



GOD'S INCREDIBLE PLAN

Unit 10 • The Cross and Beyond

UNIT DESCRIPTION

This unit covers the period of time from the birth of Jesus to the events surrounding His return at the end of the age. It contains the pivotal point and the consummation of God's whole redemptive plan.

Being divine, human and perfect, Jesus qualified as the final sacrificial Lamb. As a result of His death on the cross, the penalty for sin was paid in full for all time.

With complete atonement made for sin and the arrival of the Holy Spirit into the hearts of believers, God began the church. During the "church age," God's work is accomplished through the church rather than the nation of Israel. Jesus commissioned the church to spread the gospel over the earth (Acts 1:8). The church includes each member's own unique contribution as God uses them in continuing His Incredible Plan.

At the end of history, Christians will be persecuted with increased intensity, and mankind will suffer great distress. After these things, Jesus Christ will return, judge the living and the dead, and create a new heaven and a new earth for His people. Every soul will be placed in his eternal home, with or apart from God. As believers this is the eternal hope that motivates us to live for Christ.



JESUS - OUR SUBSTITUTE

God's Incredible Plan • U10#1 1st-3rd Grade • April 26, 2026

Concept

Jesus, our substitute, bore the punishment for the sin of all people.

Goal

Students will learn that all people are sinners and that Jesus died for all people.

Passage

Luke 2:11, 12, 16; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Colossians 2:9; 1 Corinthians 15:17, 20-22; Hebrews 10:12

Key Verse: "God showed his great love for us by sending Jesus to die for us while we were still sinners." Romans 5:8

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Children's Guide to the Bible, Robert Willoughby</i> <p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>God's Incredible Plan pictures</i> <p>Learning Activity #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Stack of fake money "bills"</i> <p>Learning Activity #2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Long strip of Velcro</i> <p>Lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Mighty Acts of God, Starr Meade</i>	<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Christ's Crossword," [1] 1/student• Pens, pencils, or crayons• Key verse printed in shape of cross on ¼ sheet of acetate, 1/student• ¼ sheets of colored construction paper or cardstock, 1/student• <i>Hole punches</i>• 5" lengths of yarn, 1/student <p>[1] Tom Finley, <i>Incredible Stories: Twenty Active Bible Lessons for Your 8-12 Year Olds</i> (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, Youth Specialties, 1991), p. 91.</p>

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

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

Background Information/Teacher Helps

God's Incredible Plan • U10#1 1st-3rd Grade

Christ's work on the Cross is the pivotal point of God's Incredible Plan. The cross is the only solution for man's separation from God.

In the earliest period of human history, just after Adam and Eve plunged all of humanity into sin, God began to reveal His remedy. In His gracious covenant with Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3, God promised that all peoples on earth would be blessed through Abraham and his family. (See also Genesis 18:18; 22:18.) This promise referred to Jesus Christ, descendant of Abraham. (Acts 3:25 and Galatians 3:8)

Centuries later God chose David as king and promised to establish the throne of David forever. "When your days are over..., I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, ..., and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. I will never take my love away from him... I will set him over my house and my kingdom forever; his throne will be established forever" (1 Chronicles 17:11-14). This descendant of Abraham would also be a King in the line of David. This king would be God Himself (Isaiah 9:6-7)!

During the exile God preserved a remnant of His people to maintain the identity of the nation and to continue the Messianic line. God's plan for redemption could not be stopped!

God provided hundreds of predictions regarding Jesus' birth, life, character, ministry, death, and resurrection throughout the Old Testament. And He prepared the world for the coming Messiah so that people would recognize and receive Jesus Christ as Savior! In the words of Paul, "When the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son..., in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons" (Galatians 4:4-5). The "fullness of time" has come.

Read Hebrews 8:1-10:25, note Jesus Christ is the ultimate priest and ultimate sacrifice.

Incorporation Lg. Group

As students arrive: Choose 2 students to act in the improvisational Drama skit. Go over the instructions and have them rehearse with a teacher.

Activity Stations:

- **"Christ's Crossword"**
 - **Instructions:** Give each student a pencil and a copy of "Christ's Crossword." Assist students as needed.
- **Research – "The death of Jesus"**
 - **Instructions:** Read pages 84-85 of Children's Guide to the Bible. Have students read the material. What new information did they learn? Does reading about the crucifixion deepen their appreciation for the sacrifice that Christ made for them?
- **Craft**
 - **Instructions:** Give each student a quarter sheet of cardstock and a quarter sheet of acetate with the key verse in the shape of a cross, markers and a piece of yarn. Write and decorate their name on the piece of card stock. Punch a hole through the acetate and the cardstock in the middle of the top. Thread the yarn through the hole and tie it. The cross now covers their name illustrating that their sins are all paid for. When we tell Jesus we want him to be to be our substitute, our sins are forgiven. Be sure to communicate the meaning to the children as they work.
- **Missions Prayer**
 - **Instructions:** Talk about and pray for the Oasis Giving campaign.

Introduction Lg. Group

Review

Instructions: Put designated pictures on the white board as you review. This year we've studied God's Incredible Plan to save people from sin. Who knows why there is sin in the world? (Adam and Eve disobeyed God.) God created the world (picture #1) and Adam and Eve (picture #2). Adam and Eve disobeyed God and sin entered the world (picture #3). Because Adam and Eve sinned, we are all born with sin (picture #4). But the good news is that because God made us and loves everyone so much, He had a great plan ready to deal with sin (picture #5 - "God's Incredible Plan").

God promised that one day a savior would come to save us from our sin. So God's people waited and waited for that person to come.

When God knew the time was right, He sent Jesus (picture #6 - "Jesus"). Today we're going to talk about what He was like and how He saved us from our sin.

Everyone grab a Bible and watch the skit. We need you all to participate as the jury.

Transition

Learning Activity #1 Lg. Group

Drama

"What's the Consequence?" skit performed by 3 students and a teacher
Instructions: Student #1 will walk into the room with a handful of fake bills hidden behind his/her back. A teacher will confront the student concerning some money missing from his/her wallet, piggy bank, Oasis giving globe, etc. Both the teacher and the student should be creative and ham it up. When the money is finally discovered the teacher will turn to the "jury" and ask what punishment should be given to this thief. Take a few suggestions. As the teacher is ready to decree the punishment, the other student will stand up and volunteer to take his/her punishment in his/her place.

Good News

How did Jesus save us from our sin? (He died on the cross.) Let's talk about why Jesus had to die on the cross.

Who knows what a substitute is? (A substitute is something or someone that takes the place of the real thing.) Have you ever had a substitute teacher at school? A substitute teacher is a person who takes your teacher's place when your teacher isn't there. Jesus is our substitute. He took our place.

Turn to Romans 5:8, our key verse for this week. It is about Jesus, our substitute. It is, "God showed his great love for us by sending Jesus to die for us while we were still sinners" (Romans 5:8). We have all sinned and deserve to be separated from God. Jesus never sinned and didn't deserve this. He was our substitute. He took our place. He let God punish Him instead of us. But we have to decide whether or not we want Him to be our substitute. Those who decide they want Jesus to be their substitute will never be separated from God. Those who decide they don't want Jesus to be their substitute will be separated from God forever.

Even though Jesus never sinned, He chose to be our substitute. When God looked at Jesus on the cross, He saw all the sins of all people, including yours and mine. During that moment, God gave Jesus all the punishment that everyone in the whole world deserves. Jesus died and three days later He rose from the dead. Because He is alive we also can live forever with Jesus in heaven. This was God's great plan all along—to offer a way for sinful people to begin a friendship with God.

Everybody stand up in your place we're going to play a true/false game.

Game - True or False – Jesus...

Instructions: Put the Velcro on the floor, dividing in half the floor in front of the white board. Have the students stand on the Velcro line facing the white board. Write TRUE on one side of the white board and FALSE on the other side. Have students listen carefully to the statements about Jesus. If they believe the statement to be true, they will jump to the TRUE side; if they think the statement is false, they will jump to the FALSE side of the line.

Transition

Learning Activity #2 Lg. Group

Learning Activity# 2 Continued

For example, if I say, I have brown hair, but I don't, you would jump to the false side. If I say, "I am really good looking," you will jump to the true side.

- Jesus is God. (True; the Bible says Jesus was God.)
- Jesus was only a good teacher. (False; Jesus was a good teacher, but he was more than a good teacher—He was our substitute.)
- Jesus was mean to the Pharisees and people who opposed him. (False; Jesus spoke truth to them, but he was never mean.)
- The reason Jesus came to earth as a man was to do good things as an example for us to follow. (False; Jesus came to earth to be a perfect substitute and take the punishment for our sins.)
- Jesus never sinned ever. (True; He was the only man who never sinned.)
- Jesus was very powerful. He made storms stop, made sick people better, and he even made dead people alive again so people would worship him! (False; He came to this earth to glorify the Father.)
- Jesus got thirsty, sad, hungry, and tired. (True; Jesus was a man and experienced all the same things we experience.)
- Jesus was weak because he allowed people to kill him. (False; He voluntarily died for sin in our place.)
- Jesus died on the cross because you were mad at your sister and wouldn't talk to her for three days. (False; Jesus died on the cross because we are all born with a sin nature which separates us from God.)

Transition

Everyone sit back down. It is interesting to think about who Jesus is and why He is the only one who can pay for our sins. He is the perfect substitute, the person who took our punishment.

Lesson Lg. Group

Instructions: Read pages 235-240, *Mighty Acts of God*

The Bible tells us that only Jesus could be the perfect substitute because He's perfect man and God.

Jesus was a man. He was born like we were. He got hungry, thirsty and tired like we do and He died like all people do.

We know that Jesus was sinless/perfect because He always wanted to do what God wanted Him to, and He always did what God wanted Him to do. He never sinned.

We know that Jesus was God because He said He was God and He never lied. He told people they were forgiven for their sins and only God can forgive sins. And the amazing thing is that He was able to pay for everyone's sins at one moment of time for all time. Only God could do that.

Jesus rose from the dead. Because He's alive we know we can live forever with Him.

Lesson Continued

Transition

Learning Activity #3 Sm. Groups

Jesus was both a perfect man and God. He is the only one who could take the punishment we deserve for our sins! Let's remember our key verse, "God showed his great love for us by sending Jesus to die for us while we were still sinners" (Romans 5:8). Isn't it amazing that God would love us so much that even though we were His enemies, He sent Jesus to earth to die for us? Look at Hebrews 10:12. Jesus died for us and we know His sacrifice is complete because He is sitting at the right hand of God.

Let's get into small groups.

Small Groups

- Have you ever been punished for something you didn't do? What was it like? How did you feel about it?
- Have you ever thought about what it would be like to love an enemy? How about to love an enemy so much that you were willing to take the punishment he or she deserves?
- What's the key verse? Do you know that sinners are God's enemies? Romans 8:10?
- Why does it matter that Jesus came to earth to be our substitute?

Let's pray.