. Consider inviting students to locate in a dictionary the definitions of any of these attributes that they would like to better understand.

Invite students to think about examples of when the Savior demonstrated one of these divine attributes. Ask several students to report their thoughts to the class.

Write the following incomplete principle on the board: *As we develop divine attributes within ourselves, we can . . .*

Ask a student to read 2 Peter 1:8–9 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for a blessing we can receive as we develop the divine attributes of the Savior.

- What blessing can we receive as we develop divine attributes? (After students respond, complete the statement on the board so that it reads as follows: **As we develop divine attributes within ourselves, we can come to know Jesus Christ.**)
- Why do you think developing divine attributes helps us come to know Jesus Christ?

Invite a student to read 2 Peter 1:10–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for another blessing that can come to those who are diligent in developing divine attributes.

- What blessing can come to those who are diligent in developing the divine attributes of Jesus Christ? (Explain that the phrase “to make your calling and election sure” [verse 10] means to receive in this life God’s assurance that you will obtain eternal life. Peter also referred to this as “a more sure word of prophecy” [2 Peter 1:19. See also D&C 131:5].)
- What principle can we learn from these verses about why we should be diligent in developing our divine potential? (Students should identify the following principle: **If we are diligent in developing our divine potential while in this life, we can receive God’s assurance of eternal life.** Write this principle on the board.)

Consider sharing your testimony that developing divine attributes helps us come to know Jesus Christ and prepares us to receive eternal life.

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals one of the divine attributes they would most like to develop. Ask them to write a specific action they can take to develop that attribute.

2 Peter 1:12–21

Peter shares his witness of Jesus Christ and teaches about scripture

Consider writing on the board the ages of some of the oldest current Apostles. Read aloud the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Others say we are too old. Well, it is true that nine of the Apostles are over 80 years of age! I am 85” (“Be Still, and Know That I Am God” [Church Educational System devotional, May 4, 2014], broadcasts.lds.org).

- Why do you think some people are critical about the ages of some of the prophets and apostles?
- How would you respond to the criticism that modern-day prophets and apostles are too old to be effective?

Invite students as they continue to study 2 Peter 1 to look for a truth about prophets and apostles that is more important than these leaders’ ages.

Explain that in 2 Peter 1:12–19 Peter shared his eyewitness testimony of Jesus Christ.

Invite a student to read 2 Peter 1:20–21 aloud, including the Joseph Smith Translation of 2 Peter 1:20 found in verse 20, footnote *a*. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter taught about the role of “holy men of God,” meaning, in this case, prophets.

- What did Peter teach about the role of prophets? (Students should identify the following truth: **Prophets receive scripture through the Holy Ghost.** Write this truth on the board.)

To help the class understand what scripture is, invite a student to read the following statement aloud:

“[Scriptures are] words, both written and spoken, by holy men of God when moved upon by the Holy Ghost” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Scriptures,” scriptures.lds.org; see also D&C 68:2–4). Some scripture has been canonized. A canon is “a recognized, authoritative collection of sacred books. In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the canonical books are called the standard works and include the Old and New Testaments, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Canon,” scriptures.lds.org).

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for his witness that prophets continue to receive scripture today.

“[Prophets are] the channel by which God has spoken to His children through the scriptures in times past. And it is this line through which He currently speaks through the teachings and counsel of living prophets and apostles and other inspired leaders” (“Two Lines of Communication,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 84).

- Why do you think it is important to know that God uses this pattern to produce scripture for His children?
- How does understanding this pattern give you greater confidence in the spoken and written word of both ancient and modern-day prophets?

Read the following questions aloud, and invite students to write their answers in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

- What passages of scripture, either from ancient prophets or from prophets today, have influenced your life? How have you been blessed through those scriptures?

Invite a few students to share their responses with the class. You might also share an example of how you have been blessed through scripture.

Refer to the preceding statement by Elder Oaks, and invite students to testify to others as the Spirit directs about the reality of prophets and scripture.

2 Peter 2–3

Introduction

Peter warned that false prophets and teachers lead people astray. He prophesied that in the last days, the wicked would scoff at the righteous for believing that

Jesus Christ would return. Peter encouraged the Saints to prepare diligently for the Savior's Second Coming.

Suggestions for Teaching

2 Peter 2

Peter warns about being deceived by false teachers

Write the following question on the board: *Why might people choose to sin even when they know that what they are doing is wrong?*

Invite students to ponder this question, and then ask a few of them to report their answers.

Explain that in 2 Peter 2 we read that the Apostle Peter warned the Saints about people who were seeking to deceive them. Invite students to look for truths as they study 2 Peter 2 that can help them recognize and avoid deceptions that lead to sin.

Invite a student to read 2 Peter 2:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Peter's warning about who would try to deceive the Saints.

- Whom did Peter warn the Saints about?
- What do these false prophets and teachers teach? (Explain that “damnable heresies” [verse 1] are false and destructive teachings.)
- What truth can we learn from Peter about what false teachers seek to do to us? (Help students identify a truth similar to the following: **False teachers seek to deceive us.** Write this truth on the board.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for what false teachers teach today in order to deceive us.



“False prophets and false teachers are those who declare that the Prophet Joseph Smith was a duplicitous deceiver; they challenge the First Vision as an authentic experience. They declare that the Book of Mormon and other canonical works are not ancient records of scripture. They also attempt to redefine the nature of the Godhead, and they deny that God has given and continues to give revelation today to His ordained and sustained prophets. . . .

“False prophets and false teachers are also those who attempt to change the God-given and scripturally based doctrines that protect the sanctity of marriage, the divine nature of the family, and the essential doctrine of personal morality. They advocate a redefinition of morality to justify fornication, adultery, and homosexual relationships” (“Beware of False Prophets and False Teachers,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 63, 64).

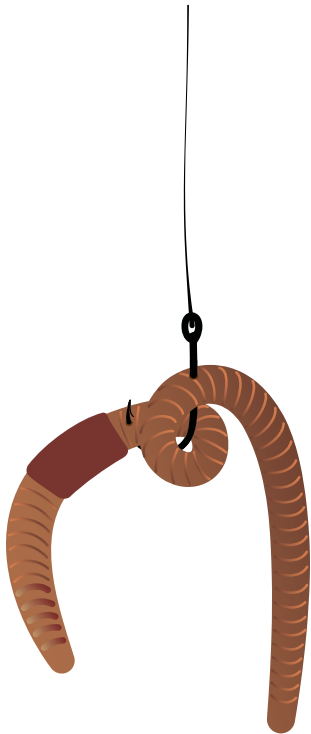
Invite students to consider times when they may have encountered teachings or messages from false teachers.

- Why is it helpful to be aware of the messages and teachings of false teachers?

Summarize 2 Peter 2:4–17 by explaining that Peter gave several examples of what had happened to people who had followed false teachers in the past. Peter also gave examples of individuals who had not been influenced by false teachers. Peter then described false teachers' wicked behavior.

Display a fishing pole and some lures or bait, or display or draw a picture of these objects on the board. (If another method of catching fish would be more familiar to your students, use objects or pictures that show that method.)

Explain that one way a fisherman catches fish is by using lures or bait to entice fish into a trap or into biting a hook. Invite students to consider how a fisherman's techniques are like those of a false teacher.



Object lessons

Look for ways to use objects that will help students understand gospel principles. Through effective object lessons, you can help students visualize, analyze, and understand the scriptures. You can also use object lessons to stimulate discussion.

Invite a student to read 2 Peter 2:18–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how false teachers entice Saints to follow their teachings.

- How do false teachers entice and deceive Church members? (Point out that some false teachers may be sincere but have been deceived themselves.)
- How are the teachings of false prophets and teachers like a fishing lure or fly?
- According to verse 19, what do these false teachers promise? (“Liberty.” In other words, they teach that sin, rather than obedience to the commandments, leads to greater freedom.)

Add to the truth on the board so it reads as follows: **False teachers seek to deceive us into believing that sin leads to greater liberty.**

Invite students to read verse 19 again silently, looking for what happens to people who are overcome by false teachings and sin.

- What happens to people who are overcome by false teachings and sin? (They become enslaved to them.)
- What are some false teachings that appear to promote freedom but actually lead to bondage?

Invite a student to read 2 Peter 2:20–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter taught about those who return to sin after escaping from it.

- Why do you think those who “have escaped the pollutions of the world through . . . Jesus Christ” (verse 20) may be tempted to return to their sinful ways?
- What advice would you give to help someone remain faithful to Jesus Christ and His gospel rather than return to previous sins?

2 Peter 3

Peter testifies of the Second Coming

Explain that as Peter concluded his epistle, he reminded the Saints of Jesus Christ’s Second Coming and taught them how to prepare for it. Summarize 2 Peter 3:1–9 by explaining that Peter taught that in the last days some people would scoff at and mock those who believed in the Second Coming.

Ask a few students to explain why they believe in the Second Coming, even though many people do not.

Invite a student to read 2 Peter 3:10–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter taught about the Second Coming. Explain that *conversation* in verse 11 means conduct (see 1 Timothy 4:12, footnote *c*) and “hasting unto” in verse 12 means awaiting something eagerly.

- According to verse 10, what did Peter teach about the Second Coming?
- According to verses 11–14, what counsel did Peter give the Saints to prepare them for the Second Coming? (Lead holy and godly lives, watch for and eagerly await the Second Coming, and diligently strive to be found “without spot, and blameless” [verse 14].)

Explain that the phrase “without spot, and blameless” (verse 14) means being clean from sin. Those who are clean from sin have been reconciled to God and will be found at peace with the Savior when He comes.

- How would you summarize a principle Peter taught about how we can prepare for the Savior’s Second Coming? (Help students identify a principle similar to the following: **We can prepare for the Savior’s Second Coming by leading godly lives and earnestly watching for His Coming.** Explain that “watching” can mean we are eagerly awaiting the Savior’s Coming.)
- What are some things we can do to lead godly lives as we earnestly watch for the Second Coming?

Summarize 2 Peter 3:15–18 by explaining that Peter warned about falling into wickedness. He invited the Saints to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of [the] Lord” (verse 18).

Conclude by testifying of the truths taught in 2 Peter 2–3. Invite students to seek to recognize and avoid false teachings and to prepare diligently for the Second Coming.

INTRODUCTION TO

The First Epistle General of John

Why study this book?

In this epistle John addressed the dangerous spread of apostate influences in the Church. He warned the Saints to have no fellowship with darkness and to stay in the safety of gospel light. Studying 1 John can help students become more discerning of false teachings about Jesus Christ, and following John's counsel can help them maintain close fellowship with the Lord as they abide in the truth. In addition, studying this book can help students come to understand the great love Heavenly Father has for each of His children, which He manifested by offering His Son, Jesus Christ, as a sacrifice for all mankind.

Who wrote this book?

"In none of these three epistles does the writer mention himself by name; but tradition assigns them to John," one of the original Twelve Apostles (Bible Dictionary, "John, Epistles of").

The author of the Epistles of John was an eyewitness of the resurrected Savior, which was certainly true of John the Apostle (see 1 John 1:1–4; 4:14).

When and where was it written?

It is unknown exactly when and where 1 John was written. It was likely written sometime in the latter part of the first century A.D.

Although John spent much of the early part of his life in Palestine, the area was hostile to Christians and Jews following the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in A.D. 70. Tradition states that John left Palestine to live in Ephesus during his later years. If this was the case, John could have written the letter from Ephesus between A.D. 70 and 100.

To whom was it written and why?

The audience of 1 John is not explicitly stated, but it appears from his writings that John wrote to believers (see 1 John 1:3–4; 2:12–14), perhaps those in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey), where some historical sources say John may have lived and ministered in the late first century A.D.

At this time, false teachers had created a schism, or division, among the Saints in

the region (see 1 John 2:18–19, 22, 26; 4:1), and apostasy was spreading in the Church. A particular philosophy that was gaining popularity was Docetism. Docetism was part of a larger movement known as Gnosticism. A core teaching in many forms of Gnosticism was that the spirit was wholly good and that matter, including the physical body, was wholly evil.

Followers of Gnosticism believed that salvation was not achieved by being freed from sin but rather by freeing the spirit from matter, meaning the physical body. They also believed that salvation was achieved through special knowledge (*gnosis*) rather than through faith in Jesus Christ.

Followers of Docetism overemphasized Jesus's spiritual nature to the point that they rejected the idea that He came to earth in actual bodily form. They believed that God was invisible, immortal, all-knowing, and immaterial, and they considered the physical world and the physical body to be base and evil. Therefore, they believed that since Jesus was the divine Son of God, He could not have experienced the limitations of being human. In their view, Jesus Christ was not literally born in the flesh, and He did not inhabit a tangible body, bleed, suffer, die, or rise with a physical resurrected body—He only seemed to do these things. *Docetism* comes from the Greek word *dokeō*, meaning "to seem" or "to appear."

Although 1 John refutes these false teachings, they persisted and crept into the Church membership. These and other false doctrines are part of what led to the Great Apostasy.

What are some distinctive features of this book?

As one of Jesus Christ's original Apostles, John was a special witness of the resurrected Savior. John began this letter by declaring that he had personally seen, heard, and touched Jesus Christ. Expanding on this personal witness, John invited his readers to have "fellowship . . . with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). Love is a central theme of John's First Epistle. John emphasized that those who say they love God but do not in turn love those around them are liars (see 1 John 4:20–21).

Outline

1 John 1–3 John teaches that through obedience, we can come to know God, have fellowship with Him, and become like Him. In the last days antichrists will arise. The Savior's love for us is manifest through His atoning sacrifice.

1 John 4–5 John encourages the Saints to determine whether a teacher is of God. God is love, and because of His great love for us He sent His Son to suffer in our behalf. Those who love God will keep His commandments. Those who believe in Jesus Christ and are born of God will overcome the world.

1 John

Introduction

John invited Church members to seek fellowship with the Father and the Son. He emphasized the need to keep the commandments of God to show our love

for Him. John also reminded Church members to love others.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 John 1–5

John explains the importance of keeping the commandments and loving one another

Divide students into pairs. Write the word *apostasy* on the board. Invite students to turn to their partners and briefly explain the meaning of *apostasy*. Then invite a student to come to the board and write a definition of *apostasy*. The definition should indicate that *apostasy* means a turning away from the truth (see Guide to the Scriptures, “Apostasy,” scriptures.lds.org).

Explain that the Apostle John wrote the epistle of 1 John at a time when apostasy was threatening the Church. In this epistle, John warned the Saints of antichrists (see 1 John 2:18–26; 4:3). An antichrist is “anyone or anything that counterfeits the true gospel plan of salvation and that openly or secretly opposes Christ” and the authority and teachings of His chosen servants (Guide to the Scriptures, “Antichrist,” scriptures.lds.org). Some antichrists in John’s day were teaching that Jesus Christ did not have a physical body while on earth but only appeared to be a physical being.

Invite a student to read 1 John 1:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what John testified of to refute this false teaching. Explain that the phrase “the Word of life” (verse 1) refers to Jesus Christ.

- What words did John use to refute the false idea that Jesus Christ did not have a physical body?
- According to verses 3–4, why did John share his sacred witness of Jesus Christ with Church members? (He wanted them to have fellowship with the leaders of the Church, who had fellowship with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. He also desired that they experience a fulness of joy.)

Explain that to have fellowship means to enjoy a relationship of trust, communion, and common purpose. We can have fellowship with Church leaders as we receive and follow their teachings and counsel.

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we receive and follow the teachings of prophets and apostles, we can . . .*

- Based on John’s teachings in John 1:3, how would you complete this statement to form a principle? (Using students’ words, complete the statement on the board so that it conveys the following principle: **If we receive and follow the teachings of prophets and apostles, we can gain fellowship with the Father and the Son.**)

Display pictures of the current President of the Church and other prophets and apostles.

- How does following the teachings of the prophets and apostles help us gain fellowship with our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ?

Invite a student to read 1 John 1:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what can prevent us from having fellowship with our Father in Heaven.

- What can prevent us from having fellowship with our Father in Heaven?

Point out that John’s use of the word *darkness* refers to spiritual darkness.

- What do you think it means to walk in spiritual darkness?

Invite students to study 1 John 1:7–10; 2:1–6, looking for truths John taught that can help us know how to walk in the light of the gospel. Explain that the word *propitiation* in 1 John 2:2 means an atoning sacrifice that satisfies the justice of God. Invite students to study these verses silently on their own or with partners or in small groups.

Teach as the Savior taught

President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles invited gospel teachers to strive to teach as the Savior taught: “When we begin to analyze ourselves and look to improve ourselves as teachers, what better model could we find? What finer study could we undertake than to analyze our ideals and goals and methods and compare them with those of Jesus Christ?” (*Teach Ye Diligently*, rev. ed. [1991], 22).

- What truths did you identify in these verses? (Consider writing students' responses on the board. These may include truths such as the following: **Jesus Christ atoned for our sins. When we keep the commandments of God, our love for God is perfected.**)
- Why do you think our love for God becomes more perfect, or complete, as we keep His commandments?
- When have you experienced a greater love for God as you have striven to keep His commandments?

Read aloud the following descriptions of two Latter-day Saint youth. Invite students to listen for a particular commandment that these two individuals struggle to obey.

1. A young man reads the scriptures each day and faithfully performs many of his priesthood duties, but he is often unkind to his younger brother.
 2. A young woman regularly attends her Church meetings and has earned her Young Womanhood Recognition. However, she often posts rude comments about some of her classmates and teachers on social media.
- What commandment do these two young people struggle to obey?

Invite students to reflect on situations in which they might struggle to show love for others.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 1 John 2:9–11; 4:7–11, 19–21. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what John taught about love. You may want to invite students to consider marking teachings in these verses that are meaningful to them.

- Which of John's teachings about love are meaningful to you? Why?
- What principle can we identify from these verses about what we will do when we love God? (Students may use different words, but they should identify a principle similar to the following: **When we love God, we will love others.**)
- Why do you think we will show our love to others if we truly love God?

Point out that while John used the word *hate* in 1 John 4:20, there are many ways that we can withhold our love or kindness from others besides hating them. Invite students to explain what they think some of those ways might be.

Invite a student to read 1 John 3:17–18 aloud, and ask the class to look for how we ought to demonstrate our love for others. Invite students to report what they find. Students should discover the importance of loving not just "in word" but also "in deed."

- Why do you think it is important that we demonstrate our love through our actions and not through our words alone?
- Whom do you know who is a good example of showing love to others? What does this person do that manifests his or her love for others?

Invite students to think of someone in their life for whom they could show more love. Ask them to write on a piece of paper the name of that individual along with something specific they could do to demonstrate love or kindness toward that person. Explain that they do not need to show their love in extravagant ways and that small, simple gestures of charity and kindness are often the most meaningful. Invite them to take the paper home with them and act on what they wrote.

Point out that when we demonstrate our love through our actions, we are following the example of Jesus Christ (see 1 John 2:6; 3:1–3). You may want to conclude the lesson by sharing your testimony of the truths students identified in their study of 1 John. Encourage students to apply these truths in their lives.

Supplemental Teaching Idea

1 John 4:7–11. Video presentation—"Two Brothers Apart"

To help students feel the truth and importance of the principle that **when we love God, we will love others**,

consider showing the video "Two Brothers Apart" (6:12). This video shows the relationship between two brothers over several years as they learn to understand and love each other. This video is available on LDS.org.

INTRODUCTION TO

The Second Epistle of John

Why study this book?

In his Second Epistle, John expressed concern regarding apostate influences in the Church. At the same time, he also expressed joy for Church members who had remained strong and loyal to the gospel (see 2 John 1:4). These words illustrate the joy and gratitude that Church leaders feel for those who remain faithful to the Lord. As students study 2 John, they can be strengthened by John's reminder to love one another, obey God's commandments, and faithfully abide in the doctrine of Christ.

Who wrote this book?

The author identified himself as "the elder" (2 John 1:1), and tradition holds that John, one of the original Twelve Apostles, wrote this epistle (see Bible Dictionary, "John, Epistles of").

When and where was it written?

It is unknown exactly when and where 2 John was written.

If the tradition of John's long residence in Ephesus is correct, he could have written this epistle from there between A.D. 70 and 100.

To whom was it written and why?

The Second Epistle of John was written to "the elect lady and her children" (2 John 1:1). It is unknown whether John was addressing his family or another specific group of people or was speaking to the Church collectively in figurative language.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles wrote that 2 and 3 John may be letters that John wrote to members of his immediate family (see *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 3:409–10, 412–14).

Another possibility is that "the elect lady" actually refers to a Christian congregation (see 2 John 1:13). The Greek word for *church* is feminine, and it was common to personify the Church as a woman (see Ephesians 5:25–27, 32; Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 12:1–3, 7 [in the Bible appendix]; Revelation 19:7–8).

As with 1 John, John apparently wrote this epistle to respond to false teachings that Jesus Christ did not literally come to earth in the flesh. He explained that members who taught that Christ did not have a physical body should not be received into one's house, or congregation (see 2 John 1:7–10).

What are some distinctive features of this book?

In this epistle John warned about false teachers who had entered into the Church. He advised Church members not to heed or keep company with these individuals.

Outline

2 John 1 John reminds the Church of the commandment to love one another. He warns of false teachers and deceivers within the Church and counsels Church members to not allow them to remain in their congregations.

INTRODUCTION TO

The Third Epistle of John

Why study this book?

In this brief epistle, John praised Gaius, a Church member who was loyal during a time of rebellion against Church leaders. John's teachings can help students better understand the apostasy that occurred in the New Testament Church and can inspire them to remain faithful to Church leaders despite opposition.

Who wrote this book?

The author identified himself as "the elder" (3 John 1:1) and is traditionally understood to be the Apostle John.

When and where was it written?

It is unknown exactly when and where 3 John was written.

If the tradition of John's long residence in Ephesus is correct, he could have written this epistle from there between A.D. 70 and 100.

To whom was it written and why?

The Third Epistle of John was written to Gaius, a faithful member of the Church whom John praised for showing unselfish devotion to the cause of Christ by providing accommodations for God's traveling servants (see 3 John 1:5–8).

John also warned Gaius about someone named Diotrephes, who may have held a local leadership position in the Church. Diotrephes openly opposed John and other Church officials and even prevented local Church members who wished to receive them from attending Church meetings (see

3 John 1:9–10). John encouraged Gaius to continue in goodness and said he expected to visit Gaius soon (see 3 John 1:11–14).

What are some distinctive features of this book?

In 3 John we see John's concern about apostate influences in the Church. We also see John's love for others and the joy he felt for those who were choosing a life of obedience (see 3 John 1:4).

Outline

3 John 1 John praises Gaius for his faithfulness and warns against a leader who opposed John and other Church leaders.

2 John–3 John

Introduction

John warned the Saints about people who deceive and preach that Jesus Christ did not come in the flesh. He also praised Gaius for his faithfulness.

Note: This lesson includes a teaching suggestion for 3 John that involves students receiving letters from parents or Church leaders. If you choose to use this teaching

suggestion, you will need to prepare several days in advance. Invite the parents or, if needed, local Church leaders of each student to write a short letter to the student expressing the joy they have felt as they have seen the student's efforts to live the gospel. Make sure you have a letter for each student from his or her parents or a Church leader on the day you teach this lesson.

Suggestions for Teaching

2 John

John warns about people who teach false doctrine

Name a well-known athlete who is familiar to most students.

- What might this athlete do to stay in peak health in order to perform well?
- What could happen if this athlete, after working hard to get in shape, stopped going to the gym and began eating junk food, watching a lot of TV, playing video games, and taking substances that are harmful to the body?

Invite students to consider how the work that successful athletes must do to preserve their peak physical condition can be compared to the work that Church members must do to preserve the blessings they have obtained through the gospel. Invite them to look for a principle as they study 2 John that can help them preserve the blessings they have obtained as Church members.

Summarize 2 John 1:1–4 by explaining that the Apostle John began his epistle by addressing “the elect lady and her children,” which may have been either a direct address to a female Church member and her children or symbolic language to describe a Church congregation.

Invite a student to read 2 John 1:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the commandment that John reminded the Saints about.

- What commandment did John remind the Saints about?

Invite a student to read 2 John 1:7 aloud. Ask the class to look for why John counseled Church members to “walk after” (2 John 1:6), or obey, the commandments.

- Why did John counsel Church members to obey the commandments?
- What were the “deceivers” (verse 7) teaching?

Explain that when John wrote this epistle, a philosophy known as Docetism was gaining popularity. Docetists believed that God was so exalted that He was above suffering, death, or any other mortal experience. Therefore, they concluded that Jesus Christ as the Son of God did not actually come in the flesh but that His spirit only *seemed* to do things that a mortal would do or experience.

- What are some examples of false teachings in our day that contradict the truths of the gospel?
- Why are these teachings spiritually dangerous?

Invite a student to read 2 John 1:8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what John counseled Church members to do in light of these false teachings. Explain that to “look to yourselves” means to be watchful or careful not to adopt false teachings and that *wrought* can mean performed or acquired (see 2 John 1:8, footnote a).

- What principle can we learn from John’s teachings in verses 6–8 about how we can continue to enjoy the gospel blessings we have received? (Using their own words, students should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we keep the commandments**

and are watchful, we can continue to enjoy the gospel blessings we have received.

(Write this principle on the board.)

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a list of gospel blessings they have already received or hope to receive. Ask them to share with the class what they wrote. Write their responses on the board.

- How could adopting false teachings prevent us from obtaining and continuing to enjoy these gospel blessings?

Invite a student to read 2 John 1:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what John taught would happen to those who abide in the doctrine of Christ, or remain close to and endure in the gospel.

- What do those who abide in the doctrine of Christ have with them? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we abide in the doctrine of Christ, we will have the Father and the Son with us.**)

Point out that one way we have the Father and the Son with us is through the companionship of the Holy Ghost.

Ask students to ponder their efforts to keep the commandments, to be watchful, and to abide in the gospel. Invite them to write down why they want to preserve the blessings they have received through the gospel and one thing they will do today to be more faithful and consistent in keeping the commandments.

Summarize 2 John 1:10–13 by explaining that John encouraged the Saints to avoid people who spread false doctrine. He also expressed his desire to personally visit the Saints he was writing to.

3 John

John praises Gaius for his faithfulness

Bring to class a small pebble and a large bowl full of water. Ask a student to drop the pebble into the water without making any ripples.

- Why is it impossible for the water to remain unchanged by the pebble?
- Who else besides yourself can be positively affected by your choice to live the gospel?

Explain that as recorded in 3 John, John addressed a faithful member of the Church named Gaius.

Invite a student to read 3 John 1:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how John was affected by Gaius’s faithfulness in living the gospel. Explain that *children* in verse 4 may refer to Church members whom John had helped convert to the gospel.

- How was John affected by Gaius’s faithfulness in living the gospel?
- How would you summarize a truth from these verses about how living the gospel can affect ourselves and others? (Students may identify a variety of truths, but make sure they identify a truth similar to the following: **Living the gospel brings joy not only to ourselves but to others.**)
- When have you experienced joy because someone else faithfully lived the gospel?

To further illustrate this truth, if you chose to have parents or Church leaders write letters to students, hand out those letters at this time. Make sure each student has a letter from his or her parents or a Church leader, and allow students time to read the letters.

Summarize 3 John 1:5–14 by explaining that John praised Gaius for his willingness to receive traveling Church leaders or missionaries, and he criticized a local leader named Diotrefes, who did not receive John and his companions.

Review the truths identified in this lesson. Testify of these truths, and invite students to apply them in their lives.

Invite all students to participate

Find ways to appropriately invite all students to be involved in the lesson. Inviting the parents or leaders of each student to write a letter can involve every student, even those who are normally hesitant or unwilling to actively participate.

INTRODUCTION TO

The General Epistle of Jude

Why study this book?

The General Epistle of Jude describes the forces of apostasy that were at work in the early Church. As students study this epistle, they can learn how to discern those who seek to turn disciples of Jesus Christ away from the faith. Students can also come to feel the importance of earnestly contending for the faith and remaining true to it.

Who wrote this book?

The author of this epistle identifies himself as “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James” (Jude 1:1). Traditionally the author has been understood to be Jude the half brother of Jesus Christ (see Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3; Bible Dictionary, “Jude”). Jude was evidently a Church member of high esteem in Jerusalem, and he may have traveled as a missionary (see Acts 1:13–14; 1 Corinthians 9:5). There is no indication of what priesthood office Jude held, but the epistle itself suggests that he had a position of authority that qualified him to write letters of counsel.

When and where was it written?

We do not know where the Epistle of Jude was written. If this letter was indeed authored by Jude the brother of Jesus, it was probably written between A.D. 40 and 80.

To whom was it written and why?

The Epistle of Jude was addressed to faithful Christians—“to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ” (Jude 1:1). Jude’s stated purpose was to encourage his readers to “earnestly contend for the faith” against ungodly teachers who had entered the Church and were promoting immoral behavior and false teachings that denied the Lord Jesus Christ (Jude 1:3).

What are some distinctive features of this book?

Although it is one of the shortest books in the New Testament, the Epistle of Jude contains information that is not found anywhere else in the Bible. Jude wrote about “angels which kept not their first

estate” (verse 6; see also Abraham 3:26), of a confrontation between Michael and Lucifer over the body of Moses (verse 9), and of a prophecy of Enoch about the Savior’s Second Coming (verses 14–15; see also Moses 7:65–66).

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles noted several unique characteristics of the Epistle of Jude:

“In the whole Bible, it is Jude only who preserves for us the concept that pre-existence was our first estate and that certain angels failed to pass its tests.

“It is to him that we turn for our meager knowledge of the disputation between Michael and Lucifer about the body of Moses.

“He alone records Enoch’s glorious prophecy about the Second Coming of the Son of Man” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 3:415).

Jude’s words are sharp against those who opposed God and His servants and against those who were practicing immoral pagan worship and claiming to be exempt from needing to obey God’s commandments, including the law of chastity. Jude described some of the characteristics of these corrupt individuals.

Outline

Jude 1 Jude exhorts Church members to “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 1:3). He explains that people have discreetly crept in among the Saints and are spreading false doctrine and promoting evil practices. Jude warns of the judgments that come upon those who turn away from God. Jude counsels Church members to build up their faith and “keep [themselves] in the love of God” (Jude 1:21).

LESSON 150

Jude

Introduction

Jude exhorted Church members to earnestly contend for the faith against false teachers. He described false teachers and counseled the Saints to build their lives upon the gospel of Jesus Christ. Jude is traditionally understood to

be the half brother of Jesus Christ (see Matthew 13:55). Jude was apparently an active Church member of high esteem in Jerusalem.

Suggestions for Teaching

Jude 1:1–19

Jude exhorts Church members to earnestly contend for the faith against false teachers

Read the following scenarios aloud, and invite students to consider how they would respond:

1. On a social media site, a friend posts a statement criticizing the Church’s position on same-sex marriage.
 2. A neighbor learns that you are a member of the Church. He tells you that he has read the Book of Mormon and feels that it is uplifting literature but not the word of God.
 3. During a class discussion at school, a peer argues that viewing pornography is harmless and should not be discouraged.
- What are different ways a person could respond in these situations?

Invite a student to read Jude 1:3–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jude warned Church members about.

- According to verse 4, what did Jude warn Church members about?

Help students understand that “ungodly men” with evil intentions had subtly entered the ranks of the Church. These Church members promoted corrupt, immoral practices by teaching that the doctrine of grace allowed for a complete license to sin because God would mercifully forgive. They also rejected certain truths about Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. The phrase “who were before of old ordained to this condemnation” (verse 4) means that the condemnation of such people had been written about long ago.

- In light of the false teachings and corrupt practices these people were spreading, what did Jude exhort faithful Church members to do? (“Earnestly contend for the faith” [verse 3].)

Explain that “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (verse 3) refers to the gospel of Jesus Christ—the truths, laws, and ordinances taught by the Savior and His Apostles.

- What truth can we learn about the responsibility of Jesus Christ’s disciples in dealing with false teachings and corrupt practices? (Students may use their own words to identify the following truth: **Disciples of Jesus Christ should earnestly contend for the gospel of Jesus Christ against false teachings and corrupt practices.**)
- What do you think it means to earnestly contend for the gospel? (We are to boldly teach and testify of the gospel. However, we should not be unkind, overbearing, or contentious as we do so [see Alma 38:12; 3 Nephi 11:29].)
- How can we contend for the gospel without being contentious?

Remind students of the situations presented earlier in the lesson.

- In these and similar situations, what are some ways we can contend for the gospel against false teachings and corrupt practices?

Invite a student to read the following account given by Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for how the young woman contended for the gospel.

“Recently, I spoke from her email. I quote from her email:

“This past year some of my friends on Facebook began posting their position on marriage. Many favored same-sex marriage, and several LDS youth indicated they “liked” the postings. I made no comment.

Have faith in the Lord and in the Spirit

The responsibility to teach the principles of the gospel to youth can feel challenging and overwhelming. Remember that it is the Lord’s work and that He will help those who have faith in Him (see Moroni 7:33). Also believe that the Holy Ghost can soften students’ hearts and prompt them to apply gospel truths according to their needs and circumstances (see Alma 24:8; D&C 50:14).

“I decided to declare my belief in traditional marriage in a thoughtful way.

“With my profile picture, I added the caption “I believe in marriage between a man and a woman.” Almost instantly I started receiving messages. “You are selfish.” “You are judgmental.” One compared me to a slave owner. And I received this post from a great friend who is a strong member of the Church: “You need to catch up with the times. Things are changing and so should you.”

“I did not fight back,” she said, “but I did not take my statement down.”

“She concludes: ‘Sometimes, as President Monson said, “You have to stand alone.” Hopefully as youth, we will stand together in being true to God and to the teachings of His living prophets’” (“Spiritual Whirlwinds,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 19–20).

- How did this young woman contend for the gospel?
- When have you or someone you know contended for the gospel of Jesus Christ? What did you learn through that experience?

Ask students to ponder what they can do to earnestly contend for the gospel of Jesus Christ. Encourage them to follow any promptings they receive.

Summarize Jude 1:5–7 by explaining that Jude compared these rebellious Church members to people in Old Testament times who rebelled against God and suffered His judgments. These people included many of the children of Israel who were destroyed in the wilderness and the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, who were destroyed by fire. Jude also compared rebellious Church members to those who rebelled against God in “their first estate,” or premortal existence, and were cast out of His presence (Jude 1:6; see also Abraham 3:22–26).

Write the following heading on the board: *Characteristics of False Teachers*.

Explain that in Jude 1:8–16, we read Jude’s description of many characteristics that would help Church members recognize those who were spreading corrupt philosophies and practices in the Church. To illustrate this idea, point out the phrases “clouds they are without water, carried about of winds” and “trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit” in Jude 1:12.

- How might false teachers be like clouds without water and fruit trees without fruit?

Divide students into groups of three or four. Instruct students to read Jude 1:8, 10, 14–19 with their group members, looking for additional characteristics of false teachers. Invite students to consider marking what they find. You may need to explain that “the last time” (verse 18) refers to the period of time in which Jude lived as well as the last days in which we live.

After sufficient time, invite students to come to the board and write a characteristic of false teachers they found. Characteristics students might write include the following (you may need to use some of these statements to help students understand what they read):

Characteristics of False Teachers

Defile their bodies with immorality (verse 8)

Despise authority and speak evil of dignities (verse 8)

Speak evil of things they do not understand (verse 10)

Corrupt themselves by living by the carnal knowledge they possess (verse 10)

Act in ungodly ways (verse 15)

Speak harsh words against God (verse 15)

Murmur and complain (verse 16)

Follow and act upon their lusts (verse 16)

Boast (verse 16)

Express admiration for others for the sake of personal advantage (verse 16)

Mock the Lord’s Church and its standards (verse 18)

Separate themselves from the believers (verse 19)

Think and act in sensual ways (verse 19)

Do not have the Spirit (verse 19)

- How does not having the Spirit lead to the development of the other characteristics listed on the board?
- Why is it important to recognize the characteristics of false teachers?

Help students understand that not everyone who has one or more of these characteristics or who teaches something incorrect is necessarily a false teacher as described by Jude. Such a person may be innocently mistaken in his or her understanding of a subject. However, these characteristics can help us recognize false teachers whose intent is to weaken the faith and obedience of others by deceiving them and promoting evil.

Invite students to review Jude 1:17–18 silently.

- Who had previously warned Church members about false teachers?
- What truth can we learn from these verses about how apostles and prophets can help us in our efforts to contend against false teachers? (Students may use their own words but should identify a truth such as the following: **Apostles and prophets warn us of and help us recognize those who seek to weaken our faith and obedience.** Write this truth on the board.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for how his statement reflects this truth.

“Today we warn you that there are false prophets and false teachers arising; and if we are not careful, even those who are among the faithful members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will fall victim to their deception” (“Beware of False Prophets and False Teachers,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 62).

- Considering this truth, why is it important to study the words of apostles and prophets?
- What are some false teachings that modern prophets and apostles have warned against?

Jude 1:20–25

Jude counsels the Saints to build their lives upon the gospel of Jesus Christ and help save others

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *We can remain true to the faith by . . .*

Invite a student to read Jude 1:20–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jude counseled the Saints to do to remain true to the faith. You may need to explain that “praying in the Holy Ghost” means to pray with the assistance of inspiration from the Holy Ghost.

- According to verses 20–21, how would you complete the statement on the board? (One way students might complete the statement is as follows: **We can remain true to the faith by building our lives on the gospel of Jesus Christ.**)
- How can following Jude’s additional instruction in verses 20–21 help us build our lives on the gospel?
- Why is remaining true to the faith worth the effort?
- How has living by Jude’s counsel helped you or others you know remain true to the faith?

Invite students to write in their class notebooks and scripture study journals one way they can improve in following Jude’s counsel. Encourage them to apply what they wrote.

Summarize Jude 1:22–25 by explaining that Jude counseled faithful Church members to assist others who were spiritually struggling, possibly due to the influence of the false teachers, and he offered praise unto God.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths discussed in this lesson.

Scripture Mastery Review

Assign each student a different scripture mastery passage. Instruct students to write a real-life scenario on a piece of paper in which the doctrines and principles contained in their assigned scripture mastery passage could be applied. After students finish writing, collect their scenarios. Read a few scenarios, and invite students to share how the doctrines and principles in scripture mastery passages could be used and applied to each scenario. You could present some of the scenarios at the beginning or end of lessons during the coming week.

Home-Study Lesson

2 Peter–Jude (Unit 30)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied 2 Peter–Jude (unit 30) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (2 Peter)

The Apostle Peter wrote this epistle to the Saints to help them amidst persecution, trials, and apostasy within the Church. As students studied Peter’s words, they learned that prophets receive scripture through the Holy Ghost and that false teachers seek to deceive us into believing that sin leads to greater liberty. Students also learned that we can prepare for the Savior’s Second Coming by leading godly lives and earnestly watching for His coming.

Day 2 (1 John)

From 1 John, students learned that if we receive and follow the teachings of prophets and apostles, we can gain fellowship with the Father and the Son. In addition, they learned that when we love God, we will love others.

Day 3 (2 John–3 John)

In the Apostle John’s two other epistles to the Saints, he continued to express concern over apostate influences in the Church. From these letters students learned that as we keep the commandments and are watchful, we can continue to enjoy the gospel blessings we have received, and if we abide in the doctrine of Christ, we will have the Father and the Son with us. Students also learned that living the gospel brings joy not only to ourselves but to others and that Church members ought to receive and sustain all servants of the Lord.

Day 4 (Jude)

As students studied Jude’s letter to Saints who were experiencing fierce opposition, they learned that disciples of Jesus Christ should earnestly contend for the gospel of Jesus Christ against false teachings and corrupt practices. Students also learned that apostles and prophets warn us of and help us recognize those who seek to weaken our faith and obedience and that we can remain true to the faith by building our lives on the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Introduction

The Apostle Peter encouraged the Saints to grow in their knowledge of Jesus Christ by seeking to become like Him. He assured them that this spiritual growth could help them make their “calling and election sure” (2 Peter 1:10).

Suggestions for Teaching

2 Peter 1:1–11

Peter teaches how to partake of the divine nature of Jesus Christ

Note: In discussing the following principle and scripture passages, be careful not to discuss topics related to temple ordinances and doctrines.

Before class begins, write on the board the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson. (This statement is found in “The Will Within,” *Ensign*, May 1987, 68.)

“Our task is to become our best selves” (President Thomas S. Monson).

Divide students into pairs. Invite them to read the statement on the board and discuss the following questions with their partners:

- What do you think President Monson meant by becoming “our best selves”?
- Why do you think it is important to become our best selves?
- What can prevent us from becoming our best selves?

Invite students to look for a truth as they study 2 Peter 1 that can help them know how they can become their best selves.

Summarize 2 Peter 1:1–2 by explaining that Peter wrote to Church members who had obtained faith in Jesus Christ but who may have been tempted to return to the sinful ways of the world.

Invite a student to read 2 Peter 1:3–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Peter taught to help the Saints stay true to their testimonies of the Savior.

- According to these verses, what did Peter teach the Saints?
- What does it mean to “be partakers of the divine nature”? (2 Peter 1:4).

Invite students to read 2 Peter 1:5–7 silently, looking for attributes of Jesus Christ that Peter invited the Saints to develop. Then ask students to list on the board the attributes they find. Consider inviting students to locate in a dictionary the definitions of any of these attributes that they would like to better understand.

Invite students to think about examples of when the Savior demonstrated one of these divine attributes. Ask several students to report their thoughts to the class.

Write the following incomplete principle on the board: *As we develop divine attributes within ourselves, we can . . .*

Invite a student to read 2 Peter 1:8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a blessing we can receive as we develop the divine attributes of the Savior.

- What blessing can we receive as we develop divine attributes? (After students respond, complete the statement on the board so that it reads as follows: **As we develop divine attributes within ourselves, we can come to know Jesus Christ.**)
- Why do you think developing divine attributes helps us come to know Jesus Christ?

Invite a student to read 2 Peter 1:10–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for another blessing that can come to those who are diligent in developing divine attributes.

- What blessing can come to those who are diligent in developing the divine attributes of Jesus Christ? (Explain that the phrase “to make your calling and election sure” [verse 10] means to receive in this life God’s assurance that you will obtain eternal life. Peter also referred to this as “a more sure word of prophecy” [2 Peter 1:19]. See also D&C 131:5.)
- What principle can we learn from these verses about why we should be diligent in developing our divine potential? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we are diligent in developing our divine potential while in this life, we can receive**

God’s assurance of eternal life. Write this principle on the board.)

Invite students to think of people they know who have diligently striven to develop Christlike attributes.

- Which Christlike attributes have the people you thought of developed?
- In what ways have their efforts and attributes helped them and others around them?

You may want to share your testimony that developing divine attributes helps us come to know Jesus Christ and prepares us to receive eternal life.

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals one of the divine attributes they would most like to develop. Ask them to write a specific action they can take to develop that attribute.

Next Unit (Revelation 1–11)

Ask students if they have ever heard of the Apocalypse. Explain that the book of Revelation is often referred to as the Apocalypse, which is Greek for “unveiling.” In the book of Revelation the Apostle John described a vision he had that includes many prophecies about our day and future events, including the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the end of the earth. Much of John’s vision includes symbols. Invite students to watch for symbols as they study the book of Revelation that show the final victory of good over evil.

INTRODUCTION TO

The Revelation of St. John the Divine

Why study this book?

As “the Revelation of Jesus Christ” (Revelation 1:1), this book is sometimes called the Apocalypse, which in Greek means a revelation, uncovering, or unveiling of that which is hidden (see Bible Dictionary, “Revelation of John”). This book is an unveiling of the Lord Jesus Christ and a revelation of His authority, power, and preeminent role in the Father’s plan of salvation. The book also reveals much important information about the events leading up to the Second Coming and the Millennium.

Studying the book of Revelation can help students gain a deeper understanding of the resurrected and glorified Son of God and His dealings with God’s children throughout the ages of earth’s history, particularly in the last days. This book extends a message of hope to the righteous and can encourage students to remain faithful to their testimonies of the Savior in the midst of persecution and trials.

Who wrote this book?

The Apostle John, the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ, is the author of this book. The Book of Mormon affirms that John was foreordained to write the things recorded in the book of Revelation (see 1 Nephi 14:18–27; Ether 4:16).

When and where was it written?

The book of Revelation was written at a time when Christians were facing false teachings, apathy, and severe persecution (see Revelation 1:9; 2:4, 10, 14–15; 3:16; 6:9). This persecution most likely came at the hands of Roman officials in the final two decades of the first century A.D. John wrote from the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea, about 60 miles (100 kilometers) southwest of Ephesus (see Revelation 1:9).

To whom was it written and why?

John wrote a message of hope and encouragement to the Saints in his day (see Revelation 1:4, 11) and those in the latter days. The first three chapters of Revelation were specifically addressed to seven branches of the Church in Asia

Minor (see Revelation 1:4, 11; 2–3). Because of intense persecution, the Saints were in great need of the encouraging message found in Revelation. In addition, the prophet Nephi testified that “God hath ordained the apostle” John to write about the end of the world (1 Nephi 14:25) and that his words would come forth to both the Gentiles and the remnant of Israel in the latter days (see 1 Nephi 13:20–24, 38; 14:19–27).

What are some distinctive features of this book?

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “The book of Revelation is one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written” (in *History of the Church*, 5:342). Though it is rich with imagery and symbols that are not always easy for readers in modern times to understand, the themes of this book are simple and inspiring.

John described the conditions of the Church in his day (see Revelation 2–3) and wrote about past and future events (see Revelation 4–22). The book of Revelation contains one of the few passages in the scriptures that describes the premortal War in Heaven (see Revelation 12:7–11) and presents an inspired overview of the history of the world, concentrating particularly on the latter days and the Millennium. Its major themes include Jesus Christ’s role in carrying out God’s plan, the hand of God in earth’s history, the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the destruction of evil, and the promise that the earth will eventually become celestial. The book also explains that there will be “a permanent victory of good over evil . . . [and] of the kingdom of God over the kingdoms of men and of Satan” (Bible Dictionary, “Revelation of John”).

Outline

Revelation 1–3 John sees a vision of Jesus Christ. He writes individual messages to the seven churches in Asia; these messages include praise, admonitions, and promises to the faithful Saints in each branch.

Revelation 4–11 John sees a vision of God enthroned in the celestial kingdom, the Lamb of God, and a book sealed with seven seals. John sees visions in connection with the opening of each of the seven seals. Those who have the seal of God in their foreheads will receive God’s protection in the last days. John sees wars, plagues, and many other latter-day events that will precede the Lord’s Second Coming.

Revelation 12–16 John sees a vision of the premortal War in Heaven and its continuation on the earth. He teaches that evil forces seek to destroy God’s kingdom on the earth. In the last days the gospel will be restored to the earth in its fulness by angelic ministry. Preparations will be made for the battle of Armageddon.

Revelation 17–22 Spiritual Babylon will be spread throughout the earth. After the righteous Saints are gathered, Babylon will fall and be mourned by her supporters. The righteous will be invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb of God. Satan will be bound, the Millennium will begin, and Christ will reign personally on the earth. The dead will be judged. The earth will receive its celestial glory.

Revelation 1

Introduction

While on the island of Patmos, John wrote a letter of encouragement to seven congregations of the Church describing revelation he had received. John bore record

of what had been delivered to him from an angel and from Jesus Christ. John also recorded details about his vision of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Suggestions for Teaching

Revelation 1:1–11

John bears record of his vision

Before class, place an object on a table or chair at the front of the class. Cover the object so students will not know what it is. When class begins, invite students to guess what the object is. After several guesses, invite a student to come to the front of the class and ask him or her to lift part of the covering from the object so that only he or she can see the object. Ask this student to describe the object to the class.

- How might the student who described the object represent one role of prophets and apostles?

Ask the student to be seated. Invite students to turn to the book of Revelation. Explain that this book is also known as the Apocalypse, which in Greek means a revelation, uncovering, or unveiling of that which is hidden. In this book, the Apostle John recorded truths that were revealed or unveiled to him about the Lord Jesus Christ, His role in Heavenly Father’s plan of salvation, the events leading up to His Second Coming, and His Millennial reign.

Invite students to look for truths that were revealed to John as they study the book of Revelation.

Invite a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 1:1–3, located in the Bible appendix. Ask students to follow along, looking for what John taught about the revelation he had received.

- Why was this revelation given to John?
- What did John want the Saints to do with this revelation?

To help students understand why John mentioned both those who hear his words and those who read his words, explain that in John’s day many Saints could not read, so they became acquainted with the book of Revelation by listening to others read it aloud.

- What did John say about people who would read, seek to understand, and keep (or obey) the teachings recorded in the book of Revelation?
- How would you summarize John’s teachings in Revelation 1:3 as a principle? (Students should identify the following principle: **As we read, seek to understand, and obey the Lord’s words, we will be blessed.**)

Invite a student to read Revelation 1:4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom John addressed in his letter.

- Whom did John address in his letter? (Explain that “the seven churches which are in Asia” refers to seven Church congregations, like wards and branches today, that were located in what is now the western area of modern-day Turkey. “The seven Spirits” refers to the leaders of those congregations.)

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Revelation 1:5–8. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what John wanted the seven congregations to know about Jesus Christ. Consider inviting students to mark what they find.

- What did John want the seven congregations to know about Jesus Christ?
- Which phrase about the Savior in these verses is especially meaningful to you? Why? (You may want to point out that Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. This title indicates that Jesus Christ’s role in Heavenly Father’s plan of salvation encompasses everything from the beginning to the end. [See also Revelation 22:13.]

Invite a student to read Revelation 1:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for where John was when he received this revelation and where the seven churches were located.

- Where was John when he received this revelation? Where were the seven congregations located?

Consider asking students to turn to Bible Maps, no. 13, “The Missionary Journeys of the Apostle Paul,” to locate Patmos and some of the seven cities listed in Revelation 1:11.

To help students understand what Patmos looks like, consider inviting them to locate Bible Photographs, no. 32, “Isle of Patmos.”

- According to Revelation 1:9, why was John on the island of Patmos?

Explain that John received this revelation during a difficult time for members of the Church. During this time, there was intense persecution toward the Saints and apostasy and divisions among Church members. Additionally, all the Apostles except John had been killed. The book of Revelation may have been written during the time of the Roman emperor Domitian, who had reinstated emperor worship throughout the Roman Empire and exiled or executed those who did not worship gods approved by the Roman government. Many people believe John was exiled to the island of Patmos for that reason.

- According to Revelation 1:10, how did John describe his circumstances when he received this revelation?
- What do you think the phrase “I was in the Spirit” means?
- According to verse 11, what did Jesus Christ command John to do?

Explain that we learn from the Book of Mormon that Nephi had a vision similar to John’s vision. Nephi saw the events of the last days (including Jesus Christ’s Second Coming, the Millennium, and the completion of God’s work on the earth), but he was commanded not to write about them because John had been foreordained to do so (see 1 Nephi 14:24–29).

- Why is it important for us to study John’s words in Revelation?

Invite students as they continue to study the book of Revelation to look for truths about the last days, the Second Coming, the Millennium, and the completion of God’s work on the earth.

Revelation 1:12–20

John sees the Lord Jesus Christ in a vision

To introduce the idea of symbolism, display (or draw on the board) pictures of a few common signs in your culture that can be easily understood without words. For instance, you might display traffic signs or warning signs. Ask students to explain the purpose of these signs.

Explain that in the book of Revelation John used symbols and images to teach important messages about the gospel. Symbols can be powerful teaching tools because they can communicate to people in different generations and cultures. They can also communicate several different messages.

Divide students into pairs. Invite each pair to read Revelation 1:12–18 aloud together, looking for symbols John used to describe his revelation. You may want to suggest that students mark the symbols they read about.

- What symbols did John use to describe his revelation?

Provide students with a handout of the following chart (or recreate the chart on the board). Invite each pair of students to read the scripture references in the right-hand column of the chart and to write in that column the possible meaning of each symbol John used.

Symbolism in Revelation 1

Symbol	Possible Meaning
Revelation 1:12—Seven golden candlesticks	Revelation 1:20; 3 Nephi 18:24—
Revelation 1:16–17—The right hand	Mark 16:19—
Revelation 1:16—Seven stars	Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 1:20 (in Revelation 1:20, footnote <i>b</i>)—

Symbol	Possible Meaning
Revelation 1:16—A sharp two-edged sword	Hebrews 4:12—
Revelation 1:18—The keys of hell and death	2 Nephi 9:10–13—

After sufficient time, ask several students to report the possible meaning of each symbol John used. As needed, help them identify that the seven candlesticks represent the seven churches that are to hold up the light of the gospel; the right hand represents divine power and approval; the seven stars symbolize the servants or leaders over the seven churches who are upheld by the Lord; the sword represents the word of God, pronouncing judgment on the wicked and freeing the innocent; and the keys of hell and death represent the Lord's power to overcome spiritual and physical death.

- Based on the message the Lord revealed to His Saints through John, what truth can we learn about Jesus Christ and His relationship to His faithful followers? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify a truth similar to the following: **Jesus Christ watches over and cares for His faithful followers.**)

Remind students of the challenges that Church members in John's day were facing.

- Why would it have been important for Church members in John's day to know that Jesus Christ continued to watch over and care for them?
- Why is it important for us to remember this same truth?

Invite students to think about a time when they felt Jesus Christ watch over and care for them. Ask a few of them to share their experiences with the class. Consider sharing one of your experiences as well.

Invite a student to read Revelation 1:17–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior said to John.

- What doctrine can we learn about Jesus Christ based on what He said to John? (Students may use different words but should identify the following doctrine: **Jesus Christ is a glorified resurrected being who has power over death and hell.**)
- What hope might this doctrine have brought to the Saints in John's day?
- What hope can this doctrine give to us?
- What does this doctrine teach us about the eventual outcome of the battle between good and evil that exists throughout the earth?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement about the book of Revelation:

"The message of Revelation is the same as that of all scripture: there will be an eventual triumph on this earth of God over the devil; a permanent victory of good over evil, of the Saints over their persecutors, of the kingdom of God over the kingdoms of men and of Satan" (Bible Dictionary, "Revelation of John").

Point out that because we know that good will eventually triumph over evil, what remains to be seen is whose side we choose to be on, Satan's or God's. You may want to testify of the Savior's victory over death and hell and of the fact that because of Him we can choose to side with God in the battle between good and evil.

Invite students to consider what they can do to more fully choose to be on God's side. Encourage them to act on any promptings they may receive.

Invite a student to read Revelation 1:19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord told John to write. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that Revelation 1 records what John wrote about his vision of the Savior. As recorded in Revelation 2–3, John wrote about "things which are" (Revelation 1:19), or the condition of the Church in his day. Revelation 4–22 records what John wrote about "things which shall be hereafter" (Revelation 1:19), or the future.

Help students apply doctrines and principles

Give students time in class to meditate on, ponder, or write about what they understand and feel and to consider specific actions they should take to apply doctrines and principles in their lives. At such times, encourage students to ask for guidance and direction from the Lord.

Revelation 2–3

Introduction

John wrote to the seven angels, or servants, of the congregations of the Church in Asia Minor and conveyed the Lord’s words of commendation, correction, and

warning to the Saints. John also included promises of exaltation to those who overcome.

Be attentive to student behavior and respond appropriately

Be aware of students’ engagement during the lesson and respond in an appropriate manner. If students seem bored or restless, it may be because they are not involved in the lesson or because they do not understand what is being taught or how it applies to them. To help students focus, you may need to adjust something in the lesson presentation.

Suggestions for Teaching

Revelation 2–3

John writes the words of Jesus Christ to the leaders of the seven churches

Invite a student to read aloud the following account by Sister Sydney S. Reynolds, a former member of the Primary general presidency. Ask the class to listen for what they can learn about the Lord from this account.



“Sister Gayle Clegg of the Primary general presidency and her husband lived for a number of years in Brazil. Recently she had a Primary assignment in Japan. As she came into the chapel on Sunday, she noticed among the Japanese Saints a Brazilian family. . . . She only had a minute to greet them and found the mother and children very enthusiastic but noticed that the father was rather quiet. ‘I’ll have a chance to talk with them after the meeting,’ she thought as

she was quickly ushered to the stand. She delivered her message in English, which was translated into Japanese, and then she felt impressed to bear her testimony in Portuguese as well. She hesitated as there were no translators for Portuguese, and 98 percent of the people would not understand what she said.

“After the meeting the Brazilian father came up to her and said, ‘Sister, the customs are so different here, and I have been lonely. It is difficult to come to church and not understand anything. Sometimes I wonder if I would be better off just reading my scriptures at home. I told my wife, ‘I’ll give it one more chance,’ and I came today for what I thought would be the last time. When you bore your testimony in Portuguese, the Spirit touched my heart, and I knew that this was where I belonged. God knows I am here, and He will help me’ ” (“He Knows Us; He Loves Us,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2003, 76).

- What can we learn about the Lord from this experience?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *Because the Lord knows each of us . . .* Invite students to look for truths as they study Revelation 2–3 that can help them understand what the Lord can do for them because He knows them.

Explain that Revelation 2–3 contains the Apostle John’s record of Jesus Christ’s words to seven Church congregations in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey).

Invite a student to read Revelation 2:1–3, 6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord knew about the Saints in Ephesus.

- What did the Lord know about the Saints in Ephesus? (Explain that the term *Nicolaitans* [verse 6] could refer to a group whose members claimed they could commit sexual sins without punishment because the grace of God would save them [see Bible Dictionary, “Nicolaitans”].)

Point out that these verses record that the Lord commended, or praised, the Saints for their good works. Add to the statement on the board so that it reads as follows: *Because the Lord knows each of us, He can give us personal commendation . . .*

Invite a student to read Revelation 2:4–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else the Lord knew about the Saints in Ephesus.

- What else did the Lord know about the Saints in Ephesus?

Point out that the Lord was giving the Saints correction because of their sins. Complete the statement on the board so that it conveys the following truth: **Because the Lord knows each of us, He can give us personal commendation and correction.**

- What are some ways we can receive personal commendation and correction from the Lord?
- How can knowing that the Lord can give us personal commendation and correction influence the way we approach our personal scripture study and prayer? How can it influence the way we respond to the counsel of our Church leaders and parents?
- Why should we make an effort to seek out personal commendation and correction from the Lord?
- When have you experienced the Lord giving you personal commendation or correction? How did this experience help you know that the Lord knows you individually? (Caution students to not share experiences that are sacred or too private.)

Invite students to ponder what actions they think the Lord might commend them for as well as what thoughts or behaviors the Lord might correct them for. Encourage students to set a goal to repent when the Lord corrects them.

Invite a student to read Revelation 2:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord promised those who overcome, or who endure faithfully to the end.

- What did the Lord promise those who overcome, or who endure to the end in righteousness?
- What do you think it means to “eat of the tree of life”? (verse 7).
- How might hearing this promised blessing after receiving personal correction have been helpful to the Saints in Ephesus?

Remind students that in addition to addressing the Church congregation in Ephesus, the Lord addressed other Church congregations in Asia Minor.

Divide the class into five groups, and assign each group one of the following references:

1. Revelation 2:8–11
2. Revelation 2:12–17
3. Revelation 2:18–29; Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 2:26–27 (in the Bible appendix)
4. Revelation 3:1–6; Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 3:1 (in Revelation 3:1, footnote *a*); Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 3:2 (in Revelation 3:2, footnote *a*)
5. Revelation 3:7–13

Invite students to read their assigned verses as a group, looking for what the Lord counseled the Saints to do and the blessings He promised they would receive if they did so.

After sufficient time, invite a member of each group to report what his or her group found. Invite a student to write on the board the promised blessing that each group identified (see Revelation 2:11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12). After the list is complete, point out that each of these promises refers to receiving the blessings of exaltation, which are conditioned upon our enduring faithfully to the end.

- What principle can we identify from these verses about what we must do to receive the blessings of exaltation? (Help students identify a principle similar to the following: **If we overcome, then we can receive the blessings of exaltation.**)
- What do you think we need to overcome to receive the blessings of exaltation?

Invite a student to read Revelation 3:14–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a condition the Church members in Laodicea needed to overcome in order to receive exaltation.

- What condition did the Church members in Laodicea need to overcome?
- What do you think it means that these Church members were lukewarm disciples of Jesus Christ? (verse 15). (The word *hot* may have been used to describe someone who is fully committed to the gospel, and *cold* may have been used to describe someone who has completely disregarded the teachings and covenants of the gospel. A lukewarm disciple may be someone who believes the gospel is true but is not fully committed to living it.)
- In your opinion, what are some things lukewarm disciples of Jesus Christ might do and not do?

Invite students to think about what they have done to follow Jesus Christ over the past few days and whether they are a hot, cold, or lukewarm disciple of Jesus Christ.

Invite a student to read Revelation 3:19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why the Lord said He was correcting the Saints in Laodicea.

- Based on what the Lord told the Saints in Laodicea, why does He correct us? (Help students identify a truth similar to the following: **Because the Lord loves us, He corrects us so we will repent.**)



Display the picture *Jesus at the Door* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 65; see also LDS.org).

- What is the Savior doing in this picture?

Read aloud the following questions, and invite students to silently ponder their answers:

- What feelings might you have if you heard a knock at the door of your home and realized it was the Savior?
- Would you open the door?

Point out that this picture illustrates the words the Lord addressed to the Church in Laodicea. Invite a student to read Revelation 3:20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the blessing the Lord offered to the Laodicean Saints and what they had to do to obtain it.

- What blessing did the Lord offer to the Laodicean Saints?
- What did they need to do to obtain that blessing?
- What principle can we learn from verse 20? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **As we open the door to the Savior, He will come in to us and sup with us.**)

To help students understand what it means to sup with the Savior, explain that in ancient Near Eastern culture eating a meal with someone was a sign of fellowship. It indicated that a bond of friendship and peace existed or was at least being offered.

- What do you think opening the door mentioned in verse 20 represents?

Explain that people who open the door to the Savior and sup with Him are individuals who repent of their sins and enter into fellowship with Him and our Heavenly Father.

To help students understand what opening the door might represent, invite a student to read aloud the following account by President Spencer W. Kimball:



“One day [an artist named Holman Hunt] was showing his picture of ‘Christ Knocking at the Door’ to a friend when the friend suddenly exclaimed: ‘There is one thing wrong about your picture.’

“‘What is it?’ inquired the artist.

“‘The door on which Jesus knocks has no handle,’ replied his friend.

“‘Ah,’ responded Mr. Hunt, ‘that is not a mistake. You see, this is the door to the human heart. It can only be opened from the inside.’

“And thus it is. Jesus may stand and knock, but each of us decides whether to open” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness* [1969], 212).

- How do you think we can open our hearts to the Savior?

Invite students to read Revelation 3:21–22 silently, looking for the Lord’s promise and counsel to the Saints in Laodicea.

- According to verse 22, what counsel did the Lord give?

Invite students to “hear what the Spirit saith” (verse 22) by reflecting on what they have learned today. Encourage them to act on any impressions they receive.

Commentary and Background Information

Revelation 2:28. “I will give him the morning star”

“‘The morning star’ is a symbol of Jesus Christ (Revelation 2:28; 22:16). The promise of ‘the morning star’ is given to

him ‘that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end’ (Revelation 2:26)” (*New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 535).

LESSON 153

Revelation 4–5

Introduction

The Apostle John saw glorified beings worshipping Heavenly Father as He sat on His throne. John also saw

a book that was sealed with seven seals and saw the Lamb, or Jesus Christ, who is worthy to open the book.

Suggestions for Teaching

Revelation 4

John sees glorified beings worshipping Heavenly Father

Consider singing “Glory to God on High” (*Hymns*, no. 67) as the opening hymn, or sing another hymn that praises and honors God.

Ask students to imagine being in the celestial kingdom. Invite several students to describe what they think the celestial kingdom might be like.

Explain that as recorded in Revelation 4–5, the Apostle John saw a vision of part of the celestial kingdom. Ask for a volunteer to draw on the board. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Revelation 4:1–8, and ask the class to follow along, looking for what John saw. Instruct the volunteer to draw, while these verses are being read, what John saw. Those who are reading may need to pause periodically to allow the student who is drawing time to complete each part of the drawing. (Ask the volunteer to exclude the “one [who] sat on the throne” [verse 2], or Heavenly Father, from the drawing to show respect for Him. For additional participation, you may invite several students to take turns drawing.)

Explain that to be “in the spirit” (verse 2) means to be enveloped by the Spirit in a revelatory state or vision, and explain that the “jasper” stone in verse 3 may indicate a colored stone or a diamond and that a “sardine stone” (verse 3) is a precious stone that is usually red or reddish orange.

Explain that modern revelation helps us understand more about what John saw. For example, the Lord gave the revelation recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 77 after the Prophet Joseph Smith asked Him to interpret some of the symbols and events recorded in Revelation 1–11.

Divide students into groups of two or three, and give each group a copy of the following handout. Invite students in each group to read the cross-reference passages aloud together and to write on the chart additional information they find about what John saw.

Revelation 4

What John Saw	Cross-Reference	Additional Information
Throne (Revelation 4:2–3)	Doctrine and Covenants 137:1–4	
Twenty-four elders with crowns (Revelation 4:4)	Doctrine and Covenants 77:5	
Seven Spirits of God (Revelation 4:5)	Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 4:5 (in Revelation 4:5, footnote <i>a</i>)	
Sea of glass (Revelation 4:6)	Doctrine and Covenants 77:1; 130:6–9	
Four beasts (Revelation 4:6–7)	Doctrine and Covenants 77:2–3	
Beasts’ many eyes and six wings (Revelation 4:8)	Doctrine and Covenants 77:4	

After sufficient time, invite students to report the additional information they found. As needed, use the following answers to clarify or add to students' understanding: God sits on a throne in the celestial kingdom; the 24 elders with crowns are faithful elders who belonged to the seven churches; seven servants of God are referenced, not seven spirits; the sea of glass is the earth in its glorified, celestial state; the four beasts are actual animals representing classes (or species) of glorified beings; the beasts' eyes represent great light and knowledge, and the beasts' wings represent the power to move and act.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Revelation 4:8–11. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what those assembled around Heavenly Father said and did.

- What did those assembled around Heavenly Father say about Him? What did they do?
- What could the elders casting their crowns before Heavenly Father's throne represent? (Possible answers include their recognition of Heavenly Father's greatness; their acknowledgment that they owe their exaltation to Him; and their reverence, adoration, and submissive devotion to Him.)
- What principle can we learn from this account about how recognizing Heavenly Father's greatness can affect us? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **As we recognize Heavenly Father's greatness, we desire to worship and praise Him.**)
- What can help us recognize Heavenly Father's greatness?

Revelation 5

John sees a book sealed with seven seals and the Lamb who is worthy to open it

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Revelation 5:1–4. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what John saw in Heavenly Father's hand.

- What did John see in Heavenly Father's hand? (A book, or scroll, with seven seals.)

Explain that in ancient times, important documents were sealed with clay or wax seals. Only the owner of the document and those whom the owner authorized were allowed to break the seals and read the text.

- According to verse 2, what qualification did the person who could open the book need to have?

Invite students to read Doctrine and Covenants 77:6–7 silently, looking for the meaning of the book and the seals.

- What does the book contain?

Explain that the 7,000-year period refers to the time since the Fall of Adam and Eve. It does not refer to the actual age of the earth, including the periods of creation.

- According to Doctrine and Covenants 77:7, what did the seven seals represent? (Seven thousand-year periods of the earth's temporal existence, which extends from the Fall of Adam to the end of the Millennium.)

Point out that considering the meaning of the book and the seals, when it appeared that no man was worthy to open the book, John may have thought that God's will and works would not be revealed or carried out.

- What would happen to Heavenly Father's children if His plan for their salvation could not be carried out?

Invite a student to read Revelation 5:5–7 aloud. Invite the student to also read the Joseph Smith Translation in verse 6, footnote *b*. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why John was told not to weep. You may want explain that in the scriptures, horns are often a symbol of power or authority; eyes can symbolize light and knowledge; and the number twelve can symbolize divine government and organization, or the priesthood.

- Why was John told not to weep?
- What does the title used for Jesus Christ as recorded in Revelation 5:6 reveal about Him? (He was the sacrificial offering that was given to atone for God's children [see also Isaiah 53:7; 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Peter 1:18–19]. You may need to explain that "a Lamb as it had been slain" [Revelation 5:6] refers to the Lamb displaying the marks of having been slain. Point out that John the Baptist referred to the Savior as "Lamb of God" [John 1:29, 36].)

Invite a student to read Revelation 5:8–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the beings surrounding Heavenly Father’s throne praised the Lamb. You may want to explain that “vials full of odours” (verse 8) refer to wide cups or bowls full of incense.

- How did these beings praise the Lamb, or Jesus Christ?
- Based on what John saw and heard regarding the Lamb, what truth can we learn about Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Jesus Christ is the only one who is worthy and able to redeem us.**)
- Why is Jesus Christ the only one who is worthy and able to redeem us?
- According to verse 10, what will those who are redeemed by Jesus Christ become? (Kings and priests, which includes women as queens and priestesses [see Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (1966), 613].)

Ask students to ponder what Heavenly Father’s plan of salvation and the Savior’s role in that plan mean to them personally. Invite students to write their thoughts and feelings in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Inform them that later in the lesson they will be invited to share what they wrote.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Revelation 5:11–14. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how others joined in worshipping and praising Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father.

- After the Lamb took the book from the hand of Heavenly Father, why did the glorified beings and all creation worship and praise Them? (The beings recognized the goodness of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and felt gratitude for the Lamb’s role in Heavenly Father’s plan.)
- What truth can we learn about what can lead us to worship and praise Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ as the beings and creations that John saw did? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **As we recognize and feel gratitude for what Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have done for us, we desire to worship and praise Them.**)

Point out that the glorified beings and all creation worshipped Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ in song. Similarly, we sing hymns to worship and praise Them. Invite the class to sing “All Creatures of Our God and King” (*Hymns*, no. 62) or another hymn that praises or glorifies God, and ask them to think about how the hymn relates to Revelation 5:9–14.

- In addition to worshipping Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ through music, what else can we do to worship Them?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for what he taught about worship:



“True and perfect worship consists in following in the steps of the Son of God; it consists in keeping the commandments and obeying the will of the Father to that degree that we advance from grace to grace until we are glorified in Christ as he is in his Father. It is far more than prayer and sermon and song. It is living and doing and obeying. It is emulating the life of the great Exemplar” (“How to Worship,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1971, 130).

- How do Elder McConkie’s teachings add to your understanding of how we can worship Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ?
- How are we blessed by worshipping and praising Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ?
- Why do you desire to worship and praise Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ? (Invite students to share some of the thoughts and feelings they wrote earlier.)

Consider sharing your feelings about Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, including why you willingly worship Them.

Invite students to ponder and answer the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What more could you do to worship Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ?

After students have had sufficient time to write, encourage them to apply what they wrote.

Ask follow-up questions

Asking follow-up questions can help you better understand students’ answers. Examples of follow-up questions include “Can you help me understand what you mean by that?” and “Can you give me an example of what you mean?” These questions invite students to share their thoughts and feelings and invite a spirit of testimony into the students’ responses.

Revelation 6–11, Part 1

Introduction

John saw a vision of the Lamb of God opening the first six seals of the sealed book. In the sixth seal, John saw

the servants of God who had “washed their robes . . . in the blood of the Lamb” (Revelation 7:14).

Suggestions for Teaching

Revelation 6

John saw the Lamb of God opening the first six seals of the sealed book

Invite students to share any concerns they may have about living in the latter days. List their responses on the board.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith. Ask the class to listen for how ancient prophets felt about our day:

“Prophets, priests and kings . . . have looked forward with joyful anticipation to the day in which we live; and fired with heavenly and joyful anticipations they have sung and written and prophesied of this our day” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 186).

- How did ancient prophets feel about our day?

Point out that John the Revelator was one of the prophets who knew about the events of the latter days and who prophesied of our day with joyful anticipation.

Invite students to look as they study Revelation 6–7 for reasons why ancient prophets looked forward to our day with joy.

Remind students that as recorded in Revelation 5:1–5, John saw a book with seven seals that only the Lamb was worthy to open. Explain that in his vision, John saw figurative representations of some of the major events pertaining to each of the thousand-year periods represented by the seven seals.

Write the following list on the board (consider doing this before class):

First seal (Revelation 6:1–2)

Second seal (Revelation 6:3–4)

Third seal (Revelation 6:5–6)

Fourth seal (Revelation 6:7–8)

Fifth seal (Revelation 6:9–11)

Give each student a sheet of paper. Assign each student one of the seals (each seal may be assigned to more than one student). Ask students to read the references corresponding with their assigned seal and to draw some of the events John saw pertaining to that seal.

After sufficient time, invite students to show their drawings to the class in order, starting with those who were assigned the first seal. Invite one student from each group to use his or her drawing to explain what John saw when that seal was opened. As students report, share the following possible interpretations suggested by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. You may want to encourage students to write this information in their scriptures or in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

First seal (About 4000 to 3000 B.C.)	White horse = Victory Bow = Warfare Crown = Conqueror Elder McConkie suggested that verses 1–2 describe Enoch’s day and that the rider is Enoch (see <i>Doctrinal New Testament Commentary</i> , 3 vols. [1966–73], 3:476–78).
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Teacher presentation

While it is important that students take an active role in the learning process in order to better understand the scriptures and apply them in their lives, you will still need to explain, clarify, and illustrate when appropriate so that students can more clearly understand the context and content of a particular scripture block.

Second seal (About 3000 to 2000 B.C.)	Red horse = Bloodshed Sword = War and destruction Elder McConkie suggested that verses 3–4 describe Noah’s day, when wickedness covered the earth. The rider of the red horse could be the devil himself or perhaps “a person representing many murdering warriors” (<i>Doctrinal New Testament Commentary</i> , 3:478–79).
Third seal (About 2000 to 1000 B.C.)	Black horse = Famine Balances = High prices for food Elder McConkie suggested that verses 5–6 describe Abraham’s day, when many died of starvation (see <i>Doctrinal New Testament Commentary</i> , 3:479–80). A person could purchase only enough food to live on with a whole day’s wages, indicating extreme famine prices.
Fourth seal (About 1000 B.C. to the birth of Christ)	Pale horse = Death Death and hell = Destruction of the wicked and their reception into spirit prison (see Isaiah 5:14) Elder McConkie said verses 7–8 refer to “the millennium of those great kingdoms and nations whose wars and treacheries tormented and overran [Israel], again and again” (<i>Doctrinal New Testament Commentary</i> , 3:481). These nations included Babylon, Persia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome.
Fifth seal (About the birth of Christ to A.D. 1000)	Altar = Sacrifice Souls = Martyrs, Christians killed for their beliefs Elder McConkie suggested that verses 9–11 refer to the many early Christians, including most of the original Apostles, who died as martyrs (see <i>Doctrinal New Testament Commentary</i> , 3:482–83). Because these Saints gave up their lives “for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held” (Revelation 6:9), they were given “white robes,” symbolic of purity (see Revelation 7:13–14; 3 Nephi 27:19).

After each group has presented, explain that the sixth seal represents our time and the events leading up to the Millennium, when Jesus Christ will reign personally on the earth (see *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:485–86).

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Revelation 6:12–17, including the Joseph Smith Translation in verse 14, footnote *a*. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the events John foresaw.

- When the sixth seal was opened, what events did John see? (Explain that these catastrophic events are signs of the last days.)
- According to verse 16, what will those who seek to escape God’s “wrath” wish for?
- What question is recorded in verse 17?

Write the following question on the board: *Who shall be able to stand?*

Explain that Revelation 7 helps us understand who will be able to stand, or abide, the catastrophes of the sixth seal.

Revelation 7

John saw the servants of God who had washed their robes in the Lamb’s blood

Invite a student to read Revelation 7:1 aloud, and invite another student to read Doctrine and Covenants 77:8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else John saw in the sixth seal.

- What were the four angels doing? (Point out that the winds they are holding back have power to destroy life on earth. See also D&C 86:5–7.)

Invite a student to read Revelation 7:2–3 aloud and another to read Doctrine and Covenants 77:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what another angel said to the four angels.

- According to Doctrine and Covenants 77:9, who is the angel “ascending from the east”? (Revelation 7:2).

Explain that the word *Elias* in this instance is a “title for those whose mission [is] to commit keys and powers to men in the final dispensation” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:491–92; see also Bible Dictionary, “Elias”).

- What did this angel say to the four angels?

Explain that “the sealing, or marking, of ‘the servants of our God in their foreheads’ is a metaphor of their devotion, service, and belonging to God (Revelation 7:3; see also Revelation 9:4; 14:1). . . .

“The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the sealing of the faithful in their foreheads ‘signifies sealing the blessing upon their heads, meaning the everlasting covenant, thereby making their calling and election sure’ (in *History of the Church*, 5:530)” (*New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 544).

Explain that as recorded in Revelation 9, John saw what would happen to those who do not bear this seal. Invite a student to read Revelation 9:3–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the condition of those who do not have this seal. Invite students to report what they find.

Invite students to read Revelation 7:4 silently, looking for how many people were sealed in the forehead by this angel. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that the Lord told the Prophet Joseph Smith that “the number 144,000 mentioned in Revelation 7:4–8 is the number of ordained high priests out of the twelve tribes of Israel who will assist others in their quest for exaltation [see D&C 77:11]. It is not, as some people believe, the total number of people who will be exalted” (*New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 544).

Invite a student to read Revelation 7:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who else John saw.

- Who did John see?
- What was this multitude wearing and holding? (You may need to explain that palm branches can symbolize victory and joy.)

Invite a student to read Revelation 7:13–17 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what John learned about these people.

- What had these people endured?
- How did their robes become white? (By the “blood of the Lamb” [verse 14]—symbolic of Jesus Christ’s Atonement.)
- According to verses 15–17, what blessings did these people receive because they were purified through the Atonement of Jesus Christ? (You might point out that these verses describe the joy, peace, and devotion of those who inherit celestial glory.)
- What principle can we identify from these verses about how we can inherit celestial glory? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify a principle similar to the following: **If we endure tribulation faithfully and become pure through Jesus Christ’s Atonement, we will enjoy celestial glory with God.** Write this principle on the board.)

Invite students to ponder what it would be like and how they would feel to stand purified in God’s presence.

- How would these feelings compare to the feelings of the people described in Revelation 6:16?
- What must we do so that the Savior can purify us through His Atonement?
- How has remembering the blessings of celestial glory helped you in your efforts to endure tribulation and become pure?

Remind students of the list of concerns written on the board at the beginning of class. Invite them to consider how the principle written on the board can help them when they feel concerned about living in the latter days. Invite a few willing students to share their thoughts with the class.

Invite students to take a few minutes to ponder how they can apply the principle they learned today. Encourage them to record any promptings they receive.

LESSON 155

Revelation 6–11, Part 2

Introduction

John saw the opening of the seventh seal and learned of his mission to participate in the gathering of Israel in the latter days.

Suggestions for Teaching

Revelation 8–9

John sees the opening of the seventh seal

Divide students into pairs, and ask students to explain to their partners what they learned in their study of Revelation 6–7 that can help them remain joyful and positive amidst uncertainty and turmoil.

Write on the board the following principle identified in the previous lesson: **If we endure tribulation faithfully and become pure through Jesus Christ’s Atonement, we will enjoy celestial glory with God.** Encourage students to look for how this principle relates to the events they will learn about in today’s lesson.

Provide the following chart as a handout, or draw it on the board:

- According to this chart, how many verses in the book of Revelation deal with events of the first six seals? (25.)
- How many verses deal with events of the seventh seal? ($211 + 15 = 226$.)

Point out that John wrote more about events pertaining to the seventh thousand-year period than he did about events pertaining to any of the others. He wrote particularly about the events that would occur from the time of the opening of the seventh seal to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

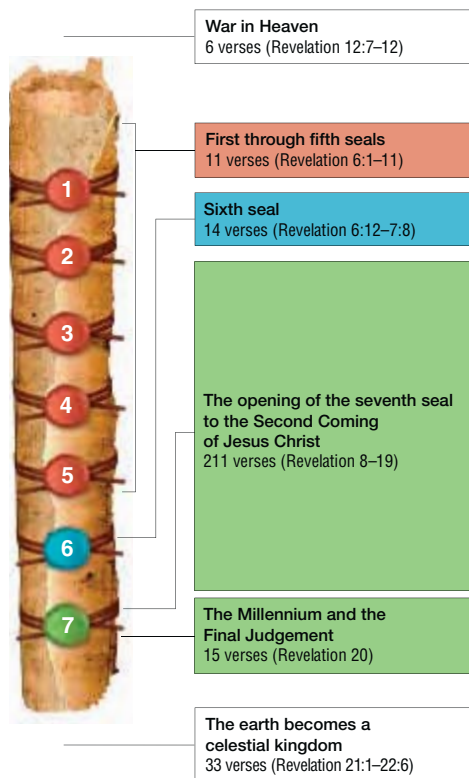
- Why do you think John focused his writings on the events of the seventh seal?

Summarize Revelation 8:1–6 by explaining that these verses describe the Savior opening the seventh seal. John saw seven angels who were given seven trumpets. Anciently, trumpets were used to “sound an alarm, signal [an army] for battle, or announce the arrival of royalty” (Gerald N. Lund, “Seeing the Book of Revelation as a Book of Revelation,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1987, 50). In this instance, blowing the trumpets would signal the onset of various plagues and destruction in preparation for Jesus Christ’s millennial reign.

Invite students to write “The Seventh Seal” at the top of a piece of paper or in their class notebooks or scripture study journals and to draw seven trumpets down the side of the page.

John’s Vision of the Seven Seals in the Book of Revelation

Each seal represents one thousand years of life on earth (see D&C 77:6–7).



Encourage students to study the scriptures daily and read the text for the course

At the beginning of this course students were encouraged to read the entire New Testament. Find out how your students are doing with this goal, and offer support and encouragement as needed. As students complete this goal, encourage them to continue to study the scriptures daily so they can continue to receive the blessings that come from doing so.

Write the following references on the board, but omit the questions that follow each reference. Invite students to write the references next to the trumpets on their papers:



First—Revelation 8:7. What happened as a result of the “hail and fire” that fell to the earth when the first angel sounded his trumpet?



Second—Revelation 8:8–9. What three things were affected when the second trumpet was sounded?



Third—Revelation 8:10–11. What was the name of the star that fell? (Explain that wormwood is a bitter herb used to denote “bitter calamity or sorrow” [Bible Dictionary, “Wormwood”].) What happened when it fell?



Fourth—Revelation 8:12. Following the sounding of the fourth trumpet, what three things were partially darkened?



Fifth—Revelation 9:1–3. What came out of the bottomless pit when the fifth angel opened it?



Sixth—Revelation 9:13–16, 18. How many soldiers were involved in the great battle that John saw after the sixth trumpet had been sounded? What portion of mankind did he see killed in this battle?



Seventh—Revelation 11:15.

Divide the class into six groups, and assign each group one of the first six scripture references listed on the board (if your class is small, you may need to assign multiple references to some groups). Ask the groups to read their assigned scripture passages aloud together, looking for what happened after the sounding of the trumpets. Invite them to write what they find next to the corresponding trumpet on their papers.

After sufficient time, invite a student from each group to report what they found. Invite students to write each group’s findings next to the corresponding trumpets on their papers. As students report, if necessary ask the question(s) accompanying their group’s assigned scripture reference.

- How can the principle we identified in the previous lesson help those who are living during the events of the seventh seal?

Invite a student to read Revelation 9:20–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the wicked who survive these plagues will respond. Invite students to report what they find.

- What does this teach us about the wickedness of these people?

Revelation 10

An angel instructs John about his mission in the latter days

Explain that Revelation 10 contains a pause in the narrative of the seven trumpet soundings and their associated plagues. We read in this chapter that John was instructed by another angel.

Write on the board the words *Sweet* and *Bitter*.

- What are some experiences in life that could be considered both sweet and bitter?

Invite a student to read Revelation 10:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the angel was holding.

- What was the angel holding?

Invite two students to take turns reading aloud from Revelation 10:8–11. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what John was told to do with the book.

- What was John told to do with the book? How did it taste?

Invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 77:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what John’s eating of the book represented.

- According to this verse, what did John’s eating of the book represent? (John’s acceptance of his mission to help “gather the tribes of Israel” and “restore all things” in the latter days.)

Point out that John had been blessed that he would not die so that he could bring individuals to the Savior (see D&C 7:1–4).

- What might John experience in fulfilling his mission that would be sweet? What might be bitter?

Revelation 11

John sees two prophets slain in Jerusalem and the sounding of the seventh trumpet

Explain that Revelation 11 begins with John’s description of the events that will precede the sounding of the seventh trumpet and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. During this time, the wicked will have more power and control over the earth, and an army will seek to overrun Jerusalem.

Invite a student to read Revelation 11:3–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what two witnesses will do in Jerusalem during this time.

- What will the two witnesses do?
- What might it mean that “fire [will proceed] out of their mouth”? (verse 5). (This could be symbolic of the power of the testimonies they will bear [see Jeremiah 5:14; 20:9].)

Invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 77:15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who these two witnesses will be. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Revelation 11:7–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what will happen to these two prophets after they have finished their ministry among the Jews.

- How will the wicked react when the two witnesses are killed?
- What will happen to the two witnesses after being dead for three and a half days?
- How will the people react when the two witnesses are raised from the dead and taken into heaven?

Invite a student to read Revelation 11:13–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what will happen prior to and when the seventh trumpet is sounded. Invite students to write what they find on their papers next to the seventh trumpet.

- After the sounding of the seventh trumpet, who will reign over “the kingdoms of this world”? (verse 15).

Summarize Revelation 11:16–19 by explaining that the 24 elders gave thanks and praise to God for rewarding the just and punishing the wicked. John also saw in vision the heavenly temple of God and the ark of the covenant, which represents God’s presence.

Conclude today’s lesson by sharing your own feelings of thanks and praise to God for His goodness and justice.

Commentary and Background Information

Revelation 8–11. Additional commentary

For additional information on the contents of Revelation 8–11, see the commentary for these chapters found in the *New Testament Student Manual* (Church Educational System manual, 2014) on pages 545–49.

Revelation 10:1–3, 8–11. The little book that John was given to eat

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught:

“John’s act of eating a book containing the word of God to him was in keeping with the custom and tradition of ancient Israel. The act signified that he was eating the

bread of life, that he was partaking of the good word of God, that he was feasting upon the word of Christ—which was in his ‘mouth sweet as honey.’ But it made his ‘belly bitter’; that is the judgments and plagues promised those to whom the Lord’s word was sent caused him to despair and have sorrow of soul” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 3:507).

“That the book was ‘sweet as honey’ in John’s mouth but ‘bitter’ in his belly (Revelation 10:10) may suggest that his mission would involve many sweet and joyous experiences but also rejection and painful experiences (see also Psalm 119:103)” (*New Testament Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2014], 548).

Home-Study Lesson

Revelation 1–11 (Unit 31)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Revelation 1–11 (unit 31) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Revelation 1–3)

As students studied about the Apostle John’s revelation, they learned that as we read, seek to understand, and obey the Lord’s words, we will be blessed. John taught the Church members that Jesus Christ watches over and cares for His faithful followers and that He is a glorified resurrected being who has power over death and hell. Students also learned that as we open the door to the Savior, He will come in to us and sup with us.

Day 2 (Revelation 4–5)

In this lesson, students read about John’s vision of the Lamb of God and learned the following truths: As we recognize Heavenly Father’s greatness, we desire to worship and praise Him. Jesus Christ is the only one who is worthy and able to redeem us. As we recognize and feel gratitude for what Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ have done for us, we desire to worship and praise Them.

Day 3 (Revelation 6–7)

As students learned about the seven seals, they discovered that if we endure tribulation faithfully and become pure through Jesus Christ’s Atonement, we will enjoy celestial glory with God.

Day 4 (Revelation 8–11)

Students reviewed the principle identified in the day 3 lesson as they learned about John’s vision of the opening of the seventh seal.

Introduction

This lesson can help students understand what the Lord will do for us because He knows us and loves us. Additionally, it can help students know what they need to do to gain eternal life.

Suggestions for Teaching

Revelation 2–3

John writes the words of Jesus Christ to the leaders of the seven churches

Note: For more information regarding the Lord’s instructions to the seven Church congregations, you may want to refer to *New Testament Student Manual* (Church Educational System manual, 2014), 531–32.

Invite a student to read aloud the following account by Sister Sydney S. Reynolds, a former member of the Primary general presidency. Ask the class to listen for what they can learn about the Lord from this account.



“Sister Gayle Clegg of the Primary general presidency and her husband lived for a number of years in Brazil. Recently she had a Primary assignment in Japan. As she came into the chapel on Sunday, she noticed among the Japanese Saints a Brazilian family. . . . She only had a minute

to greet them and found the mother and children very enthusiastic but noticed that the father was rather quiet. ‘I’ll have a chance to talk with them after the meeting,’ she thought as she was quickly ushered to the stand. She delivered her message in English, which was translated into Japanese, and then she felt impressed to bear her testimony in Portuguese as well. She hesitated as there were no translators for Portuguese, and 98 percent of the people would not understand what she said.

“After the meeting the Brazilian father came up to her and said, ‘Sister, the customs are so different here, and I have been lonely. It is difficult to come to church and not understand anything. Sometimes I wonder if I would be better off just reading my scriptures at home. I told my wife, ‘I’ll give it one more chance,’ and I came today for what I thought would be the last time. When you bore your testimony in Portuguese, the Spirit touched my heart, and I knew that this was where I belonged. God knows I am here, and He will help me’ ” (“He Knows Us; He Loves Us,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2003, 76).

- What can we learn about the Lord from this experience?

Write the following incomplete phrase on the board: *Because the Lord knows each of us . . .* Invite students to look for truths as they study Revelation 2–3 that help them understand what the Lord can do for them because He knows them.

Explain that Revelation 2–3 contains the Apostle John’s record of Jesus Christ’s words to seven Church congregations in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey).

Invite a student to read Revelation 2:1–3, 6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord knew about the Saints in Ephesus.

- What did the Lord know about the Saints in Ephesus? (Explain that the word *Nicolaitans* in verse 6 could refer to a group whose members claimed they could commit sexual sins without punishment because the grace of God would save them [see Bible Dictionary, “Nicolaitans”].)

Point out that these verses record that the Lord commended, or praised, the Saints for their good works. Add to the statement on the board so that it reads as follows: *Because the Lord knows each of us, He can give us personal commendation . . .*

Invite a student to read Revelation 2:4–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else the Lord knew about the Saints in Ephesus.

- What else did the Lord know about the Saints in Ephesus?

Point out that the Lord was giving the Saints correction because of their sins. Complete the statement on the board so that it conveys the following truth: **Because the Lord knows each of us, He can give us personal commendation and correction.**

- What are some ways we can receive personal commendation and correction from the Lord? (Through our personal prayers, scripture study, counsel from Church leaders and parents, and patriarchal blessings.)
- How can knowing that the Lord can give us personal commendation and correction influence the way we approach our personal scripture study and prayer? How can it influence the way we respond to the counsel of our Church leaders and parents?
- Why should we make an effort to seek out personal commendation and correction from the Lord?
- When have you experienced the Lord giving you personal commendation or correction? How did this experience help you know that the Lord knows you individually? (Caution students to not share experiences that are sacred or too private. You might also share an experience.)

Invite students to ponder what actions they think the Lord might commend them for as well as what thoughts or behaviors the Lord might correct them for. Encourage students to set a goal to repent when the Lord corrects them.

Invite a student to read Revelation 2:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord promised those who overcome, or who endure faithfully to the end.

- What did the Lord promise those who overcome, or who endure to the end in righteousness?
- What do you think it means to “eat of the tree of life”? (verse 7).
- How might hearing this promised blessing after receiving personal correction have been helpful to the Saints in Ephesus?

Remind students that in addition to addressing the Church congregation in Ephesus, the Lord addressed other Church congregations in Asia Minor.

Divide the class into five groups, and assign each group one of the following references:

1. Revelation 2:8–11
2. Revelation 2:12–17
3. Revelation 2:18–29; Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 2:26–27 (in the Bible appendix)
4. Revelation 3:1–6; Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 3:1 (in Revelation 3:1, footnote a); Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 3:2 (in Revelation 3:2, footnote a)
5. Revelation 3:7–13

Invite students to read their assigned verses as a group, looking for what the Lord counseled the Saints to do and the blessings He promised they would receive if they did so. Explain that Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that “the hidden manna” mentioned in Revelation 2:17 is “the bread of life, the good word of God, the doctrines of Him who is the Bread of Life—all of which is hidden from the carnal [or worldly] mind. Those who eat thereof shall never hunger more; eternal life is their eventual inheritance” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 3:451).

After sufficient time, invite a member of each group to report what his or her group found. Invite a student to write on the board (beneath the promised blessing students identified in Revelation 2:7) the promised blessing that each group identified (see Revelation 2:11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12). After the list is complete, point out that each of these promises refers to receiving the blessings of exaltation, which are conditioned upon our enduring faithfully to the end.

- What principle can we identify from these verses about what we must do to receive the blessings of exaltation? (Help students identify a principle similar to the following: **If we overcome, then we can receive the blessings of exaltation.**)

Explain that those who receive the blessings of exaltation are those who, through the grace of God, overcome all obstacles that could prevent them from returning to Him. These include worldliness, trials, sin, and death.

Ask students to consider what obstacles they need to overcome in their lives. Invite them to pray and ask Heavenly Father for help to overcome obstacles that could prevent them from returning to Him. Testify of Heavenly Father’s power to help them overcome any obstacle.

Next Unit (Revelation 12–22)

Ask students whether they have ever wondered about the Final Judgment and events that occurred in the premortal life. What did the Apostle John write about the War in Heaven? How many were cast out with Satan? What will the Final Judgment be like? What will we be judged by when we stand before God? How did John describe celestial splendor? Explain that as they study Revelation 12–22 during the coming week, they will learn the answers to these questions.

Revelation 12–13

Introduction

John saw a vision of a dragon threatening a woman and her child, which symbolizes Satan’s attempts to destroy the Lord’s Church and its faithful members. John wrote

about the War in Heaven and about the kingdoms of the world that would fight against the followers of God.

Study the scripture block before you teach

President Ezra Taft Benson taught: “Before you can strengthen your students, it is essential that you study the doctrines of the kingdom and learn the gospel by *both* study and faith” (“The Gospel Teacher and His Message” [address to religious educators, Sept. 17, 1976], 5, Church History Library, Salt Lake City). Carefully study each lesson’s scripture block, and ponder the doctrines and principles contained in it. Seek to increase your faith in those truths.



Suggestions for Teaching

Revelation 12

John is shown that Satan and his angels have always warred against the Lord and His Church

Before class, copy the following matching activity on the board. After class begins, invite a few students to draw connecting lines between each of the threats listed in the left-hand column and the ways to combat them listed in the right-hand column.

Threats	Ways to Combat Threats
Sunburn	Truths in Revelation 12
Enemy soldiers	Medicine or rest
Sickness	Sunscreen or clothing
Sin and guilt	Repentance and trust in Jesus Christ
Influences of Satan	Weapons of war

- Which of these threats have you had to combat lately? Which one do you think is the most dangerous? Why?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Revelation 12 that can help them combat Satan’s influences. Explain that Revelation 12–14 records an interlude, or pause, in John’s vision of the events of the seventh seal. The Lord may have been helping John understand the meaning of the phrases “the kingdoms of this world” and “the kingdoms of our Lord” in Revelation 11:15.

Show students the accompanying picture of the woman with the dragon behind her (see the appendix). Invite students to consider what these symbols might represent.

Invite a student to read Revelation 12:1–2, 5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to the woman. Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation places verse 5 directly after verse 2.

- What happened to the woman? (She gave birth to a son “who was to rule all nations” [verse 5].)
- What do you think it means that he would “rule all nations with a rod of iron”? (verse 5). (The child would use the rod of iron, which may symbolize the gospel, the priesthood, and the word and power of God, to righteously govern the nations of the world [see Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. (1965–73), 3:517].)

Invite a student to read Revelation 12:3–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the symbols described in these verses.

- What do you think the symbols described in verses 1–5 could represent?

Invite students to read silently Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 12:7–8 (in the Bible appendix). Ask them to look for what the dragon, the woman, and the child represent.

- According to Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 12:7–8, what do the dragon, the woman, and the child in John’s vision represent? (The dragon represents Satan [see verse 8]; the woman represents “the church of God”; and the child represents the “kingdom of our

God and his Christ” [verse 7], which is a political kingdom that the Lord will establish during the Millennium, through which He will rule all nations. [See *New Testament Student Manual* (Church Educational System manual, 2014), 550–52, for more explanation of the symbolism in these passages.]

- According to Revelation 12:4, what was the dragon’s intent? Why do you think Satan seeks so diligently to destroy the kingdom of God and Christ?

Invite a student to read Revelation 12:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the woman did because of the threatening dragon.

- What happened to the woman? What might this symbolize? (The woman fleeing into the wilderness represents the Church entering the Great Apostasy and the priesthood being taken from the earth after the Apostles’ deaths [see also D&C 86:3].)

Explain that after John saw the dragon threatening the woman and her child, he witnessed the War in Heaven between Satan and the Saints of God. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 12:6–11 (in the Bible appendix).

Ask half of the class to look for what happened to Satan in the War in Heaven and the other half of the class to look for how the Saints of God overcame Satan and his followers.

- What happened to Satan and his followers? (You might point out that Revelation 12:4 says that the dragon’s tail “drew the third part of the stars of heaven.” This is symbolic of the large number of Heavenly Father’s spirit children who chose to follow Satan. You may also want to explain that “Michael and his angels” [Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 12:6] are Adam and other righteous spirit children of God.)
- According to verse 11, how did the righteous hosts of heaven overcome Satan? (“By the blood of the Lamb,” or through the Savior’s Atonement, and by remaining true to their testimonies of the gospel. Write these answers on the board.)
- According to verse 8, where were Satan and his followers sent following their rebellion?

Invite a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 12:12, 17 (in the Bible appendix). Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom Satan made war against after he was cast out of heaven.

- Whom did Satan make war against after he was cast out of heaven?
- Based on what we learn from verse 11, what can we do to overcome the influences and attacks of Satan in our day? (Help students identify a principle similar to the following: **We can overcome Satan’s influences through the Savior’s Atonement and by remaining true to our testimonies of the gospel.** Write this principle on the board.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder James J. Hamula of the Seventy. Ask the class to listen for how Satan is attacking their generation.



“Reserved to come forth in these last days and labor for our Father and His Son are some of the most valiant and noble of our Father’s sons and daughters. Their valiance and nobility were demonstrated in the pre-earth struggle with Satan. . . .

“With God’s kingdom restored to the earth and your entry into the world, Satan knows that ‘he hath but a short time’ [Revelation 12:12]. Therefore,

Satan is marshalling every resource at his disposal to entice you into transgression. He knows that if he can draw you into transgression, he may prevent you from serving a full-time mission, marrying in the temple, and securing your future children in the faith, all of which weakens not only you but the Church. He knows that nothing can overthrow God’s kingdom ‘save it [be] the transgression of [his] people’ [Mosiah 27:13]. Make no mistake about it—the focus of his war is now on you” (“Winning the War against Evil,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 50, 51).

- How do Satan and his followers seek to weaken us?

Invite students to consider how Satan is waging war against them personally.

- What are some things we can do to increase our faith in Jesus Christ and strengthen our testimonies of Him? (List students’ responses on the board.)

Read the following two statements aloud, and invite students to respond to one of them in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

1. Write about an experience when your testimony of and faith in the Savior's Atonement helped you combat Satan's influences.
2. Record your testimony of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and explain how the Atonement can help us in our war against Satan and his followers.

After sufficient time, invite a few students to share what they wrote.

Encourage students to select one or more of the ideas listed on the board and apply them in their battles against Satan and his followers.

Revelation 13

John writes about kingdoms of the earth that will receive power from Satan

Summarize Revelation 13 by inviting a student to read the chapter summary aloud. (If you prefer, you could explain that John saw a vision of fierce-looking beasts that represent wicked earthly kingdoms controlled by Satan. John also saw that through these kingdoms, Satan would work wonders and false miracles to deceive the inhabitants of the earth.)

Scripture Mastery Review

During the last week of seminary, consider giving students a final scripture mastery test. You might encourage students to study at home or immediately before the test. The following are a few types of tests you could use (you may adapt these ideas to meet students' needs):

Reference test: Give students clues from the scripture mastery passages. These clues could be key words, doctrines or principles, or passage summaries. Invite students to write the reference to the passage on a piece of paper after you provide each clue.

Doctrine test: List the Basic Doctrines on the board. Ask students to list corresponding scripture mastery references under each doctrine. They could do this by recalling the scripture mastery passages from memory or by using a list of the mastery passages.

Memorization test: Invite students to use memorized words and principles from the scripture mastery passages to explain some of the Basic Doctrines. Invite them to write out their explanations and read them aloud to the class.

Remember to commend your class for their efforts to master these key scripture passages and the Basic Doctrines. Testify of the spiritual power and testimony we can receive as we master scripture passages and doctrines.

Commentary and Background Information

Revelation 13. Fierce-looking beasts

Apart from the knowledge that the beasts represent worldly kingdoms, we do not have any interpretation from the Lord concerning the beasts. While speaking about the mysteries of the book of Revelation, the Prophet Joseph Smith said the following:

"Whenever God gives a vision of an image, or beast, or figure of any kind, He always holds Himself responsible to give a revelation or interpretation of the meaning thereof, otherwise we are not responsible or accountable for our belief in it. . . .

". . . Never meddle with the visions of beasts and subjects you do not understand" (in *History of the Church*, 5:343, 344).

Revelation 13:8. "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"

The phrase "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8) refers to Jesus Christ and His Atonement. "From the foundation of the world" refers to the premortal life, before the world was created. Therefore, we can understand from this verse that the effects of the Savior's Atonement were in place before Jesus was even born. For example, people who lived before the time of Christ could exercise faith in Christ, repent, and have their sins forgiven through the power of His Atonement, even though the Savior had yet to be born (see D&C 20:25–26).

LESSON 157

Revelation 14–16

Introduction

In a vision, the Apostle John saw an angel restore the gospel of Jesus Christ in the latter days. He also heard a voice from heaven describing the blessings that come to those who die having been faithful to the Lord. John

saw the gathering of the righteous and the gathering of the wicked in the latter days and the judgments of God being poured out upon the wicked.

Suggestions for Teaching

Revelation 14

John sees the Restoration of the gospel and the gathering of the righteous and wicked

Write the following question on the board: *Is it possible to enjoy peace even when the world is filled with wickedness, calamities, and violence?*

Invite several students to respond to this question and explain their responses.

Invite students to look for truths as they study Revelation 14–16 that can bring them peace while living in a wicked and tumultuous world prior to Jesus Christ’s Second Coming.

Explain that as recorded in Revelation 14:1–13, the Apostle John saw a vision of the latter days. In his vision he saw the calamities that would come upon the wicked. He also saw what would bring peace to the righteous.

Invite a student to read Revelation 14:1–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what John saw happening in the latter days.

- What did John see happening in the latter days?

Remind students that the 144,000 are high priests of the twelve tribes of Israel who will be ordained from every nation to administer the gospel and bring people to the Church (see Revelation 7:4–8; D&C 77:11).

- According to verses 4–5, how did John describe the 144,000 high priests who would administer the gospel throughout the earth? (Explain that the phrase “not defiled with women” [verse 4] means they were chaste, the phrase “in their mouth was found no guile” [verse 5] means they were honest and sincere, and the phrase “without fault” [verse 5] means they were clean from sin.)
- Why do you think being chaste, honest, and clean from sin would help the 144,000 high priests take the gospel to others?

Explain that during John’s vision of the latter days he saw three angels. Invite three students to represent the three angels (these students may remain in their seats). Invite the student who represents the first angel to read Revelation 14:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the angel had.

- What did the angel have?

Invite the student representing the first angel to read Doctrine and Covenants 133:36–37 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the angel did with the everlasting gospel.

- What did the angel do with the everlasting gospel?

Display the picture *Moroni Appears to Joseph Smith in His Room* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 91; see also LDS.org). Ask a student to recount what happened during Moroni’s first visit to Joseph Smith. (If students need reminding of these events, you could invite a student to read Joseph Smith—History 1:29–35 aloud.)

- Under God’s direction, what did Moroni give to Joseph Smith that helped restore the gospel to the earth? (The record containing the Book of Mormon.)

Display a picture of a temple that has a statue of the angel Moroni on top, such as the picture of the Salt Lake Temple found in the *Gospel Art Book* (no. 119; see also LDS.org).



- Why do you think a statue of the angel Moroni is placed on top of many of our temples? Explain that in a conference talk, President Gordon B. Hinckley quoted Revelation 14:6 and then declared, “That angel has come. His name is Moroni” (“Stay the Course—Keep the Faith,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 70). The angel may also represent a composite of the many heavenly messengers, including Moroni, who have assisted in the latter-day Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ (see Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 3:529–31; see also D&C 13; 110:11–16; 128:20–21).

Invite the student representing the first angel to read Revelation 14:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the angel said.

- What did the angel say?
- What is the meaning of the phrase “the hour of his judgment is come”? (The time will come when Jesus Christ will judge all the people of the earth. His judgments will occur both at the Second Coming [see Malachi 3:1–5] and at the Final Judgment [see 2 Nephi 9:15].)
- Based on what we have learned, what is one reason God restored the gospel of Jesus Christ? (Students should identify the following truth: **God restored the gospel of Jesus Christ to prepare the earth’s inhabitants for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.**)
- In what ways does the gospel of Jesus Christ prepare people for His Second Coming?

Invite students to ponder how the restored gospel of Jesus Christ has helped bring them peace while living in a wicked and tumultuous world. Ask a few students to share their thoughts with the class.

Invite the student representing the second angel to read Revelation 14:8 aloud and the student representing the third angel to read Revelation 14:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the angels said.

- According to verse 8, what did the second angel say? (Explain that one meaning of the phrase “Babylon is fallen” is that the day will come when the wickedness of the world will end.)
- How might it bring us peace to know that the wickedness of the world will end?
- According to verses 9–11, what did the third angel say would happen to those who chose to follow “the beast” (verse 9), or Satan?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statements by the Prophet Joseph Smith. Ask the class to listen for how the Prophet explained the torment the wicked would experience after they die.



“The great misery of departed spirits in the world of spirits, where they go after death, is to know that they come short of the glory that others enjoy and that they might have enjoyed themselves, and they are their own accusers” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 224).

“A man is his own tormentor and his own condemner. Hence the saying, They shall go into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone [see Revelation 21:8].

The torment of disappointment in the mind of man is as exquisite as a lake burning with fire and brimstone” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith*, 224).

- According to the Prophet Joseph Smith, what will be part of the torment the wicked will experience after they die?

Point out that after learning what the wicked will experience after they die, John heard a voice from heaven describing what the righteous will experience after they die.

Invite a student to read Revelation 14:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the righteous will experience after they die.

- What will the righteous experience after they die?
- What do you think it means that they will “rest from their labours”? (verse 13).
- How would you summarize John’s teachings in verses 12–13 as a principle? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify a principle similar to the following: **If we live righteously, then we will be blessed for our works and rest from our labors after we die.**)
- How might this principle bring us peace even when we are surrounded by wickedness?

Consider sharing your testimony of the importance of choosing to live righteously in a wicked world. Invite students to ponder what they can do in their lives to make sure they will not suffer the torment of the wicked but instead enjoy the peace of the righteous. Invite them to act on any impressions they receive.

Summarize Revelation 14:14–20 by explaining that John described two harvests. In his vision, John saw that during the first harvest the righteous would be gathered from the wicked (see verses 14–16) and that during the second harvest the wicked would be gathered and ultimately destroyed (see verses 17–20).

Revelation 15–16

John sees the righteous in the celestial kingdom and seven plagues in the latter days

Invite a student to read Revelation 15:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else John saw occurring in the last days. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that as recorded in Revelation 15–16, John described seven plagues that would torment the wicked in the last days. However, before he described these plagues, John paused to reiterate the blessings that the righteous would receive. Summarize Revelation 15:2–4 by explaining that John saw a vision of those who would overcome Satan and praise God in the celestial kingdom.

Draw seven vials or bowls on the board, and number them 1 through 7 (or simply write the numbers on the board). Explain that in his vision John saw seven vials, or bowls, that contained the seven plagues.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Revelation 16:2–4, 8–12, 16–21. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how John described the seven plagues. Pause after each plague is described, and invite a student to write the plague on the board under the corresponding vial (or number) on the board.

After a student reads John’s description of the third plague, invite a student to read Revelation 16:6 aloud. Ask the class to look for one reason people will suffer this plague in the last days.

- What is one reason people will suffer this plague?

After a student reads the description of the sixth plague, explain that during this plague the Euphrates River will dry up to prepare for the gathering of the world’s kings for the battle at Armageddon (see Revelation 16:12–16; see also Zechariah 12:11). At the end of this battle, the Savior will appear to the people in Jerusalem (see D&C 45:47–53) and to all the people of the earth (see Matthew 24:30; D&C 101:23).

Invite a student to read Revelation 16:15 aloud, and ask the class to look for what we can do to be prepared for Jesus Christ’s Second Coming. Explain that the phrase “keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked” refers to being spiritually ready.

- According to verse 15, what can we do to be prepared for Jesus Christ’s Second Coming? (Students should identify the following principle: **If we are watchful and spiritually ready, then we will be prepared for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.**)
- What are some ways we can become spiritually ready?

Testify that the Lord loves His people and desires that we prepare for His Second Coming. Encourage students to be watchful and spiritually ready so they can receive the Lord’s blessings.

Testify

One of the most important things you can do is testify of gospel truths and your love for Heavenly Father and His Son. Your testimony can help fortify students’ faith and comfort them as they face the difficulties of living in a wicked world.

Revelation 17–19

Introduction

John saw that spiritual Babylon, or the wicked world, will war against the Lamb of God and that the Lamb will triumph over evil. The Saints are called to come out of spiritual Babylon, and the clean and righteous will be

called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. John saw Jesus Christ coming in great power to destroy those who fight against Him.

Suggestions for Teaching

Revelation 17–18

John foresees the destruction of spiritual Babylon

Write on the board the following statement by Elder Lynn G. Robbins of the Seventy, and invite a student to read it aloud. (This statement is found in “Avoid It” [Brigham Young University devotional, Sept. 17, 2013], 1, speeches.byu.edu.)

“It is easier to avoid temptation than it is to resist temptation” (Elder Lynn G. Robbins).

- Why do you think it is easier to avoid temptation than it is to resist it?
- What can happen if we put ourselves in situations where we must constantly resist temptation?

Invite students to look for a truth as they study Revelation 17–18 that will help them know how to avoid many of the temptations and sins of the world.

Remind students that John saw in vision seven angels that would pour out plagues upon the wicked in the last days (see Revelation 16). Invite a student to read Revelation 17:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what one of the seven angels said he would show John.

- What did the angel say he would show John?

Invite students to read Revelation 17:15 silently, looking for what the many waters represent.

- According to verse 15, what do the many waters that the woman sits upon represent? (People and nations she has power and influence over [see also 1 Nephi 14:11].)

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Revelation 17:2–6. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words and phrases that describe the woman and her influence on the world.

- What words and phrases describe the woman?
- According to verse 2, how is the woman’s influence upon the rulers and people of the earth described?
- What do you think is represented in verse 6 by the woman being drunk with the blood of the Saints and martyrs? (Throughout the ages, many righteous people have been slain by the wicked, and the scriptural language suggests that slaying the righteous had an intoxicating effect on those who carried out the slaughter.)

Explain that the beast described in verse 3 may represent Rome in John’s day as well as corrupt kingdoms and nations in the last days (see Revelation 17:8–13).

Ask students to consider who or what is represented by the woman described in verses 1–6. Invite students to read Revelation 17:18 silently, looking for what the woman represents.

- According to verse 18, what does the woman represent?

Explain that the “great city” (verse 18) refers to spiritual Babylon (see D&C 133:14). Because of the worldliness and corruption of ancient Babylon, and because it was a place where the children of Israel were captive, Babylon is often used figuratively in the scriptures to represent sin, worldliness, the influence of the devil on the earth, and spiritual captivity (see also 1 Nephi 13:1–9; 14:9–10).

Write on the board: *The Woman = Babylon, or the wickedness of the world*

Invite students to read Revelation 17:14 silently, looking for whom Babylon will fight against. Ask students to report what they find.

- What will be the outcome of this war? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **In the last days, Jesus Christ will overcome the wickedness of the world.**)
- How can knowing this truth help you as a follower of Jesus Christ?

Summarize Revelation 18:1–3 by explaining that another angel announced the fall of wicked Babylon.

Invite a student to read Revelation 18:4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord instructed His people to do.

- What did the Lord instruct His people to do?
- What reasons did the Lord give for His people to come out of Babylon? (To avoid the sins of the world and the plagues or judgments that would come upon the wicked.)
- What truth can we identify from the Lord’s instruction to His people to separate themselves from the wickedness of the world? (Although students may use different words, ensure they identify a truth similar to the following: **Separating ourselves from the wickedness of the world can help us avoid sin and the judgments that will come upon the wicked in the last days.** You may want to suggest that students mark the words in verse 4 that teach this truth.)

Divide students into groups of two to four. Provide the following questions to each group as a handout, and instruct students to discuss the questions with their group:

Separating Ourselves from Spiritual Babylon

- How does the restored gospel of Jesus Christ help us separate ourselves from the wickedness of the world?
- What can we do to separate ourselves from the wickedness of the world while we continue to live among, love, and interact with those who do not share our standards?
- How has separating from unrighteous influences and practices helped you or others you know avoid some of the temptations and sins of the world?

After sufficient time, invite several students to share with the class what they discussed in their groups. Invite students to write on a piece of paper (1) the unrighteous influences or practices they need to separate themselves from and (2) how they will do so. Invite them to keep the piece of paper where they can refer to it often, and encourage them to act on what they have written.

Summarize Revelation 18:5–24 by explaining that John saw the fall of wicked Babylon and the sorrow of her supporters.

Revelation 19

John sees Jesus Christ coming in power to destroy those who fight against Him

Show students a picture of a bride and groom. Ask students what they think is the best gift they could give their future spouse on their wedding day. After students respond, read the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“On your wedding day the very best gift you can give your eternal companion is your very best self—clean and pure and worthy of such purity in return” (“Personal Purity,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 77).

- Why do you think being clean and pure is the best gift you could give your spouse on your wedding day?

Explain that Revelation 19 records a marriage analogy used to depict the Savior’s Second Coming. Summarize Revelation 19:1–6 by explaining that John saw that the righteous will praise God for His judgments against the wicked.

Focus on converting principles

When determining what to teach in a scripture block, focus on truths that will help students come closer to Heavenly Father and the Savior. President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency counseled: “As you prepare a lesson, look in it for converting principles. . . . A converting principle is one that leads to obedience to the will of God” (“Converting Principles” [evening with Elder L. Tom Perry, Feb. 2, 1996], 1, si.lds.org).

Invite a student to read Revelation 19:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whose marriage the angel announced to John.

- Whose marriage did the angel announce to John?
- What did John learn about the wife of the Lamb?

Explain that the “marriage of the Lamb” (Revelation 19:7) refers to the Savior’s Second Coming. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for who the Lamb’s bride is.

“In this dispensation the Bridegroom, who is the Lamb of God, shall come to claim his bride, which is the Church composed of the faithful saints who have watched for his return” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 469).

- In what ways is a marriage relationship a fitting symbol for our covenant relationship with Jesus Christ? (You might explain that marriage is a relationship that requires faithfulness, sacrifice, love, commitment, and trust.)

Invite a student to read Revelation 19:8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Saints can do to make themselves ready for the Savior’s Second Coming. You might explain that white linen can symbolize holiness, cleanliness, and righteousness.

- As symbolized by the clothing of the Lamb’s wife, what must we do to make ourselves ready for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we are clean and righteous, then we will be ready for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.**)

Explain that the word *granted* in verse 8 means given or bestowed. To be cleansed of sin and made righteous is a gift from God.

- What has God done to provide a way for us to be cleansed of sin and become righteous?
- Why do you think being clean and righteous is one of the best gifts we can give to the Savior when He comes again?

Invite students to read Revelation 19:10 silently, looking for how John reacted after hearing what the angel proclaimed to him. Ask students to report what they find.

- What did the angel declare to John that he (the angel) and other servants of God possess? (The testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy.)

Explain that the “spirit of prophecy” (verse 10) refers to the gift of revelation and inspiration from God, which allows someone to receive and speak His word (see Guide to the Scriptures, “Prophecy, Prophecy,” scriptures.lds.org).

- How might a person who possesses a testimony of Jesus prepare for the Second Coming?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Revelation 19:11–16, including the Joseph Smith Translation of Revelation 19:15 (in Revelation 19:15, footnote *a*). Ask the class to follow along, looking for words and phrases that describe the Savior at His Second Coming. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that the white horse mentioned in verse 11 is symbolic of conquest and victory. The Savior will come to conquer sin and wickedness.

- According to verse 13, how is the Savior’s clothing described? (Explain that the phrase “vesture dipped in blood” means His clothing will be the color of blood. This color symbolizes the destruction of the wicked at His coming [see D&C 133:46–51] and can also remind us of the suffering He experienced during His Atonement.)

Point out that Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 19:15 clarifies that John saw that when the Savior came as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, He would rule the nations with the word of God. Summarize Revelation 19:17–21 by explaining that John saw the destruction of those who fought against the Lamb of God (see Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 19:18 [in Revelation 19:18, footnote *a*]).

Conclude by asking students to ponder what they can do to make themselves ready for the coming of Jesus Christ. Encourage them to act on any promptings they receive.

LESSON 159

Revelation 20

Introduction

John saw in vision the events that will happen immediately before and during Jesus Christ's millennial reign. He also witnessed the final battle between Satan and the

forces of God at the end of the Millennium and saw the Final Judgment, during which God will judge everyone out of the books that have been written.

Suggestions for Teaching

Revelation 20:1–6

John sees in vision what will happen immediately before and during Jesus Christ's millennial reign

Ask students to think of a contest or competition (such as an artistic or athletic event) that they participated in even though they believed they would lose. Then ask them to think of a time they participated in a contest or competition they believed they would win.

- How might your expectations about the outcome of a contest or competition change the way that you perform in it?
- Why might people give up when they think they are going to lose? Has there been a time when you thought you were going to lose and actually won?

Explain to students that as they study Revelation 20 they will learn more about the battle between good and evil and the final outcome of the battle. Invite them to look for truths as they study Revelation 20 that can motivate them to stay faithful to the Savior during this battle.

Invite a student to read Revelation 20:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what will happen to Satan during the Millennium.

- What will happen to Satan during the Millennium? (Explain that the bottomless pit represents hell.)
- According to verse 3, what will Satan be unable to do because he is bound?

Invite a student to read Revelation 20:4–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom John saw being judged.

- According to verse 4, whom did John see being judged?
- What reward did these people receive because of their faithfulness?
- What will they have part in during the Millennium? (The First Resurrection.)
- What principle can we learn from Revelation 20:4–6 about the blessings we can receive if we are faithful to Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we are faithful to Jesus Christ, we will have part in the First Resurrection and reign with Christ during the Millennium.**)

Explain that the First Resurrection began with the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and included the righteous who died before Christ's Resurrection (see Mosiah 15:21–25; Alma 11:16–20). The majority of the righteous who died after the Resurrection of Christ will be resurrected in connection with the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (see James E. Talmage, *The Articles of Faith*, 12th ed. [1924], 385). The wicked and unrepentant will not be resurrected until the Second Resurrection, which will occur at the end of the Millennium (see D&C 76:85).

- How can knowing that you can have part in the First Resurrection and reign with Jesus Christ during the Millennium help you to be faithful now in the battle against evil?

Testify that those who remain faithful will be a part of the First Resurrection and reign with the Savior during the Millennium.

Revelation 20:7–11

John sees the final battle between Satan and the forces of God at the end of the Millennium

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *At the end of the Millennium . . .*

Invite a student to read Revelation 20:7–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for events John described that will occur at the end of the Millennium.

- What events did John describe? (Explain that the names *Gog* and *Magog* in verse 8 refer to the forces Satan will use at the end of the Millennium to battle one last time against the Lord’s people [see D&C 88:110–14].)
- After this battle, what will happen to the devil and his followers? (After students respond, complete the statement on the board so that it reads as follows: **At the end of the Millennium, the forces of God will defeat Satan and his followers.**)
- Why is it important that we understand the final outcome of the battle between God and Satan?

Revelation 20:12–15

John sees the Final Judgment

Explain that as part of Heavenly Father’s plan of salvation, every person who has lived on this earth will stand before God to be judged. Ask students to imagine what they think the Final Judgment will be like.

- What do you hope to think and feel when you stand before God to be judged?

Invite a student to read Revelation 20:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how we will be judged by God.

- What truth can we learn from verse 12 about how we will be judged? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **God will judge us out of the books that have been written according to our works.**)
- What books did John see? (The scriptures, Church records that record the saving ordinances and perhaps other actions, and the book of life [see 2 Nephi 29:10–11; D&C 128:6–7].)

Invite a student to read aloud the following explanation of the book of life:

“In one sense the book of life is the sum total of one’s thoughts and actions—the record of his life. However, the scriptures indicate that a heavenly record is kept of the faithful, whose names are recorded, as well as an account of their righteous deeds (D&C 88:2; 128:7)” (Bible Dictionary, “Book of life”).

Point out that the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith that in addition to our works, we will be judged according to the desires of our hearts (see D&C 137:9; see also Alma 41:3–5).


- According to Revelation 20:13, what will happen before we are judged? (If necessary, explain that “the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them” refers to the Resurrection of all people.)
- What might be the significance of us being resurrected before we stand before God to be judged?

Testify that each of us will stand before God to be judged and that our actions now will determine what that experience will be like for us. Read the following question aloud, and invite students to respond to it in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What can you do better in your life to prepare to be judged by the Lord?

Scripture Mastery—Revelation 20:12

Consider inviting students to use scripture-study tools such as scripture footnotes, the Guide to the Scriptures (available on scriptures.lds.org), and the Topical Guide to locate additional scriptures that teach about the Final Judgment. Students could write these additional scripture references in their scriptures near Revelation 20:12. Invite students to report to the class additional truths about the Final Judgment that they learn through this activity.

 **Revelation 20:12** is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

LESSON 160

Revelation 21–22

Introduction

John saw a new heaven and a new earth and the New Jerusalem come down from heaven. He also saw that God will dwell with and comfort His people and that the celestial city of God will be established on the earth.

John saw that those whose names are written in the book of life will enter the city and live with God in glory. John concluded his vision with a plea for the Lord to return to the earth.

Suggestions for Teaching

Revelation 21

John sees a new heaven and a new earth and the celestial city of God

Invite students to think of times in their lives when they experienced great sorrow or pain.

- What are some things in life that can cause us great sorrow or pain? (Write students' answers on the board.)

Invite students to look for a truth as they study Revelation 21 that can bring them comfort during difficult times.

Explain to students that Revelation 21–22 is a continuation of John's vision of events that will occur after the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Invite a student to read Revelation 21:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what John saw will happen.

- What did John see will happen?

Invite two students to read the following statements aloud:

Statement 1

When Jesus Christ comes again and the Millennium begins, the earth will be changed to the condition it was in prior to the Fall of Adam and Eve. Before the Fall, the earth existed in a terrestrial, or paradisiacal, state (a state of paradise). After the Millennium, the earth will change again to a celestial state prepared for the presence of God. These changes may have been what John saw taking place when he "saw a new heaven and a new earth" (Revelation 21:2).

Statement 2

The New Jerusalem that John saw coming down from heaven is the celestial city of God. This city will likely include the city of Enoch, which was translated and taken up to heaven. This "holy city" will descend and join the New Jerusalem, or Zion, that the Saints will have built on earth (see Moses 7:62–64).

- How do you think John may have felt as he saw these things while he was exiled for his belief in Jesus Christ?

Ask a student to read Revelation 21:3–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what God will do for His people.

- What will God do for His people? (Students may identify truths similar to the following: **God will dwell with and comfort His people, and they will no longer experience death, sorrow, or pain.** Write this truth on the board.)

Refer to the list on the board of things that can bring us sorrow or pain.

- How can knowing that God will comfort His people and remove their sorrows and pains help us when we experience challenges now?

You may want to share your testimony of God's ability to comfort us.

Invite a student to read Revelation 21:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord promises those who faithfully overcome.

- What does the Lord promise those who overcome?

- Based on what you have learned about challenges that exist and will exist prior to the Second Coming, what kinds of things will these people have overcome?

Invite the same student to read Revelation 21:8 aloud. You may want to explain that a sorcerer is someone who participates in activities in order to invite the influence of evil spirits and a whoremonger is a person who commits fornication or adultery.

- What will those described in verse 8 experience? (The second death.)

Explain that the second death is a spiritual death, or separation from God, that those who willfully rebel against light and truth will experience after the Final Judgment (see Helaman 14:16–19).

Summarize Revelation 21:9–21 by explaining that John described the celestial city of God. He saw that the city had a great wall that had 12 gates guarded by 12 angels.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Revelation 21:22–27. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what John learned about this celestial city.

- What did John learn about this city?
- According to verse 27, who will be permitted to enter? (Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.)

Revelation 22

John concludes his vision

Invite students as they study Revelation 22 to look for a truth that can help them know how to have their names written in the Lamb's book of life and be permitted to enter this celestial city.

Consider showing a picture of a throne or drawing one on the board.

Ask a student to come to the board and draw what else John saw in addition to a throne as another student reads Revelation 22:1–2 aloud.

- What else did John see in the celestial city of God?

Invite the student to return to his or her seat.

- According to verse 2, how did John describe the tree of life? (The tree produced an abundance of fruit at all times, and its leaves could heal the nations.)

Remind students that the Book of Mormon records that both Lehi and Nephi saw a vision of the tree of life. Nephi learned that both the tree and the fountain of living waters represent the love of God (see 1 Nephi 11:25). Write *The love of God* next to the tree and the river in the student's drawing.

- What is the greatest manifestation of the love of God? (The Atonement of Jesus Christ [see John 3:16; 1 John 4:9]. The fruit of the tree might also represent the blessings of the Atonement.)

Summarize Revelation 22:3–10 by explaining that in addition to seeing this celestial city, John also received a witness from the angel who spoke to him that the things revealed to him were true.

Invite a student to read Revelation 22:11–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord will do when He comes again.

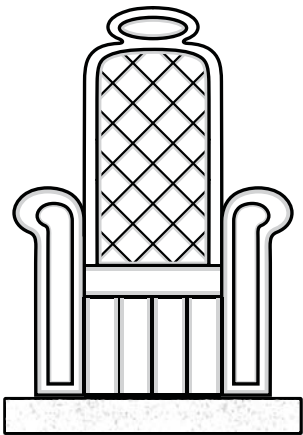
- What will the Lord do when He comes again?

Invite a student to read Revelation 22:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what we must do to be permitted to enter the celestial kingdom.

- What must we do to enter the celestial kingdom?

Explain that to “have right to the tree of life” means to be worthy to receive all of the blessings of the Atonement, including eternal life.

- What principle can we identify from verse 14? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we keep the Lord's commandments, then we can receive all the blessings of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and enter the celestial kingdom.** Explain that keeping His commandments includes receiving all the ordinances necessary for entering the celestial kingdom.)



Explain that although some blessings of the Atonement—such as the gift of resurrection—are given freely to all of God’s children, other blessings—such as eternal life—are only available to those who diligently seek to exercise faith in Jesus Christ, repent, and follow His commandments.

Write the following questions on the board:

What commandments and teachings have you learned about in your study of the New Testament and tried to apply in your life?

How have your efforts to apply these commandments helped you receive the Lord’s blessings and prepared you to return to the presence of your Father in Heaven?

Invite students to consider how they would answer these two questions by reviewing what they have written in their scripture study journals, what they have noted or marked in their scriptures, and the scripture mastery verses they have studied this year. Ask them to write their answers to these two questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

After sufficient time, invite several students to share with the class what they wrote. (Remind students not to share anything that is too private or personal.)

Summarize Revelation 22:15–19 by explaining that those who do not keep the Lord’s commandments will not be able to enter the celestial city. Jesus Christ testified that He gave this revelation to John, and John invited all to come to the waters of life to drink freely. John warned his readers not to alter the message of the book he had written.

Invite a student to read Revelation 22:20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for John’s plea.

- What was John’s plea?
- Based on what you have learned in the book of Revelation, why do you think John was eager for the Lord to come?

Conclude by testifying of the truths students discovered in Revelation 21–22.

Encourage daily scripture study

Few things you can do will have a more powerful and long-lasting influence for good in students’ lives than helping them learn to love the scriptures and study them daily. You can encourage daily scripture study by inviting students to read their scriptures consistently even when seminary classes are not being held. Invite students to set a goal to read the Book of Mormon, which they will be studying next year in seminary.

Commentary and Background Information

Revelation 20:4. “God shall wipe away all tears”

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that in the Lord’s own time, the sorrows of the faithful will be replaced with joy:

“The Lord compensates the faithful for every loss. That which is taken away from those who love the Lord will be added unto them in His own way. While it may not come at the time we desire, the faithful will know that every tear today will eventually be returned a hundred-fold with tears of rejoicing and gratitude” (“Come What May, and Love It,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 28).

Revelation 22:18. “If any man shall add unto these things”

Some people reject the Book of Mormon and other scriptures because they believe that the Lord has finished revealing scripture to His children. Many mistakenly use Revelation 22:18 to declare that the Lord will never provide any additional scripture beyond the Bible and that any person who claims to have received more scripture will suffer the penalties warned of by John. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles addressed this misinterpretation:

“There is now overwhelming consensus among virtually all biblical scholars that this verse applies only to the book of Revelation, *not* the whole Bible. Those scholars of our day acknowledge a number of New Testament ‘books’ that were almost certainly written *after* John’s revelation on the Isle of Patmos was received. Included in this category are at least the books of Jude, the three Epistles of John, and probably the entire Gospel of John itself. Perhaps there are even more than these.

“But there is a simpler answer as to why that passage in the final book of the current New Testament cannot apply to the whole Bible. That is because the whole Bible as we know it—one collection of texts bound in a single volume—did not exist when that verse was written. For centuries after John produced his writing, the individual books of the New Testament were in circulation singly or perhaps in combinations with a few other texts but almost *never* as a complete collection. Of the entire corpus of 5,366 known Greek New Testament manuscripts, only 35 contain the whole New Testament as we now know it, and 34 of those were compiled after A.D. 1000” (“My Words . . . Never Cease,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2008, 91–92).

Home-Study Lesson

Revelation 12–22 (Unit 32)

Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the events, doctrines, and principles students learned as they studied Revelation 12–22 (unit 32) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

Day 1 (Revelation 12–13)

As students studied John’s vision of the dragon and the woman with child, they learned that Satan, represented by the dragon, seeks to destroy the Church and kingdom of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. This war began in the pre-earth life. Students learned that we can overcome Satan’s influences through the Savior’s Atonement and by remaining true to our testimonies of the gospel.

Day 2 (Revelation 14–16)

From John’s vision of seeing an angel return to the earth in the latter days, students learned that one reason God restored the gospel of Jesus Christ was to prepare the earth’s inhabitants for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. They also learned the following: If we live righteously, then we will be blessed for our works and rest from our labors after we die. If we are watchful and spiritually ready, then we will be prepared for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Day 3 (Revelation 17–19)

Students learned that in the last days, Jesus Christ will overcome the wickedness of the world. They also learned that separating ourselves from the wickedness of the world can help us avoid sin and the judgments that will come upon the wicked in the last days. As students compared marriage to the Second Coming, they learned that if we are clean and righteous, then we will be ready for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Day 4 (Revelation 20–22)

From the concluding chapters of John’s vision, students learned the following truths: God will judge us out of the books that have been written according to our works. God will dwell with and comfort His people, and they will no longer experience death, sorrow, or pain. If we keep the Lord’s commandments, then we can receive all the blessings of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and enter the celestial kingdom.

Introduction

The Apostle John saw in vision the events that will occur immediately before and during Jesus Christ’s millennial reign. He also witnessed the final battle between Satan and the forces of God at the end of the Millennium and saw the Final Judgment, during which God will judge everyone out of the books that have been written.

Suggestions for Teaching

Revelation 20:1–6

John sees in vision what will happen immediately before and during Jesus Christ’s millennial reign

Ask students to think of a contest or competition (such as an artistic or athletic event) that they participated in even though they believed they would lose. Then ask them to think of a time they participated in a contest or competition they believed they would win.

- How might your expectations about the outcome of a contest or competition change the way that you perform in it?
- Why might people give up when they think they are going to lose? When is a time that you thought you were going to lose and actually won?

Explain to students that as they study Revelation 20 they will learn more about the battle between good and evil and the final outcome of the battle. Invite them to look for truths as they study Revelation 20 that can motivate them to stay faithful to the Savior during this battle.

Invite a student to read Revelation 20:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what will happen to Satan during the Millennium.

- What will happen to Satan during the Millennium?
- According to verse 3, what will Satan be unable to do because he is bound?

Invite a student to read Revelation 20:4–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom John saw being judged.

- According to verse 4, whom did John see being judged?
- What reward did these people receive because of their faithfulness?
- What will they have part in during the Millennium? (The First Resurrection.)
- What principle can we learn from Revelation 20:4–6 about the blessings we can receive if we are faithful to Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words but should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we are faithful to Jesus Christ, we will have part in the First Resurrection and reign with Christ during the Millennium.**)

Explain that the First Resurrection began with the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and included the righteous who died before Christ's Resurrection (see Mosiah 15:21–25; Alma 40:16–20). The majority of the righteous who died after the Resurrection of Christ will be resurrected in connection with the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (see Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 639; James E. Talmage, *The Articles of Faith*, 12th ed. [1924], 385). Those who will come forth in the First Resurrection include “all the prophets, and all those that have believed in their words” (Mosiah 15:22), those who have died in ignorance without having had “salvation declared unto them” (Mosiah 15:24; see also D&C 45:54), and little children who have died before becoming accountable (see Mosiah 15:25; Moroni 8:4–24). The wicked and unrepentant will not be resurrected until the Second Resurrection, which will occur at the end of the Millennium (see D&C 76:85).

- How can knowing that you can have part in the First Resurrection and reign with Jesus Christ during the Millennium help you to be faithful now in the battle against evil?

Testify that those who remain faithful will be a part of the First Resurrection and reign with the Savior during the Millennium.

Revelation 20:7–11

John sees the final battle between Satan and the forces of God at the end of the Millennium

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *At the end of the Millennium . . .*

Invite a student to read Revelation 20:7–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for events John described that will occur at the end of the Millennium.

Invite a few students to come to the board and write what they have found. Then ask the following questions:

- What events did John describe? (Explain that the names *Gog* and *Magog* in verse 8 refer to the forces Satan will use at the end of the Millennium to battle one last time against the Lord's people [see D&C 88:110–114].)
- After this battle, what will happen to the devil and his followers? (After students respond, complete the statement on the board so that it reads as follows: **At the end of the Millennium, the forces of God will defeat Satan and his followers.**)
- Why is it important that we understand the final outcome of the battle between God and Satan?

Revelation 20:12–15

John sees the Final Judgment

Explain that as part of Heavenly Father's plan of salvation, every person who has lived on this earth will stand before God to be judged. Ask students to imagine what they think the Final Judgment will be like.

- What do you hope to think and feel when you stand before God to be judged?

Invite a student to read Revelation 20:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how we will be judged by God.

- What truth can we learn from verse 12 about how we will be judged? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **God will judge us out of the books that have been written according to our works.**)
- What books did John see? (The scriptures, Church records that record the saving ordinances and perhaps other actions, and the book of life [see 2 Nephi 29:10–11; D&C 128:6–7; Bible Dictionary, “Book of life”].)
- What else have you learned about the Final Judgment? (*Note:* In Unit 32: Day 4, assignment 3, students found additional scriptures that taught about the Final Judgment.)

Point out that the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith that in addition to our works, we will be judged according to the desires of our hearts (see D&C 137:9; see also Alma 41:3–5).

- How does knowing that we will be judged according to the desires of our hearts influence what you want to do?

Testify of this doctrine and how it influences your choices.

Invite a student to read Revelation 22:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and remember the principle they learned from this verse in their study at home.

- What principle did you learn from this verse? (**If we keep the Lord's commandments, then we can receive all the blessings of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and enter the celestial kingdom.** Write this principle on the board.)
- Why is this a fitting truth to end our study of the New Testament with?

Consider inviting students to share some of the truths that have influenced them during their study of the New Testament this year. Invite any who desire to share their testimonies of these truths and of the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Encourage students to continue studying the scriptures daily. If they will be taking seminary next year or if they are preparing for a mission, invite them to begin reading the Book of Mormon today.



Appendix

Scripture Reading Charts

We help fulfill the Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion as we encourage students to (1) read and study the scriptures daily and (2) read the scriptures for the course of study. (Charts for tracking scripture reading of the entire New Testament can be found with the New Testament Scripture Mastery Cards on LDS.org and on store.lds.org [item no. 10480].)

You may want to give reading charts to students to help them keep track of their progress. If you would like to report students' daily reading of the scriptures, follow the directions in the Scripture Reading Reporting Instructions. Search for these instructions on si.lds.org using the phrase "scripture reading reporting instructions."

New Testament Scripture Reading Chart

Matthew	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	JS—Matt. 1				25	26	27	28	
Mark	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Luke	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24								
John	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21											
Acts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28				
Romans	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1 Corinthians	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
2 Corinthians	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
Galatians	1	2	3	4	5	6										
Ephesians	1	2	3	4	5	6										
Philippians	1	2	3	4												
Colossians	1	2	3	4												
1 Thessalonians	1	2	3	4	5											
2 Thessalonians	1	2	3													
1 Timothy	1	2	3	4	5	6										
2 Timothy	1	2	3	4												
Titus	1	2	3													
Philemon	1															
Hebrews	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
James	1	2	3	4	5											
1 Peter	1	2	3	4	5											
2 Peter	1	2	3													
1 John	1	2	3	4	5											
2 John	1															
3 John	1															
Jude	1															
Revelation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22										

Daily Scripture Reading Chart

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22
23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23
24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26
27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
29	(29)	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29
30		30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
31		31		31		31	31		31		31

Pacing Guide for Daily Teachers

Suggested Schedule for 36-Week School Year

Week	Lessons	Scripture Block
1	Day 1: Lesson 1 Introduction to the New Testament Day 2: Lesson 2 The Plan of Salvation Day 3: Lesson 3 The Role of the Learner Day 4: Lesson 4 Studying the Scriptures Day 5: Lesson 5 Context and Overview of the New Testament	
2	Day 1: Lesson 6 Matthew 1–2 Day 2: Lesson 7 Matthew 3 Day 3: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 4: Lesson 8 Matthew 4 Day 5: Lesson 9 Matthew 5:1–16	Matthew 1:1–5:16
3	Day 1: Lesson 10 Matthew 5:17–48 Day 2: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 3: Lesson 11 Matthew 6 Day 4: Lesson 12 Matthew 7 Day 5: Lesson 13 Matthew 8–10	Matthew 5:17–10:42
4	Day 1: Lesson 14 Matthew 11–12 Day 2: Lesson 15 Matthew 13:1–23 Day 3: Lesson 16 Matthew 13:24–58 Day 4: Lesson 17 Matthew 14 Day 5: Lesson 18 Matthew 15	Matthew 11–15
5	Day 1: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 2: Lesson 19 Matthew 16 Day 3: Lesson 20 Matthew 17 Day 4: Lesson 21 Matthew 18 Day 5: Lesson 22 Matthew 19–20	Matthew 16–20
6	Day 1: Lesson 23 Matthew 21:1–16 Day 2: Lesson 24 Matthew 21:17–22:14 Day 3: Lesson 25 Matthew 22:15–46 Day 4: Lesson 26 Matthew 23 Day 5: Lesson 27 Joseph Smith—Matthew; Matthew 24	Matthew 21–24
7	Day 1: Lesson 28 Matthew 25:1–13 Day 2: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 3: Lesson 29 Matthew 25:14–46 Day 4: Lesson 30 Matthew 26:1–30 Day 5: Lesson 31 Matthew 26:31–75	Matthew 25–26
8	Day 1: Lesson 32 Matthew 27:1–50 Day 2: Lesson 33 Matthew 27:51–28:20 Day 3: Lesson 34 Mark 1 Day 4: Lesson 35 Mark 2–3 Day 5: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days)	Matthew 27–Mark 3
9	Day 1: Lesson 36 Mark 4–5 Day 2: Lesson 37 Mark 6 Day 3: Lesson 38 Mark 7–8 Day 4: Lesson 39 Mark 9:1–29 Day 5: Lesson 40 Mark 9:30–50	Mark 4–9

Week	Lessons	Scripture Block
10	Day 1: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 2: Lesson 41 Mark 10 Day 3: Lesson 42 Mark 11–16 Day 4: Lesson 43 Luke 1 Day 5: Lesson 44 Luke 2	Mark 10–Luke 2
11	Day 1: Lesson 45 Luke 3–4 Day 2: Lesson 46 Luke 5 Day 3: Lesson 47 Luke 6:1–7:18 Day 4: Lesson 48 Luke 7:18–50 Day 5: Lesson 49 Luke 8–9	Mark 3–9
12	Day 1: Lesson 50 Luke 10:1–37 Day 2: Lesson 51 Luke 10:38–12:59 Day 3: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 4: Lesson 52 Luke 13–14 Day 5: Lesson 53 Luke 15	Luke 10–15
13	Day 1: Lesson 54 Luke 16 Day 2: Lesson 55 Luke 17 Day 3: Lesson 56 Luke 18–21 Day 4: Lesson 57 Luke 22 Day 5: Lesson 58 Luke 23	Luke 16–23
14	Day 1: Lesson 59 Luke 24 Day 2: Lesson 60 John 1 Day 3: Lesson 61 John 2 Day 4: Lesson 62 John 3 Day 5: Lesson 63 John 4	Luke 24–John 4
15	Day 1: Lesson 64 John 5 Day 2: Lesson 65 John 6 Day 3: Lesson 66 John 7 Day 4: Lesson 67 John 8:1–30 Day 5: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days)	John 5:1–8:30
16	Day 1: Lesson 68 John 8:31–59 Day 2: Lesson 69 John 9 Day 3: Lesson 70 John 10 Day 4: Lesson 71 John 11 Day 5: Lesson 72 John 12	John 8:31–12:50
17	Day 1: Lesson 73 John 13 Day 2: Lesson 74 John 14 Day 3: Lesson 75 John 15 Day 4: Lesson 76 John 16 Day 5: Lesson 77 John 17	John 13–17
18	Day 1: Lesson 78 John 18–19 Day 2: Lesson 79 John 20 Day 3: Lesson 80 John 21 Day 4: Flexible Day (recommended class period for <i>administering</i> the “New Testament Learning Assessment for Matthew–John”) Day 5: Flexible Day (recommended class period for <i>reviewing</i> the “New Testament Learning Assessment for Matthew–John”)	John 18–21

Week	Lessons	Scripture Block
19	Day 1: Lesson 81 Acts 1:1–8 Day 2: Lesson 82 Acts 1:9–26 Day 3: Lesson 83 Acts 2 Day 4: Lesson 84 Acts 3 Day 5: Lesson 85 Acts 4–5	Acts 1–5
20	Day 1: Lesson 86 Acts 6–7 Day 2: Lesson 87 Acts 8 Day 3: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 4: Lesson 88 Acts 9 Day 5: Lesson 89 Acts 10–11	Acts 6–11
21	Day 1: Lesson 90 Acts 12 Day 2: Lesson 91 Acts 13–14 Day 3: Lesson 92 Acts 15 Day 4: Lesson 93 Acts 16 Day 5: Lesson 94 Acts 17	Acts 12–17
22	Day 1: Lesson 95 Acts 18–19 Day 2: Lesson 96 Acts 20–22 Day 3: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 4: Lesson 97 Acts 23–26 Day 5: Lesson 98 Acts 27–28	Acts 18–28
23	Day 1: Lesson 99 Romans 1–3 Day 2: Lesson 100 Romans 4–7 Day 3: Lesson 101 Romans 8–11 Day 4: Lesson 102 Romans 12–16 Day 5: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days)	Romans 1–16
24	Day 1: Lesson 103 1 Corinthians 1–2 Day 2: Lesson 104 1 Corinthians 3–4 Day 3: Lesson 105 1 Corinthians 5–6 Day 4: Lesson 106 1 Corinthians 7–8 Day 5: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days)	1 Corinthians 1–8
25	Day 1: Lesson 107 1 Corinthians 9–10 Day 2: Lesson 108 1 Corinthians 11 Day 3: Lesson 109 1 Corinthians 12 Day 4: Lesson 110 1 Corinthians 13–14 Day 5: Lesson 111 1 Corinthians 15:1–29	1 Corinthians 9:1–15:29
26	Day 1: Lesson 112 1 Corinthians 15:30–16:24 Day 2: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 3: Lesson 113 2 Corinthians 1–3 Day 4: Lesson 114 2 Corinthians 4–5 Day 5: Lesson 115 2 Corinthians 6–7	1 Corinthians 15:30– 2 Corinthians 7:16
27	Day 1: Lesson 116 2 Corinthians 8–9 Day 2: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 3: Lesson 117 2 Corinthians 10–13 Day 4: Lesson 118 Galatians 1–4 Day 5: Lesson 119 Galatians 5–6	2 Corinthians 8– Galatians 6
28	Day 1: Lesson 120 Ephesians 1 Day 2: Lesson 121 Ephesians 2–3 Day 3: Lesson 122 Ephesians 4 Day 4: Lesson 123 Ephesians 5–6 Day 5: Lesson 124 Philippians 1–3	Ephesians 1– Philippians 3

Week	Lessons	Scripture Block
29	Day 1: Lesson 125 Philippians 4 Day 2: Lesson 126 Colossians Day 3: Lesson 127 1 Thessalonians 1–2 Day 4: Lesson 128 1 Thessalonians 3–5 Day 5: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days)	Philippians 4– 1 Thessalonians 5
30	Day 1: Lesson 129 2 Thessalonians Day 2: Lesson 130 1 Timothy Day 3: Lesson 131 2 Timothy 1–2 Day 4: Lesson 132 2 Timothy 3–4 Day 5: Lesson 133 Titus	2 Thessalonians 1– Titus 3
31	Day 1: Lesson 134 Philemon Day 2: Lesson 135 Hebrews 1–4 Day 3: Lesson 136 Hebrews 5–6 Day 4: Lesson 137 Hebrews 7–10 Day 5: Lesson 138 Hebrews 11	Philemon 1– Hebrews 11
32	Day 1: Lesson 139 Hebrews 12–13 Day 2: Lesson 140 James 1 Day 3: Lesson 141 James 2 Day 4: Lesson 142 James 3 Day 5: Lesson 143 James 4–5	Hebrews 12– James 5
33	Day 1: Lesson 144 1 Peter 1–2 Day 2: Lesson 145 1 Peter 3–5 Day 3: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 4: Lesson 146 2 Peter 1 Day 5: Lesson 147 2 Peter 2–3	1 Peter– 2 Peter
34	Day 1: Lesson 148 1 John Day 2: Lesson 149 2 John–3 John Day 3: Lesson 150 Jude Day 4: Lesson 151 Revelation 1 Day 5: Lesson 152 Revelation 2–3	1 John– Revelation 3
35	Day 1: Lesson 153 Revelation 4–5 Day 2: Lesson 154 Revelation 6–11, Part 1 Day 3: Lesson 155 Revelation 6–11, Part 2 Day 4: Lesson 156 Revelation 12–13 Day 5: Lesson 157 Revelation 14–16	Revelation 4–16
36	Day 1: Lesson 158 Revelation 17–19 Day 2: Lesson 159 Revelation 20 Day 3: Lesson 160 Revelation 21–22 Day 4: Flexible Day (recommended class period for <i>administering</i> the “New Testament Learning Assessment for Acts–Revelation”) Day 5: Flexible Day (recommended class period for <i>reviewing</i> the “New Testament Learning Assessment for Acts–Revelation”)	Revelation 17–22

Suggestions for Flexible Days

The pacing guide for daily teachers is based on a 36-week or 180-day school year. This manual provides 160 daily lessons, leaving 20 days for which no teaching material is provided. These 20 “flexible days” should be used wisely for worthwhile goals and activities, including the following:

1. Assessments. The Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion is to “help youth and young adults understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ, qualify for the blessings of the temple, and prepare themselves, their families, and others for eternal life with their Father in Heaven.” With this objective in mind, S&I has prepared learning assessments. These assessments are intended to help students understand, explain, believe, and live what they are learning in class.

In 2014, requirements for seminary graduation were adjusted so that students must pass the learning assessments for each course of study in order to graduate. You should administer learning assessments once during each half of the school year. Each assessment has two parts: (1) administering the assessment, which will take approximately 40 minutes, or one daily class period, and (2) correcting and discussing the assessment with students the following class period. This review is an essential part of helping students learn from the experience. If your class meets

for longer than 60 minutes, you should only take one class period to administer and review the assessment.

Assessments are to be used to help students. While announcing the addition of learning assessments to seminary graduation requirements, Elder Paul V. Johnson of the Seventy said, “A teacher’s attitude is going to make a big difference. If the teachers can see how this blesses the lives of students, they’ll view assessments as a way to help their students. . . . I think if there were a caution, it would be that we don’t want the teachers to view this as some sort of manipulation device or a club—maybe a club in two meanings of the word—a blunt instrument to beat somebody with, or some elite club for only certain students. We want them to view this as something that will really bless their lives” (“Elevate Learning Announcement” [Seminaries and Institutes of Religion global faculty meeting, June 20, 2014], si.lds.org).

Note: Other optional assessments may be found by searching the S&I website (si.lds.org) using the key word *assessment*.

2. Adapting the daily lessons. You may want to spend extra time on a lesson that takes longer to teach effectively. You may also want to use the supplemental teaching ideas that appear at the end of some lessons or take time to answer students’ questions about a particular scripture passage or gospel

topic. Flexible days allow you to take advantage of these opportunities while maintaining your pacing schedule and fulfilling your commission to teach the scriptures sequentially.

3. Mastering key scripture passages and Basic Doctrines. You may want to use the review activities for scripture mastery passages that are found throughout the manual and in the appendix. You could create additional scripture mastery review activities that meet the specific needs and interests of the students in your class. You could also use part of a flexible day for activities that help students review and deepen their understanding of the Basic Doctrines.

4. Reviewing previous material. It is helpful for students to periodically look back at what they have learned in previous lessons or from a particular book of scripture. You could provide students with an opportunity to explain a truth from a previous lesson and share how that truth has influenced their lives. You could also create and administer a quiz or learning activities that review previous material.

5. Allowing for schedule interruptions. School activities or assemblies, community events, weather, and other interruptions may require you to cancel or shorten class periodically. Flexible days can be used to allow for such interruptions.

Pacing Guide for Home-Study Teachers

This manual contains 32 home-study lessons that correspond to the 32 units in the *New Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students*. You will likely need to plan for an additional four classes in order to administer and review the required learning assessments, for a total of 36 classes. You may adapt the lessons and pacing as needed for the number of weeks you have to teach your class.

Unit	Home-Study Lesson	Unit	Home-Study Lesson	Unit	Home-Study Lesson
Unit 1	Day 1: The Plan of Salvation Day 2: The Role of the Learner Day 3: Studying the Scriptures Day 4: Introduction to and Context of the New Testament <i>Teacher Lesson: The Plan of Salvation—Introduction to and Context of the New Testament</i>	Unit 9	Day 1: Mark 10–16 Day 2: Luke 1 Day 3: Luke 2 Day 4: Luke 3–4 <i>Teacher Lesson: Mark 10–Luke 4</i>	Recommended class period for reviewing the “New Testament Learning Assessment for Matthew–John”	
Unit 2	Day 1: Matthew 1–2 Day 2: Matthew 3 Day 3: Matthew 4 Day 4: Matthew 5 <i>Teacher Lesson: Matthew 1–5</i>	Unit 10	Day 1: Luke 5 Day 2: Luke 6:1–7:18 Day 3: Luke 7:18–50 Day 4: Luke 8:1–10:37 <i>Teacher Lesson: Luke 5:1–10:37</i>	Unit 17	Day 1: Acts 1:1–8 Day 2: Acts 1:9–26 Day 3: Acts 2 Day 4: Acts 3–5 <i>Teacher Lesson: Acts 1–5</i>
Unit 3	Day 1: Matthew 6–7 Day 2: Matthew 8–10 Day 3: Matthew 11–12 Day 4: Matthew 13:1–23 <i>Teacher Lesson: Matthew 6:1–13:23</i>	Unit 11	Day 1: Luke 10:38–12:59 Day 2: Luke 13–15 Day 3: Luke 16 Day 4: Luke 17 <i>Teacher Lesson: Luke 10:38–17:37</i>	Unit 18	Day 1: Acts 6–7 Day 2: Acts 8 Day 3: Acts 9 Day 4: Acts 10–12 <i>Teacher Lesson: Acts 6–12</i>
Unit 4	Day 1: Matthew 13:24–58 Day 2: Matthew 14 Day 3: Matthew 15 Day 4: Matthew 16–17 <i>Teacher Lesson: Matthew 13:24–17:27</i>	Unit 12	Day 1: Luke 18–21 Day 2: Luke 22 Day 3: Luke 23–24 Day 4: John 1 <i>Teacher Lesson: Luke 18–John 1</i>	Unit 19	Day 1: Acts 13–14 Day 2: Acts 15 Day 3: Acts 16–17 Day 4: Acts 18–19 <i>Teacher Lesson: Acts 13–19</i>
Unit 5	Day 1: Matthew 18–20 Day 2: Matthew 21:1–16 Day 3: Matthew 21:17–22:14 Day 4: Matthew 22:15–46 <i>Teacher Lesson: Matthew 18–22</i>	Unit 13	Day 1: John 2 Day 2: John 3 Day 3: John 4 Day 4: John 5–6 <i>Teacher Lesson: John 2–6</i>	Unit 20	Day 1: Acts 20–22 Day 2: Acts 23–28 Day 3: Romans 1–3 Day 4: Romans 4–7 <i>Teacher Lesson: Acts 20–Romans 7</i>
Unit 6	Day 1: Matthew 23 Day 2: Joseph Smith—Matthew; Matthew 24 Day 3: Matthew 25 Day 4: Matthew 26:1–30 <i>Teacher Lesson: Matthew 23:1–26:30</i>	Unit 14	Day 1: John 7 Day 2: John 8 Day 3: John 9 Day 4: John 10 <i>Teacher Lesson: John 7–10</i>	Unit 21	Day 1: Romans 8–11 Day 2: Romans 12–16 Day 3: 1 Corinthians 1–2 Day 4: 1 Corinthians 3–6 <i>Teacher Lesson: Romans 8–1 Corinthians 6</i>
Unit 7	Day 1: Matthew 26:31–75 Day 2: Matthew 27–28 Day 3: Mark 1 Day 4: Mark 2–3 <i>Teacher Lesson: Matthew 26:31–Mark 3:35</i>	Unit 15	Day 1: John 11 Day 2: John 12 Day 3: John 13 Day 4: John 14–15 <i>Teacher Lesson: John 11–15</i>	Unit 22	Day 1: 1 Corinthians 7–8 Day 2: 1 Corinthians 9–10 Day 3: 1 Corinthians 11 Day 4: 1 Corinthians 12–14 <i>Teacher Lesson: 1 Corinthians 7–14</i>
Unit 8	Day 1: Mark 4–5 Day 2: Mark 6–8 Day 3: Mark 9:1–29 Day 4: Mark 9:30–50 <i>Teacher Lesson: Mark 4–9</i>	Unit 16	Day 1: John 16 Day 2: John 17 Day 3: John 18–19 Day 4: John 20–21 <i>Teacher Lesson: John 16–21</i>	Unit 23	Day 1: 1 Corinthians 15:1–29 Day 2: 1 Corinthians 15:30–16:24 Day 3: 2 Corinthians 1–3 Day 4: 2 Corinthians 4–7 <i>Teacher Lesson: 1 Corinthians 15–2 Corinthians 7</i>
		Recommended class period for administering the “New Testament Learning Assessment for Matthew–John”		Unit 24	Day 1: 2 Corinthians 8–9 Day 2: 2 Corinthians 10–13 Day 3: Galatians Day 4: Ephesians 1 <i>Teacher Lesson: 2 Corinthians 8–Ephesians 1</i>

Unit	Home-Study Lesson
Unit 25	Day 1: Ephesians 2–3 Day 2: Ephesians 4–6 Day 3: Philippians 1–3 Day 4: Philippians 4 <i>Teacher Lesson: Ephesians 2–Philippians 4</i>
Unit 26	Day 1: Colossians Day 2: 1 Thessalonians Day 3: 2 Thessalonians Day 4: 1 Timothy <i>Teacher Lesson: Colossians–1 Timothy</i>
Unit 27	Day 1: 2 Timothy Day 2: Titus Day 3: Philemon Day 4: Hebrews 1–4 <i>Teacher Lesson: 2 Timothy 1–Hebrews 4</i>
Unit 28	Day 1: Hebrews 5–6 Day 2: Hebrews 7–10 Day 3: Hebrews 11 Day 4: Hebrews 12–James 1 <i>Teacher Lesson: Hebrews 5–James 1</i>
Unit 29	Day 1: James 2–3 Day 2: James 4–5 Day 3: 1 Peter 1–2 Day 4: 1 Peter 3–5 <i>Teacher Lesson: James 2–1 Peter 5</i>
Unit 30	Day 1: 2 Peter Day 2: 1 John Day 3: 2 John–3 John Day 4: Jude <i>Teacher Lesson: 2 Peter–Jude</i>
Unit 31	Day 1: Revelation 1–3 Day 2: Revelation 4–5 Day 3: Revelation 6–7 Day 4: Revelation 8–11 <i>Teacher Lesson: Revelation 1–11</i>
Unit 32	Day 1: Revelation 12–13 Day 2: Revelation 14–16 Day 3: Revelation 17–19 Day 4: Revelation 20–22 <i>Teacher Lesson: Revelation 12–22</i>
Recommended class period for <i>administering</i> the “New Testament Learning Assessment for Acts–Revelation”	
Recommended class period for <i>reviewing</i> the “New Testament Learning Assessment for Acts–Revelation”	

Introduction to Scripture Mastery

Seminaries and Institutes of Religion has selected 25 scripture mastery passages for each of the four seminary courses. These passages provide an important scriptural foundation for understanding and sharing the gospel and for strengthening faith. The scripture mastery passages for the New Testament course are as follows:

Matthew 5:14–16
 Matthew 11:28–30
 Matthew 16:15–19
 Matthew 22:36–39
 Matthew 28:19–20
 Luke 24:36–39
 John 3:5
 John 14:6
 John 14:15
 John 17:3
 Acts 2:36–38
 Acts 3:19–21
 1 Corinthians 6:19–20
 1 Corinthians 15:20–22
 1 Corinthians 15:40–42
 Galatians 5:22–23
 Ephesians 4:11–14
 Philippians 4:13
 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3
 2 Timothy 3:15–17
 Hebrews 12:9
 James 1:5–6
 James 2:17–18
 1 Peter 4:6
 Revelation 20:12

Seminary students are encouraged to develop a “mastery” of these passages. You will be better able to help your students if you master these passages as well. Mastery of scripture passages includes the following:

- **Locating** the verses by knowing the associated scripture references
- **Understanding** the context and content of the scripture passages
- **Applying** the gospel principles and doctrines taught in the scripture passages
- **Memorizing** the passages

Consistency, Expectations, and Methods


As you plan to help students master scripture passages, you will be more successful if you refer to scripture mastery passages with consistency, maintain appropriate expectations, and use methods that appeal to different learning styles.

Consistency and repetition in teaching scripture mastery will help students place truths in their long-term memories for future use. It may be helpful to outline the course of study for the year and create a plan to consistently provide opportunities in the classroom for students to master scripture passages. Be wise in determining how often and how much time to spend helping students learn the scripture mastery passages. Ensure that scripture mastery activities do not overshadow daily sequential study of the scriptures. You could decide to spend a few minutes each day reviewing scripture mastery passages with your students. Or you might decide to provide a short mastery activity once or twice each week for 10 to 15 minutes. No matter how you plan to help students learn scripture mastery passages, be consistent and appropriate in your efforts.

Base your expectations for scripture mastery on each student’s abilities. Mastering scripture passages takes effort on the part of the learner. Communicate to students that their success with scripture mastery depends largely on their attitude and their willingness to work. Encourage them to set goals that push their abilities to higher levels. Be sensitive to students who may have difficulty memorizing, and be willing to adapt your expectations and teaching methods according to the needs of your students.

To appeal to a wider range of personality and learning styles, vary the methods you use to help students master scripture passages. As in all gospel teaching and learning, be wise in your choice of activities so that the Holy Ghost can support students’ scriptural and doctrinal mastery. You will find a number of appropriate scripture mastery teaching methods in the lessons in this manual. For additional scripture mastery teaching methods, see the section called “Scripture Mastery Activities” in this appendix.

Scripture Mastery in the Curriculum

Scripture mastery is written into the curriculum in a number of ways. A scripture mastery icon  identifies the treatment of scripture mastery passages in the lesson material. Scripture mastery passages are introduced and discussed in the context of the chapters in which they are located. Additional teaching ideas for scripture mastery passages appear at the end of the lessons in which they are located. These additional teaching ideas help balance the four elements of scripture mastery (locating, understanding, applying, and memorizing) with regard to each passage. For example, if the lesson helps students to understand and apply the scripture mastery passage, then the additional teaching idea will help them with locating or memorizing the passage.

The curriculum also regularly provides scripture mastery review activities that can be used as time allows and in harmony with the scripture mastery goals of your class. These reviews can be supplemented with the scripture mastery activities listed in this appendix. You might use extra time at the beginning or end of a shorter lesson to do one of these review activities.

Suggested Approaches for Scripture Mastery

To aid students with **locating** skills, you could plan to introduce the 25 mastery passages near the beginning of the course and then work on deepening mastery throughout the course. Or you could introduce a few passages each month and focus on mastering those passages during that month. Such introductions could include suggesting that students mark scripture mastery passages in their individual copies of the scriptures, helping students think of ways to remember key words and references, and explaining doctrines and principles contained in each passage. You could also involve students in introducing scripture mastery passages by assigning them to use passages in their devotionals or by inviting them to teach each other how to remember and locate the passages. Provide accountability for remembering scripture mastery passages with periodic

quizzes and locating activities (see the scripture mastery activities in this appendix for examples). A list of the 25 scripture mastery passages for this course of study can be found on the student bookmarks and scripture mastery cards.

To assist students in their **understanding** of scripture mastery passages, emphasize these passages as they come up in your daily lessons. You might also use the scripture mastery activities in this appendix to increase students' knowledge of and ability to explain the truths contained in the passages. Give students opportunities in devotionals or during class to explain how the truths in scripture mastery passages help them better understand the Basic Doctrines.

To support students in their **application** of truths found in scripture mastery passages, encourage them to follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost to understand how

the truths in the passages apply in their lives. To help students act on the truths they learn, you could occasionally post on a bulletin board in class a challenge related to a scripture mastery passage. Or you could give students opportunities in class to practice teaching doctrines and principles of the gospel using the scripture mastery passages (see the scripture mastery activities in this appendix for ideas). You might also invite students to apply the principles they learn in the lessons where scripture mastery passages appear. Provide students with opportunities—in devotionals or at other times—to report their experiences. This will help them to increase their witness of the truths they have learned from the scripture mastery passages.

To help students **memorize** the 25 scripture mastery passages, you could plan to commit to memory two or three

passages each month in class. You could also challenge students to memorize certain passages at home (they could do this with their families or recite passages to a parent or family member). You could make memorization a part of daily devotionals by asking the class to recite a passage or by providing time for students to memorize in pairs. Giving students opportunities to recite scripture mastery passages in pairs or small groups or in front of the class can help them be accountable for their efforts. The scripture mastery activities in this appendix include a variety of memorization methods. Take care to tailor memorization expectations to each student's abilities and circumstances. Students should not be made to feel embarrassed or overwhelmed if they are unable to memorize a scripture passage.

Scripture Mastery Activities

Introduction

This section provides some ideas you can use to assist students in mastering key scripture passages. As you assist and encourage students to develop these skills, you are helping them to become self-reliant in their study of the scriptures. Students can use these mastery skills throughout their lives to better locate, understand, apply, and memorize passages in the scriptures. Teaching ideas for each element of scripture mastery are listed below. Using a variety of these types of activities can help students to more successfully master scripture passages.

Activities That Help Students Locate Scripture Mastery Passages

Marking Passages

Marking scripture mastery passages can help students remember these passages and locate them more quickly. Consider encouraging students to mark these key passages in their scriptures in a way that sets them apart from other passages they mark.

Knowing the Books

Memorizing the names and order of the books in the New Testament can help students locate scripture mastery passages more quickly. The following are some examples of activities that can help students become familiar with the books in the New Testament:

- **Find the Table of Contents**—Help students become familiar with the table of contents in the Bible to help them locate the books in which scripture mastery references are found.
- **Sing a Song**—Substitute the words of a familiar hymn or primary song with the names of the books of the New Testament. Teach the song to your students (or use the song “The Books in the New Testament” [*Children’s Songbook*, 116–17]). Have students sing this song periodically throughout the year to help them remember the names and order of the books in the New Testament.
- **Use First Letters**—Write the first letters of the books on the board (M, M, L, J, and so on). Have students practice saying the names of the books that correspond with each letter. Repeat this activity until they can recite names of the books from memory.
- **Book Chase**—Call out one of the books in which a scripture mastery passage is located, and have students open their scriptures to any page in that book. Time how long it takes the entire class to find each of the books. This activity could be repeated to allow students to become more proficient at remembering and finding the books in the New Testament.

Remembering References and Content

As students learn the location and content of scripture mastery passages, the Holy Ghost can help them recall scripture references as needed (see John 14:26). Key words or phrases, such as “born of water and of the Spirit” (John 3:5) and “the fruit of the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22–23), can help students remember the content and doctrinal teachings of each passage. The following methods can help students associate scripture mastery references with their content or key words. (You may want to save activities that involve competition, racing, or being timed for later in the year, after students have demonstrated that they know where the scripture mastery passages are located. Such activities will then help reinforce what they have learned.)

- **References and Key Words**—Encourage students to memorize the references and key words of each scripture mastery passage listed on the scripture mastery cards. (Scripture mastery cards can be ordered online at store.lds.org. You could also have students create their own sets of scripture mastery cards.) Give students time to study the cards with a partner and then quiz each other. Encourage students to be creative in the ways they study together and quiz each other. As they become more proficient with the scripture mastery passages, you might invite them to use clues that involve

context or application of doctrines and principles from the passages. The person being quizzed could respond verbally or in writing.

- **Scripture Mastery Cards**—This activity could be used to introduce or review a set of scripture mastery passages. Select a number of the scripture mastery cards, and prepare to distribute them among your students. (Be sure to have multiple copies of each card so more than one student receives the same scripture mastery passage. You may want to have enough cards for each student to have two or three different passages.) Pass them out to the class. Allow students time to study the scripture mastery passage, the reference, the key words, the context statement, the doctrine or principle, and the application ideas on each card. Call out some clues from the cards (for example, words from the scripture mastery passage or the key words, context, doctrine or principle, or application). Students who have the associated card should stand and say the scripture mastery reference aloud.
- **Scripture Chase**—Use clues to help students practice quickly locating passages in their scriptures. For clues, you could use key words, context statements, doctrines and principles, and application ideas from the scripture mastery cards. You could also make up your own clues. Scripture chase activities in which students race to locate passages can help them actively engage in learning scripture mastery passages. When using scripture chase activities to help with scripture mastery, do it in a way that does not cause hurt feelings or offend the Spirit. Help students avoid treating their scriptures irreverently or being overly competitive. Also consider having students compete against a standard rather than each other. For example, students could race against the teacher, or you could have them race to see if a certain percentage of the class can find a particular passage in a specified amount of time.
- **Story Chase**—Give clues by making up scenarios that demonstrate the relevance of scripture mastery passages to everyday life. For example, as a clue

for Matthew 28:19–20 or Philippians 4:13, you could say, “Daniel is eligible to serve a mission and feels like it is his priesthood duty to do so, but he is worried that he does not have enough knowledge to teach the gospel well. He also worries that it will be difficult for him to talk to strangers. As he prays for assurance, he remembers that after Jesus Christ was resurrected, He charged His Apostles to ‘Go . . . and teach all nations’ and that the Lord said He would be with them always. Daniel also thought of Paul’s words, ‘I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.’” As students listen to the scenarios, have them locate relevant scripture mastery passages in their scriptures.

- **Quizzes and Tests**—Provide students with opportunities to test their memory of scripture mastery passages. Clues could include key words or scripture references, quotations from passages, or scenarios that illustrate the truths taught in passages. Quizzes and tests could be given verbally, on the board, or on paper. After students have taken a quiz or test, consider pairing high-scoring students with students who have lower scores. The higher-scoring student could act as a teacher to help the student with the lower score study and improve. As part of this effort, the pair could also set a goal to achieve a higher combined score on the next test. Consider creating a chart or bulletin board to display students’ goals and recognize their progress.

Activities That Help Students Understand Scripture Mastery Passages

Defining Words and Phrases

Defining words and phrases in scripture mastery passages (or helping students to define them) will help students understand the meaning of the entire passage. When such definitions are critical to understanding the doctrines and principles in a passage, you may want to suggest that students write these definitions in their scriptures. Review meanings of words and phrases as you review scripture mastery passages.

Identifying Context

Identifying the context of a scripture passage can help students better understand the meaning of the passage. Context includes information concerning who is speaking to whom and why, the setting of the passage (historical, cultural, and geographical), and the question or situation from which the content of the scripture passage arose. For example, the Lord’s teachings in John 3:5 are part of a conversation between Jesus Christ and a sympathetic Pharisee named Nicodemus who had come to the Savior by night to ask about His doctrine. The Lord told Nicodemus that unless we are “born again,” we “cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). Confused, Nicodemus asked how an old man could be born again. John 3:5 contains the Lord’s answer to Nicodemus’s question. Knowing this information can help students understand more clearly what questions the Lord was addressing when He declared that “except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” As you teach lessons that include scripture mastery passages, emphasize the context surrounding those passages. Additional activities like the following can also help students understand these key passages:

- **Identify Context**—Write the following headings across the top of the board: *Speaker, Audience, Purpose, and Other Helpful Insights*. Divide students into groups, and assign each group a scripture mastery passage. Invite them to discover the context of their assigned passages by identifying information that corresponds to the headings on the board. Have them write their findings on the board. Then ask each group to explain the context of their assigned passages and how this information affects their understanding of the truths in each passage. To add another dimension to this activity, you might want to challenge the class to guess the scripture mastery references based on the descriptions on the board before each group explains what they have written.

Analyzing

Analyzing involves identifying doctrines and principles found in scripture passages. It also includes helping students understand how these truths are relevant to them. This can lead to deeper application

of doctrines and principles in their lives. The following activity can help students analyze scripture mastery passages:

- **Write Clues**—As students become more familiar with scripture mastery passages, invite them to create questions, scenarios, or other clues that illustrate the doctrines and principles taught in the passages. These could be used to quiz the class.

Explaining

Having students explain scripture passages deepens their understanding and improves their ability to teach doctrines and principles from the scriptures. The following are two methods that can help students learn to explain scripture mastery passages:

- **Key Words and Phrases**—Invite students to read the same scripture mastery passage on their own and identify a word or phrase they think is especially important to the meaning of the passage. Then invite a student to read the passage to the class and give emphasis to the word or phrase he or she has chosen. Ask the student to explain why that word or phrase is important to understanding the passage. Invite a few other students to do the same. Students may choose different words or phrases for the same passage. As class members hear these different points of view, they can gain deeper understanding of the passage.
- **Prepare a Devotional**—Give students opportunities to use scripture mastery passages as they prepare and present devotionals at the beginning of class. Help them prepare to summarize context, explain doctrines and principles, share meaningful experiences or examples, and testify of the doctrines and principles in the passages. You might also suggest that students consider using an object lesson to explain the ideas in the passages.

Feeling the Importance of Doctrines and Principles

Help students understand and gain a spiritual witness of the doctrines and principles taught in the scripture mastery passages. Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained, “A true teacher, once he [or she] has taught the facts [of the gospel] . . . , takes [the students] a step

further to gain the spiritual witness and the understanding in their hearts that brings about the action and the doing” (“Teaching by Faith” [address to CES religious educators, Feb. 1, 2002], 5, si.lds.org; see also *Teaching Seminary: Preservice Readings* [2004], 92). When students feel the truth, importance, and urgency of a doctrine or principle through the influence of the Holy Spirit, their desire to apply that truth in their lives grows. Teachers can help students invite and nurture these feelings of the Holy Spirit by giving them opportunities to share experiences they have had with living the gospel principles found in scripture mastery passages. This will help students better understand the truths taught in the scripture mastery passages and ensure that these truths are written in students’ hearts. The following activity can help students feel the importance of the doctrines and principles taught by scripture mastery passages:

- **Listening for Scripture Passages**—Invite students to listen for scripture mastery passages in talks and lessons at church, in general conference addresses, and in discussions with family and friends. Periodically invite students to report on which passages they have heard, how the passages were used, what truths were taught, and what experiences they or others have had with the truths that were taught. Look for opportunities to testify (and to invite students to testify) of the truths taught by scripture mastery passages.

Activities That Help Students Apply Scripture Mastery Passages

Teaching

The scripture mastery passages and the Basic Doctrines were developed together and are intentionally aligned for the benefit of students. (Scripture mastery passages are shown throughout the Basic Doctrines document.) When students learn and express the doctrines and principles contained in scripture mastery passages, they will also be learning and expressing the Basic Doctrines. And as students learn to express the Basic Doctrines in their own words, they may rely on memorized scripture mastery passages to help them. Giving students opportunities to teach doctrines and

principles of the gospel using scripture mastery passages can increase their confidence in themselves and in their knowledge of the scriptures. When students teach and testify of the doctrines and principles found in scripture mastery passages, they can also strengthen their testimonies. Encourage students to use scripture mastery passages to teach and explain the gospel in class and in conversations with friends, family, and others.

- **Present a Message**—Assign students to prepare three- to five-minute talks or lessons based on scripture mastery passages. Have them prepare in class or at home. In addition to the scripture mastery passages, they could use other resources to help them prepare, such as scripture mastery cards, the Topical Guide, the Guide to the Scriptures, or *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference*. Each talk or lesson should include an introduction, the scripture mastery passage, a story about or an example of the principle being taught, and the student’s testimony. Students could volunteer to present their messages in class, in a family home evening, or to their quorums or classes as part of their Duty to God or Personal Progress efforts. If students present their talks or lessons outside of class, consider inviting them to report on their experiences.
- **Missionary Role Play**—Prepare a number of cards with questions an investigator might ask that can be answered with the help of scripture mastery passages (for example, “What do members of your church believe about Jesus Christ?”). Invite pairs of students to come to the front of the class to answer a question chosen from the cards. To help students understand how missionaries might answer similar questions, you could suggest a few effective teaching methods, such as (1) stating the context of the scripture passage, (2) explaining a doctrine or principle, (3) asking questions to find out if those they teach understand or believe what has been taught, (4) sharing experiences and testimony, and (5) inviting those they teach to act on the truth that was taught. Ask the class to give feedback on what they liked about how each companionship answered their question.
- **Testify**—Invite students to look through the scripture mastery passages and

choose one that contains a doctrine or principle of which they can testify. Invite them to testify of the truth they have selected and share experiences that led them to be able to testify of it. As students share their testimonies, the Holy Ghost will confirm the truth of the doctrines or principles of which they are testifying. Their testimonies may also inspire others to act in faith.

Note: Opportunities for students to share their testimonies should be voluntary. Students should never be forced to share their testimonies or be made to feel that they must profess knowledge they don’t feel they have. In addition, some students are reluctant to share their testimonies because they mistakenly think that they need to open with “I want to bear my testimony . . .” or that their expression of testimony must be accompanied by a display of emotion. Help students understand that when they testify, they can simply share doctrines or principles they know to be true. Sharing testimony can be as simple as saying “I believe this to be true” or “I know this is true” or “I believe this with all my heart.”

Living

Suggesting ways that students may apply the doctrines and principles contained in scripture passages (or inviting students to think of ways) gives them the opportunity to learn by exercising faith.

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said:

“A learner exercising agency by acting in accordance with correct principles opens his or her heart to the Holy Ghost and invites His teaching, testifying power, and confirming witness. Learning by faith requires spiritual, mental, and physical exertion and not just passive reception. It is in the sincerity and consistency of our faith-inspired action that we indicate to our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, our willingness to learn and receive instruction from the Holy Ghost” (“Seek Learning by Faith,” *Ensign*, Sept. 2007, 64).

Give students opportunities to share and testify of the experiences they have had with applying doctrines and principles. The following is one way to encourage students to apply scripture mastery passages in their lives:

- **Set Goals**—Based on the application section of the scripture mastery cards, invite students to set specific goals to better live the principles found in scripture mastery passages. Have them write their goals on a piece of paper to carry with them as a reminder. When appropriate, invite students to report on their successes.

Activities That Help Students Memorize Scripture Mastery Passages

Memorizing

Memorization of scripture passages can deepen understanding and enhance a student's ability to teach the gospel. When students memorize scriptures, the Holy Ghost can bring phrases and ideas back to their memory in times of need (see John 14:26; D&C 11:21). Remember to adapt memorization activities to the abilities of your students.

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles encouraged the memorization of scriptures when he said:

“Great power can come from memorizing scriptures. To memorize a scripture is to

forge a new friendship. It is like discovering a new individual who can help in time of need, give inspiration and comfort, and be a source of motivation for needed change” (“The Power of Scripture,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 6).

Each of the following activities could be repeated several days in a row at the beginning or end of class to help students achieve long-term memorization:

- **One-Word Race**—Challenge the class to say a scripture mastery passage one word per student at a time. For example, when helping students memorize Matthew 5:14–16, the first student would say the word *ye*, the second student would say *are*, the third student would say *the*, and so forth until the entire passage is completed. Time the class, and give them multiple tries to achieve a target time. As you repeat this activity, consider shifting the order of students so they have to say different words.
- **First Letters**—Write on the board the first letters of each word in a scripture mastery passage. Point to the letters as the class repeats the passage with you, using their scriptures as needed. Repeat this activity until students feel confident

in their ability to recite a passage with only the help of the first letters. You may want to erase a few of the letters each time students recite the passage. This will gradually increase the challenge until students can repeat the passage without using the first letters.

- **Wordstrip Puzzles**—Write, or have students write, the words of a scripture mastery passage on a lined piece of paper. Cut the paper in strips, leaving lines of the scripture intact. Cut some of the strips shorter to include just a few words of the passage on each. Mix up the paper strips and give them to pairs or small groups of students. Challenge students to arrange the paper strips in order, using their scriptures as a guide. Have them practice until they no longer need to use their scriptures. After they have finished, ask them to recite the passage aloud. You could also time students to see which group can put the strips in the correct order the fastest. Or you could time the entire class to see how long it takes for all of the groups to complete the puzzle (as the first groups finish, let them assist the slower groups).

100 Scripture Mastery Passages

Old Testament	New Testament	Book of Mormon	Doctrine and Covenants
Moses 1:39	Matthew 5:14–16	1 Nephi 3:7	JS—H 1:15–20
Moses 7:18	Matthew 11:28–30	2 Nephi 2:25	D&C 1:37–38
Abraham 3:22–23	Matthew 16:15–19	2 Nephi 2:27	D&C 6:36
Genesis 1:26–27	Matthew 22:36–39	2 Nephi 9:28–29	D&C 8:2–3
Genesis 2:24	Matthew 28:19–20	2 Nephi 25:23, 26	D&C 10:5
Genesis 39:9	Luke 24:36–39	2 Nephi 28:7–9	D&C 13:1
Exodus 19:5–6	John 3:5	2 Nephi 31:19–20	D&C 18:10–11
Exodus 20:3–17	John 14:6	2 Nephi 32:3	D&C 18:15–16
Joshua 24:15	John 14:15	2 Nephi 32:8–9	D&C 19:16–19
1 Samuel 16:7	John 17:3	Mosiah 2:17	D&C 19:23
Psalms 24:3–4	Acts 2:36–38	Mosiah 3:19	D&C 25:13
Psalms 119:105	Acts 3:19–21	Mosiah 4:30	D&C 46:33
Psalms 127:3	1 Corinthians 6:19–20	Alma 7:11–13	D&C 58:27
Proverbs 3:5–6	1 Corinthians 15:20–22	Alma 32:21	D&C 58:42–43
Isaiah 1:18	1 Corinthians 15:40–42	Alma 37:35	D&C 64:9–11
Isaiah 5:20	Galatians 5:22–23	Alma 39:9	D&C 76:22–24
Isaiah 29:13–14	Ephesians 4:11–14	Alma 41:10	D&C 76:40–41
Isaiah 53:3–5	Philippians 4:13	Helaman 5:12	D&C 78:19
Isaiah 58:6–7	2 Thessalonians 2:1–3	3 Nephi 12:48	D&C 82:10
Isaiah 58:13–14	2 Timothy 3:15–17	3 Nephi 18:15, 20–21	D&C 88:124
Jeremiah 1:4–5	Hebrews 12:9	Ether 12:6	D&C 89:18–21
Ezekiel 37:15–17	James 1:5–6	Ether 12:27	D&C 107:8
Amos 3:7	James 2:17–18	Moroni 7:41	D&C 121:36, 41–42
Malachi 3:8–10	1 Peter 4:6	Moroni 7:45, 47–48	D&C 130:22–23
Malachi 4:5–6	Revelation 20:12	Moroni 10:4–5	D&C 131:1–4

Introduction to Basic Doctrines

The following Basic Doctrines should be highlighted in seminary:

- Godhead
- Plan of Salvation
- Atonement of Jesus Christ
- Dispensation, Apostasy, and Restoration
- Prophets and Revelation
- Priesthood and Priesthood Keys
- Ordinances and Covenants
- Marriage and Family
- Commandments

Teachers are to help students identify, understand, believe, explain, and apply these basic doctrines of the gospel as they study the scriptures. Doing so will help students strengthen their testimonies and increase their appreciation for the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. Learning the Basic Doctrines will also help students be better

prepared to live the gospel and teach these important truths to others. The lessons in this manual were created with the Basic Doctrines in mind. It is important to recognize that other significant doctrines of the gospel will also be emphasized in this manual, even though they are not listed among the Basic Doctrines. The teaching of basic doctrines of the gospel occurs as you study the scriptures daily with students and as you help them master key scripture passages. Growth in understanding, believing, and living the Basic Doctrines is a process that occurs over the four years of seminary and continues for the rest of a student's life. You may want to provide students with a list of the Basic Doctrines.

Basic Doctrines Assessment

A Basic Doctrines Assessment has been designed to provide teachers with information they can use to better bless the lives of

their students. We recommend that teachers administer this assessment during the first week of class and again toward the end of the year. To find the Basic Doctrines Assessment and other assessments on the S&I website (si.lds.org), search using the key word *assessment*.

Teachers who send their students' assessment results to the S&I Office of Research will receive a report that will help them adapt their teaching to better meet the needs of their students. For example, if results indicate that students did not understand the doctrine of repentance, several lessons in the yearly curriculum would be identified that may help students better understand this doctrine. As teachers prayerfully use this information in their sequential scripture teaching, our youth and young adults will be better prepared to accomplish the Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion.

Basic Doctrines

The Basic Doctrines should be highlighted in both seminary and institute classes. Teachers are to help students identify, understand, believe, explain, and apply these doctrines of the gospel. Doing so will help students strengthen their testimonies and increase their appreciation for the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. A study of these doctrines will also help students be better prepared to teach these important truths to others.

Most of the 100 scripture mastery passages selected by Seminaries and Institutes of Religion were chosen to support students' understanding of the Basic Doctrines. The majority of the scripture references listed in this document refer to scripture mastery passages. They have been included to show how they relate to the Basic Doctrines.

1. Godhead

There are three separate personages in the Godhead: God, the Eternal Father; His Son, Jesus Christ; and the Holy Ghost (see Joseph Smith—History 1:15–20). The Father and the Son have tangible bodies of flesh and bone, and the Holy Ghost is a personage of spirit (see D&C 130:22–23). They are one in purpose and doctrine. They are perfectly united in bringing to pass Heavenly Father's divine plan of salvation.

God the Father

God the Father is the Supreme Ruler of the universe. He is the Father of our spirits (see Hebrews 12:9). He is perfect, has all power, and knows all things. He is also a God of perfect mercy, kindness, and charity.

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the Firstborn of the Father in the spirit and is the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh. He is Jehovah of the Old Testament and the Messiah of the New Testament.

Jesus Christ lived a sinless life and made a perfect Atonement for the sins of all mankind (see Alma 7:11–13). His life is the perfect example of how all mankind should live (see John 14:6; 3 Nephi 12:48). He was the first person on this earth to be resurrected (see 1 Corinthians 15:20–22). He will come again in power

and glory and will reign on the earth during the Millennium.

All prayers, blessings, and priesthood ordinances should be done in the name of Jesus Christ (see 3 Nephi 18:15, 20–21).

Related references: Helaman 5:12; D&C 19:23; D&C 76:22–24

The Holy Ghost

The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead. He is a personage of spirit without a body of flesh and bones. He is often referred to as the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Lord, and the Comforter.

The Holy Ghost bears witness of the Father and the Son, reveals the truth of all things, and sanctifies those who repent and are baptized (see Moroni 10:4–5).

Related references: Galatians 5:22–23; D&C 8:2–3

2. Plan of Salvation

In the premortal existence, Heavenly Father introduced a plan to enable us to become like Him and obtain immortality and eternal life (see Moses 1:39). The scriptures refer to this plan as the plan of salvation, the great plan of happiness, the plan of redemption, and the plan of mercy.

The plan of salvation includes the Creation, the Fall, the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and all of the laws, ordinances, and doctrines of the gospel. Moral agency—the ability to choose and act for ourselves—is also essential in Heavenly Father's plan (see 2 Nephi 2:27). Because of this plan, we can be perfected through the Atonement, receive a fulness of joy, and live forever in the presence of God (see 3 Nephi 12:48). Our family relationships can last throughout the eternities.

Related references: John 17:3; D&C 58:27

Premortal Life

Before we were born on the earth, we lived in the presence of our Heavenly Father as His spirit children (see Abraham 3:22–23). In this premortal existence we participated in a council with Heavenly Father's other spirit children. During that

council, Heavenly Father presented His plan and the premortal Jesus Christ covenanted to be the Savior.

We used our agency to follow Heavenly Father's plan. We prepared to come to earth, where we could continue to progress.

Those who followed Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ were permitted to come to the earth to experience mortality and progress toward eternal life. Lucifer, another spirit son of God, rebelled against the plan. He became Satan, and he and his followers were cast out of heaven and denied the privileges of receiving a physical body and experiencing mortality.

Related reference: Jeremiah 1:4–5

The Creation

Jesus Christ created the heavens and the earth under the direction of the Father. The earth was not created from nothing; it was organized from existing matter. Jesus Christ has created worlds without number (see D&C 76:22–24).

The Creation of the earth was essential to God's plan. It provided a place where we could gain a physical body, be tested and tried, and develop divine attributes.

We are to use the earth's resources with wisdom, judgment, and thanksgiving (see D&C 78:19).

Adam was the first man created on the earth. God created Adam and Eve in His own image. All human beings—male and female—are created in the image of God (see Genesis 1:26–27).

The Fall

In the Garden of Eden, God commanded Adam and Eve not to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; the consequence of doing so would be spiritual and physical death. Spiritual death is separation from God. Physical death is the separation of the spirit from the mortal body. Because Adam and Eve transgressed God's command, they were cast out from His presence and became mortal. Adam and Eve's transgression and the resultant changes they experienced, including spiritual and physical death, are called the Fall.

As a result of the Fall, Adam and Eve and their posterity could experience joy and

sorrow, know good and evil, and have children (see 2 Nephi 2:25). As descendants of Adam and Eve, we inherit a fallen condition during mortality. We are separated from the presence of the Lord and subject to physical death. We are also tested by the difficulties of life and the temptations of the adversary. (See Mosiah 3:19.)

The Fall is an integral part of Heavenly Father's plan of salvation. It has a two-fold direction—downward yet forward. In addition to introducing physical and spiritual death, it gave us the opportunity to be born on the earth and to learn and progress.

Mortal Life

Mortal life is a time of learning when we can prepare for eternal life and prove that we will use our agency to do all that the Lord has commanded. During this mortal life, we are to love and serve others (see Mosiah 2:17; Moroni 7:45, 47–48).

In mortality, our spirits are united with our physical bodies, giving us opportunities to grow and develop in ways that were not possible in the premortal life. Our bodies are an important part of the plan of salvation and should be respected as a gift from our Heavenly Father (see 1 Corinthians 6:19–20).

Related references: Joshua 24:15; Matthew 22:36–39; 2 Nephi 28:7–9; Alma 41:10; D&C 58:27

Life after Death

When we die, our spirits enter the spirit world and await the Resurrection. The spirits of the righteous are received into a state of happiness, which is called paradise. Many of the faithful will preach the gospel to those in spirit prison.

Spirit prison is a temporary place in the postmortal world for those who die without knowledge of the truth and for those who are disobedient in mortality. There, spirits are taught the gospel and have the opportunity to repent and accept ordinances of salvation that are performed for them in temples (see 1 Peter 4:6). Those who accept the gospel will dwell in paradise until the Resurrection.

Resurrection is the reuniting of our spirit bodies with our perfected physical bodies of flesh and bones (see Luke 24:36–39). After resurrection, the spirit and body will never again be separated and we

will be immortal. Every person born on earth will be resurrected because Jesus Christ overcame death (see 1 Corinthians 15:20–22). The righteous will be resurrected before the wicked and will come forth in the First Resurrection.

The Final Judgment will occur after the Resurrection. Jesus Christ will judge each person to determine the eternal glory that he or she will receive. This judgment will be based on each person's obedience to God's commands (see Revelation 20:12; Mosiah 4:30).

There are three kingdoms of glory (see 1 Corinthians 15:40–42). The highest of these is the celestial kingdom. Those who are valiant in the testimony of Jesus and obedient to the principles of the gospel will dwell in the celestial kingdom in the presence of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ (see D&C 131:1–4).

The second of the three kingdoms of glory is the terrestrial kingdom. Those who dwell in this kingdom will be the honorable men and women of the earth who were not valiant in the testimony of Jesus.

The telestial kingdom is the lowest of the three kingdoms of glory. Those who inherit this kingdom will be those who chose wickedness rather than righteousness during their mortal lives. These individuals will receive their glory after being redeemed from spirit prison.

Related reference: John 17:3

3. Atonement of Jesus Christ

To atone is to suffer the penalty for sin, thereby removing the effects of sin from the repentant sinner and allowing him or her to be reconciled to God. Jesus Christ was the only one capable of making a perfect atonement for all mankind. His Atonement included His suffering for the sins of mankind in the Garden of Gethsemane, the shedding of His blood, His suffering and death on the cross, and His Resurrection from the tomb (see Luke 24:36–39; D&C 19:16–19). The Savior was able to carry out the Atonement because He kept Himself free from sin and had power over death. From His mortal mother, He inherited the ability to die. From His immortal Father, He inherited the power to take up His life again.

Through grace, made available by the Savior's atoning sacrifice, all people will be resurrected and receive immortality. The Atonement of Jesus Christ also makes it possible for us to receive eternal life (see Moroni 7:41). To receive this gift, we must live the gospel of Jesus Christ, which includes having faith in Him, repenting of our sins, being baptized, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring faithfully to the end (see John 3:5).

As part of His Atonement, Jesus Christ not only suffered for our sins but also took upon Himself the pains, sicknesses, and infirmities of all people (see Alma 7:11–13). He understands our suffering because He has experienced it. His grace, or enabling power, strengthens us to bear burdens and accomplish tasks that we could not do on our own (see Matthew 11:28–30; Philippians 4:13; Ether 12:27).

Related references: John 3:5; Acts 3:19–21

Faith in Jesus Christ

Faith is a "hope for things which are not seen, which are true" (Alma 32:21; see also Ether 12:6). It is a gift from God.

Faith must be centered in Jesus Christ in order for it to lead a person to salvation. Having faith in Jesus Christ means relying completely on Him and trusting in His infinite Atonement, power, and love. It includes believing His teachings and believing that even though we do not understand all things, He does (see Proverbs 3:5–6; D&C 6:36).

More than passive belief, faith is expressed by the way we live (see James 2:17–18). Faith can increase as we pray, study the scriptures, and obey God's commandments.

Latter-day Saints also have faith in God the Father, the Holy Ghost, and priesthood power as well as other important aspects of the restored gospel. Faith helps us receive spiritual and physical healing and strength to press forward, face our hardships, and overcome temptation (see 2 Nephi 31:19–20). The Lord will work mighty miracles in our lives according to our faith.

Through faith in Jesus Christ, a person may obtain a remission of sins and eventually be able to dwell in God's presence.

Related reference: Matthew 11:28–30

Repentance

Repentance is a change of mind and heart that gives us a fresh view about God, about ourselves, and about the world. It includes turning away from sin and turning to God for forgiveness. It is motivated by love for God and the sincere desire to obey His commandments.

Our sins make us unclean—unworthy to return to and dwell in the presence of our Heavenly Father. Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, our Father in Heaven has provided the only way for us to be forgiven of our sins (see Isaiah 1:18).

Repentance also includes feeling sorrow for committing sin, confessing to Heavenly Father and to others if necessary, forsaking sin, seeking to restore as far as possible all that has been damaged by one's sins, and living a life of obedience to God's commandments (see D&C 58:42–43).

Related references: Isaiah 53:3–5; John 14:6; 2 Nephi 25:23, 26; D&C 18:10–11; D&C 19:23; D&C 76:40–41

4. Dispensation, Apostasy, and Restoration

Dispensation

A dispensation is a period of time when the Lord reveals His doctrines, ordinances, and priesthood. It is a period in which the Lord has at least one authorized servant on the earth who bears the holy priesthood and who has a divine commission to dispense the gospel and to administer the ordinances thereof. Today we are living in the last dispensation—the dispensation of the fulness of times, which began with the revelation of the gospel to Joseph Smith.

Previous dispensations are identified with Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus Christ. In addition, there have been other dispensations, including those among the Nephites and the Jaredites. The plan of salvation and the gospel of Jesus Christ have been revealed and taught in every dispensation.

Apostasy

When people turn away from the principles of the gospel and do not have priesthood keys, they are in a state of apostasy.

Periods of general apostasy have occurred throughout the history of the world. One example is the Great Apostasy, which

occurred after the Savior established His Church (see 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3). Following the deaths of the Savior's Apostles, the principles of the gospel were corrupted and unauthorized changes were made in Church organization and priesthood ordinances. Because of this widespread wickedness, the Lord withdrew the authority and keys of the priesthood from the earth.

During the Great Apostasy, people were without divine direction from living prophets. Many churches were established, but they did not have the authority to confer the gift of the Holy Ghost or perform other priesthood ordinances. Parts of the holy scriptures were corrupted or lost, and the people no longer had an accurate understanding of God.

This apostasy lasted until Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son appeared to Joseph Smith and initiated the Restoration of the fulness of the gospel.

Restoration

The Restoration is God's reestablishment of the truths and ordinances of His gospel among His children on the earth (see Acts 3:19–21).

In preparation for the Restoration, the Lord raised up noble men during what is called the Reformation. They attempted to return religious doctrine, practices, and organization to the way the Savior had established them. They did not, however, have the priesthood or the fulness of the gospel.

The Restoration began in 1820 when God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to Joseph Smith in response to his prayer (see Joseph Smith—History 1:15–20). Some of the key events of the Restoration were the translation of the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods, and the organization of the Church on April 6, 1830.

The Aaronic Priesthood was restored to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery by John the Baptist on May 15, 1829. The Melchizedek Priesthood and keys of the kingdom were also restored in 1829, when the Apostles Peter, James, and John conferred them upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.

The fulness of the gospel has been restored, and The Church of Jesus Christ

of Latter-day Saints is “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth” (D&C 1:30). The Church will eventually fill the whole earth and stand forever.

Related references: Isaiah 29:13–14; Ezekiel 37:15–17; Ephesians 4:11–14; James 1:5–6

5. Prophets and Revelation

A prophet is a person who has been called by God to speak for Him (see Amos 3:7). Prophets testify of Jesus Christ and teach His gospel. They make known God's will and true character. They denounce sin and warn of its consequences. At times, they prophesy of future events (see D&C 1:37–38). Many teachings of prophets are found in the scriptures. As we study the words of prophets, we can learn truth and receive guidance (see 2 Nephi 32:3).

We sustain the President of the Church as a prophet, seer, and revelator and the only person on the earth who receives revelation to guide the entire Church. We also sustain the counselors in the First Presidency and the members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as prophets, seers, and revelators.

Revelation is communication from God to His children. When the Lord reveals His will to the Church, He speaks through His prophet. The scriptures—the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price—contain revelations given through ancient and latter-day prophets. The President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is God's prophet on the earth today.

Individuals can receive revelation to help them with their specific needs, responsibilities, and questions and to help strengthen their testimonies. Most revelations to leaders and members of the Church come through impressions and thoughts from the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost speaks to our minds and hearts in a still, small voice (see D&C 8:2–3). Revelation can also come through visions, dreams, and visitations by angels.

Related references: Psalm 119:105; Ephesians 4:11–14; 2 Timothy 3:15–17; James 1:5–6; Moroni 10:4–5

6. Priesthood and Priesthood Keys

The priesthood is the eternal power and authority of God. Through the priesthood, God created and governs the heavens and the earth. Through this power He redeems and exalts His children, bringing to pass “the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39).

God gives priesthood authority to worthy male members of the Church so they can act in His name for the salvation of His children. The keys of the priesthood are the rights of presidency, or the power given to man by God to govern and direct the kingdom of God on the earth (see Matthew 16:15–19). Through these keys, priesthood holders can be authorized to preach the gospel and administer the ordinances of salvation. All who serve in the Church are called under the direction of one who holds priesthood keys. Thus, they are entitled to the power needed to serve and fulfill the responsibilities of their callings.

Related reference: D&C 121:36, 41–42

Aaronic Priesthood

The Aaronic Priesthood is often called the preparatory priesthood. The offices of the Aaronic Priesthood are deacon, teacher, priest, and bishop. In the Church today, worthy male members may receive the Aaronic Priesthood beginning at age 12.

The Aaronic Priesthood “holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism” (D&C 13:1).

Melchizedek Priesthood

The Melchizedek Priesthood is the higher, or greater, priesthood and administers in spiritual things (see D&C 107:8). This greater priesthood was given to Adam and has been on the earth whenever the Lord has revealed His gospel.

It was first called “the Holy Priesthood, after the Order of the Son of God” (D&C 107:3). It later became known as the Melchizedek Priesthood, named after a great high priest who lived during the time of the prophet Abraham.

Within the Melchizedek Priesthood are the offices of elder, high priest, patriarch, Seventy, and Apostle. The President of the Melchizedek Priesthood is the President of the Church.

Related reference: Ephesians 4:11–14

7. Ordinances and Covenants

Ordinances

In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, an ordinance is a sacred, formal act that has spiritual meaning. Each ordinance was designed by God to teach spiritual truths. The ordinances of salvation are performed by the authority of the priesthood and under the direction of those who hold priesthood keys. Some ordinances are essential to exaltation and are called saving ordinances.

The first saving ordinance of the gospel is baptism by immersion in water by one having authority. Baptism is necessary for an individual to become a member of the Church and to enter the celestial kingdom (see John 3:5).

The word *baptism* comes from a Greek word meaning to dip or immerse. Immersion is symbolic of the death of a person’s sinful life and his or her rebirth into a spiritual life, dedicated to the service of God and His children. It is also symbolic of death and resurrection.

After a person is baptized, one or more Melchizedek Priesthood holders lay their hands on the person’s head and confirm him or her a member of the Church. As part of this ordinance, called confirmation, the person is given the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The gift of the Holy Ghost is different from the influence of the Holy Ghost. Before baptism, a person can feel the influence of the Holy Ghost from time to time and through that influence can receive a testimony of the truth (see Moroni 10:4–5). After receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, a person has the right to His constant companionship if he or she keeps the commandments.

Other saving ordinances include ordination to the Melchizedek Priesthood (for men), the temple endowment, and the marriage sealing (see D&C 131:1–4). All saving ordinances of the priesthood are accompanied by covenants. In the temple, these saving ordinances can also be performed vicariously for the dead. Vicarious ordinances become effective only when the deceased persons accept them in the spirit world and honor the related covenants.

Other ordinances, such as administering to the sick and the naming and blessing

of children, are also important to our spiritual development.

Related reference: Acts 2:36–38

Covenants

A covenant is a sacred agreement between God and man. God gives the conditions for the covenant, and we agree to do what He asks us to do; God then promises us certain blessings for our obedience (see D&C 82:10).

All the saving ordinances of the priesthood are accompanied by covenants. We covenant with the Lord at baptism and renew those covenants by partaking of the sacrament. Brethren who receive the Melchizedek Priesthood enter into the oath and covenant of the priesthood. We make further covenants in the temple.

Related references: Exodus 19:5–6; Psalm 24:3–4; 2 Nephi 31:19–20; D&C 25:13

8. Marriage and Family

Marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God, and the family is central to His plan of salvation and to our happiness. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between a man and a woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife. Parents are to multiply and replenish the earth, rear their children in love and righteousness, and provide for the physical and spiritual needs of their children.

Husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other. Fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and provide the necessities of life. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners.

The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to continue beyond the grave. The earth was created and the gospel was revealed so that families could be formed, sealed, and exalted eternally. (Adapted from “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129; see also LDS.org/topics/family-proclamation.)

Related references: Genesis 2:24; Psalm 127:3; Malachi 4:5–6; D&C 131:1–4

9. Commandments

Commandments are the laws and requirements that God gives to mankind. We manifest our love for Him by keeping His commandments (see John 14:15). Keeping the commandments will bring blessings from the Lord (see D&C 82:10).

The two most basic commandments are “love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . And . . . love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matthew 22:36–39).

The Ten Commandments are a vital part of the gospel and are eternal principles that are necessary for our exaltation (see Exodus 20:3–17). The Lord revealed them to Moses in ancient times and has restated them in latter-day revelations.

Other commandments include praying daily (see 2 Nephi 32:8–9), teaching the gospel to others (see Matthew 28:19–20), keeping the law of chastity (see D&C 46:33), paying a full tithe (see Malachi 3:8–10), fasting (see Isaiah 58:6–7),

forgiving others (see D&C 64:9–11), having a spirit of gratitude (see D&C 78:19), and observing the Word of Wisdom (see D&C 89:18–21).

Related references: Genesis 39:9; Isaiah 58:13–14; 1 Nephi 3:7; Mosiah 4:30; Alma 37:35; Alma 39:9; D&C 18:15–16; D&C 88:124

For more information on these topics, go to LDS.org, Teachings, Gospel Topics; or see *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (2004).

Teaching the Gospels as a Harmony

We recommend that you use this manual as it is written and teach the four Gospels sequentially. However, you may choose to teach the New Testament Gospels as a “harmony,” which means teaching the events of the Savior’s life chronologically, combining the material from each Gospel. For information and resources on teaching the Gospels as a harmony, refer to the appendix in the digital versions of this manual on LDS.org and in the Gospel Library for mobile devices.



The Mortal Ministry of Jesus Christ at a Glance



GALILEE

Capernaum •

• Nazareth

SAMARIA

• Samaria

PEREA JUDEA

• Jerusalem

• Bethlehem



Calls disciples



Teaches parables of the kingdom



Changes water to wine



Ordains twelve Apostles



Calms the sea



Teaches and heals throughout Galilee



Sermon on the Mount



Heals the woman with an issue of blood



Rejected at Nazareth



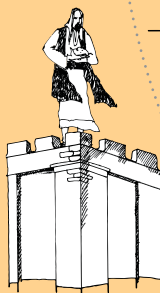
Heals the centurion's servant



Raises Jairus's daughter



Teaches the woman at the well



Tempted of the devil



Attends Passover in Jerusalem



Heals the man at the Pool of Bethesda



First cleansing of the temple



Baptism

First Year of Ministry

Second Year of Ministry



Feeds more than 4,000



Calls and sends forth the Seventy



Bread of Life sermon



Promises Peter the keys of the kingdom



Walks on water



Mount of Transfiguration



Feeds more than 5,000



Rejected by Samaritans



Refuses to condemn the woman taken in adultery



Heals ten lepers



Meets Zacchaeus



Teaches the parable of the good Samaritan



Teaches parables of the lost



Invites the rich young ruler



Triumphal entry and last week



Visits Mary and Martha



Raises Lazarus

New Testament Selected Images

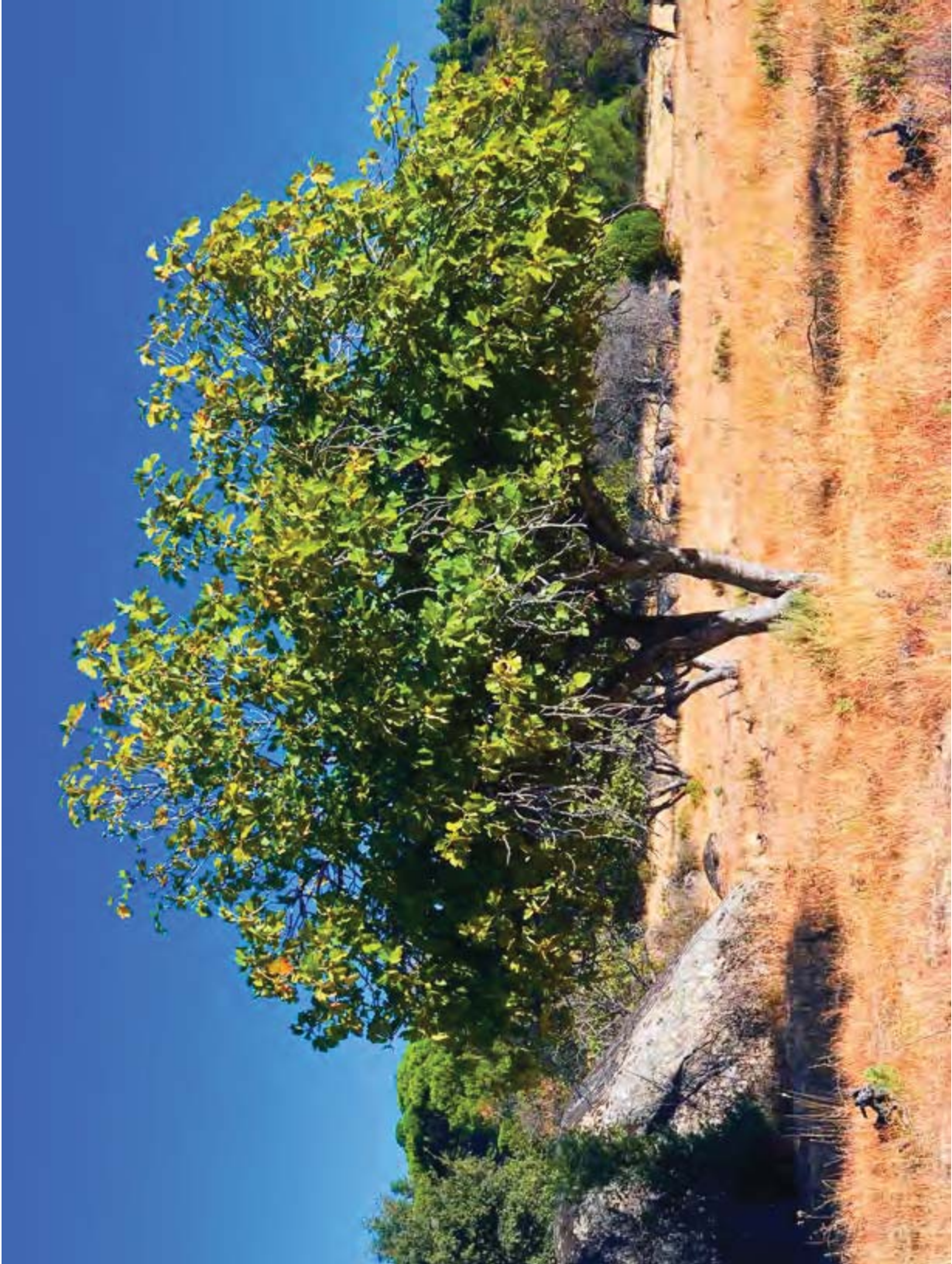
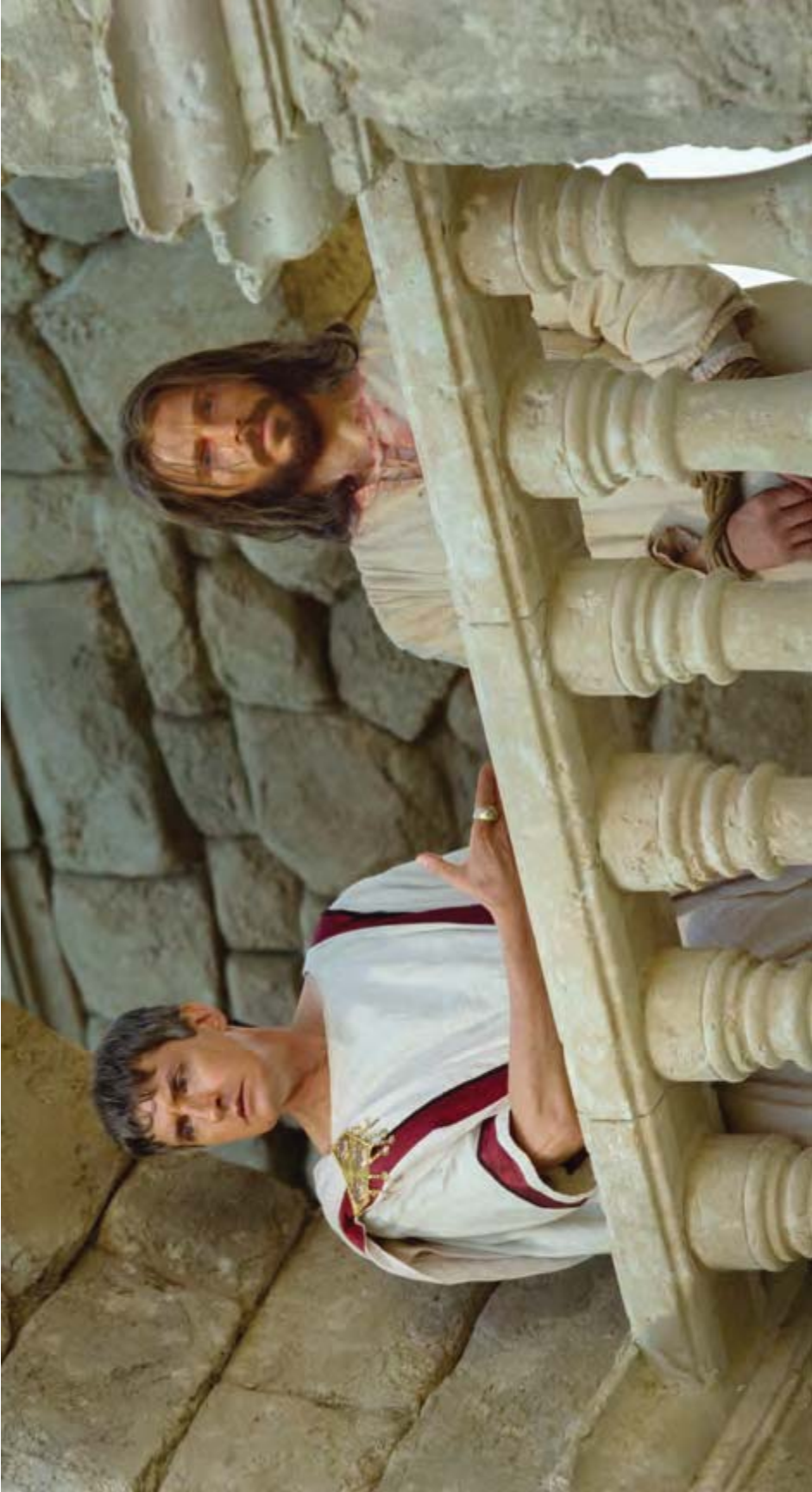


Fig tree (see Matthew 21:18–22)

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Mary and Elizabeth (see Luke 1)



Pilate acknowledges that Jesus is innocent (see John 18–19)



Jesus Christ watches over and cares for His faithful followers (see Revelation 1:12–16)



John's vision of the woman and the dragon (see Revelation 12)



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