



# TO WHO SHALL WE GO?

Disciples & Early Church • U1#2 1st-3rd Gr. • June 16, 2024

## Concept

Jesus has the words of eternal life. He is the only way to eternal life for all people.

## Goal

Students will learn that because Jesus is the only way to eternal life for all people, they should lovingly but firmly stand by this truth when sharing the gospel with other people.

## Passage

John 5:37-39; 6:66-69; 8:12, 31-32

Key Verse: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68

## Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p><b>Lesson:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Bible (New Century Version)</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Activity Stations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Adam Raccoon and Forever Falls, Glen Keane</i></li> <li><i>Bookmarks printed on cardstock, 1/student</i></li> <li><i>Small stickers – variety of shapes &amp; colors, several/child</i></li> <li><i>Hole punch, 2/room</i></li> <li><i>Yarn</i></li> <li><i>Markers</i></li> <li><i>Scissors</i></li> </ul>

### \*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

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

# Background Information (for the teacher)

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This week's passage in John 6 occurred just after Jesus described Himself as the bread from heaven that gives life to anyone who eats or drinks of Him (John 6:35-58). The disciples were either unable to understand His metaphor or couldn't accept the claims implied within (that Jesus is God and eternal life is dependent upon our response to Him). Consequently, many disciples stopped following Jesus (John 6:60-66). At this point, Jesus challenged His 12 disciples. Would they leave Him as well? Peter said that he believed only Jesus had the words that give eternal life and He was indeed God's Messiah. "The words of Simon Peter parallel those in the Great Confession given in the Synoptics (Matt 16:16; Mark 8:29; Luke 9:20). Peter spoke as the representative of the Twelve. He declared that nobody else had the life-giving message of Jesus and that there was no other source that would satisfy them. The statement reveals that, in spite of all his usual awkwardness, Simon's faith in Jesus was genuine; and he evidenced true spiritual sensitivity.

"Words of eternal life' refer to the nature of Jesus' teaching rather than to any specific formula he might have used... Simon Peter recognized the difference between the authoritative declaration of Jesus and the speculations of the religious teachers of his day. Peter's statement represents the spiritual discernment the disciples had developed during their association with Jesus." [1]

Peter's response is an important consideration today for both non-Christian and Christian students. The same implications that stumbled the disciples also confront our culture. Students are bombarded with false ideas, e.g., we all are children of God, we are acceptable to God by our good works, we can develop the "god" within us, Jesus was just another good teacher, there are many ways to a full life, etc. Just as Peter and those who chose to follow Jesus, students need to know that only Jesus has the words that give eternal life.

[1] Gaebelien, Frank E., The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Vol. 9, © 1981 by Zondervan Corp., p. 80.

### **Activity Stations**

- **Craft – Bookmarks**

- **Instructions:** Give each child a preprinted bookmark to cut out and decorate. Put their name on it. After they are finished decorating, punch a hole in the top and tie a piece of yarn through the hole as decoration.

When Jesus lived here on earth he spent a lot of time teaching people about God. The most important thing that he taught was that He was the Messiah. This means that he is the one who God had promised to send to save us. That he had come to earth to give us eternal life. He taught that God had sent him to die for us because this was the only way that we can have a friendship with God.

At first some people didn't understand that Jesus had come to save us. Many people decided to follow Him because they thought His miracles were really cool and others because they learned a lot of things about God. As Jesus continued to teach that eternal life and a friendship with God come only through Him, some of the people who had been listening to and following Jesus decided that they didn't want to follow him anymore.

### **Listen as I read from the Bible. (Read John 6:63-69)**

- What were the two ways the people responded to Jesus? (Some stopped following and walked away, some stayed.) So that day many of Jesus' followers left Him, but there were still some who stayed right where they were. Then He said to these people, "You do not want to go away, too, do you?" Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe that you are God's Son sent to save us."
- The focus throughout the Bible is on the person of Jesus and what He has to offer. But those who withdrew wanted it to be about them and how they could gain eternal life on their own. For example: going to the Temple to worship, doing some kind of good works, hard study of scripture [even though they failed to recognize that it spoke of Jesus]. Jesus' bold claim was that He is the only way to eternal life. This made people angry and so they walked away - 6:66
- Those who continued to follow Jesus did so because they believed that He was the Son of God and had the words of eternal life. In verses 68 & 69, why did Peter say He would follow Jesus? (He knew that Jesus was the Holy One of God and that Christ has the words of eternal life.) Peter knew that Jesus was from God. He believed that only Jesus could give meaning to life here on earth and give life that would last forever.

Our key verse today is, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

## Lesson Continued

What does this mean? Peter knew that only Jesus offered eternal life with God. Eternal life is life that goes on forever and never ends. We all will live somewhere forever after we die. Those who choose to believe Jesus will begin a friendship with Him right now and look forward to living forever in heaven with Him. If you choose not to believe Jesus you can't be His friend and you will not go to heaven after you die. Jesus told us that to have eternal life with Him you must admit that you sin and need God's forgiveness. When you tell Jesus that you want His death on the cross to pay for your sin, God will forgive you and you will begin a life with Him that will last forever.

Peter told Jesus that he didn't want to go anywhere else because only Jesus could give him eternal life. He knew that Jesus was the only way to a good and satisfying life. Peter was Jesus' friend while Jesus was on earth. He was with Jesus every day for three years. He saw Jesus perform miracles and learned about God the Father from Jesus. Because Peter believed that Jesus was from God, He knew that Jesus told the truth and that He would keep the promises He made. Peter wanted to follow Jesus.

### Transition

Let's use rhythm to learn our key verse.

### Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

#### Verse Rhythm [1]

**Instructions:** Practice saying the key verse rhythmically, emphasizing words or syllables while alternately clapping hands and hitting thighs. Demonstrate to the class the rhythmic key verse. Have students join you in saying the verse. As students become confident, say the verse faster.

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

[1] The Big Book of Bible Games, ©1996 by Gospel Light, p. 67.

### Transition

Let's get into small groups to pray.

### Learning Activity#2 Sm. Groups

- Remember our key verse, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). If you believe that Jesus has the words of eternal life, what about the other religions? Do you think someone can have eternal life if he/she believes in Buddha and is a really good Buddhist? What about the Muslims? They believe in one God and the truth of the Old Testament. What about the good person who goes to church every week? Will any of these good works give them eternal life? (Allow the students to discuss this a bit.) Look at John 6:68, 69. What did Peter say? (It's about the person of Jesus, not whether we go to church or do certain rituals or believe certain doctrines. Jesus is the only one who can give us eternal life that can begin now and will last forever.)

## Learning Activity# 2 Continued

- Knowing that Jesus is the only way to eternal life, how do you lovingly present this truth to others who believe that there are other ways to eternal life? (Discuss this.)
- If you present the truth in a loving way, is there a guarantee that others will always accept that truth and believe in Jesus? Go back to verse 66. Our responsibility is to tell the truth as Jesus did. The response is up to each individual. When Jesus clearly presented the truth some people believed and continued to follow Him and others withdrew and walked away. Jesus didn't change His message because some didn't like it. As a matter of fact, Jesus died at the hands of the many who hated His truth. Jesus asks each of us the same question. "Do you believe that through me you can have eternal life?" You can choose to believe and follow Him or to walk away and pursue ways that will not give you eternal life. He loves everyone and wants everyone to have a relationship with Him, but He won't force anyone. He wants it to be our personal choice.

**Missions Prayer:** Talk about and pray for the Oasis Giving Campaign.

Let's pray now. Let's thank Jesus that He loved us so much that He was willing to come to this earth so we can have eternal life. Let's ask Him to help us to grow in the understanding of the living relationship we have with God through Jesus.

Finish bookmarks.

Read *Adam Raccoon and Forever Falls* and discuss that Jesus is the only one who can save us.

## Optional Activity