

Lesson 2: God's Plan for the World

Objective: The point of the lesson is that students would see that Jesus desires for us, His children, to be active in sharing the Gospel with those who need to hear it, and that students would embrace ways that they can be communicators of Christ's story in their contexts.

Scripture Focus: John 10:14-17, Matthew 9:35-38, Matthew 28:16-20

Overview: Jesus didn't leave a lot of room for discussion. He made it clear that His plan calls for us to be messengers of the Gospel. This lesson will help your students see exactly where Jesus' desire for us to share the Gospel comes from (His compassion for the lost and broken), as well as understanding exactly what Christ calls them to do. Jesus put the task of communicating the hope of the Gospel, and the life-transforming nature of a relationship with God, squarely in the Church's hands. And guess what? Your students are the Church! God desires for your students to be actively pointing people toward Christ. This lesson will help your students begin to think about how they communicate the Gospel in their contexts.

Teacher Prep Video

The *elements Teacher Prep Videos* are short videos designed to help you grasp the main points of the lessons as you prepare to teach.

To access your "Evangelism Teacher Prep Video," click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/evangelism-teacher-prep>

Bible Background

The **Bible Background** is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. *The Details* gives you background info for each Book, while *The Main Point* gives you an overview of how the passages are all used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every **ym360** Bible study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context" we mean at the very least helping students know who wrote the Book, when it was written, and why it was written.
- **What's The Big Deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context. *But don't feel like you have to read everything written in the Bible Background for each Book.*

The Details

Matthew

- **Author:** Matthew, a former tax collector, was one of Jesus' disciples and a firsthand witness to the stories he relates in his Gospel.
- **Time frame:** Most people hold to Matthew's Gospel being written in the late 50's or 60's AD, though there are some who think it was written after the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD.

- **Purpose:** Matthew was writing to a primarily Jewish audience to convince them that Jesus was indeed the long-awaited Messiah. But he was probably aware of a Gentile audience, as his Gospel makes the case that the saving truth of Christ is for all nations.

John

- **Author:** The Gospel of John was written by John, son of Zebedee, a fisherman who left his trade to follow Jesus. John also penned the book of Revelation as well as the three letters in the New Testament that bear his name.
- **Time frame:** The Gospel of John was probably written between 85 and 95 AD. John most likely wrote his gospel in Ephesus before he was exiled to Patmos.
- **Purpose:** John's stated purpose for writing this book can be found in John 20:30-31, the last two verses in his gospel: "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." John's goal seems to have been to clearly communicate a full theology of Jesus as the Messiah, the promised Son of God.

The Main Point

The main point of this lesson is quite simple: Jesus has a heart to include those outside the family of God and has tasked you and me to be the tool He uses to accomplish this task. Over the course of this lesson we will see how God's heart is full of love and compassion towards those who do not yet know Him, how He models it Himself, then calls and empowers us to go out into the world, and more specifically into our contexts to share the love and grace of Jesus Christ. This should be an awesome lesson for your students.

Lesson Plan

The **Lesson Plan** contains three elements: An introductory activity called *The Lead In*; the Bible study section called *The Main Event*; an application-focused segment called *The Last Word*.

The Lead In

- **Goal:** To have students identify the people they most care about in their world and illustrate who God cares for, as well.
- **Set-Up:** You'll need a half sheet of paper for each student and something to write with.

FIRST, explain to students that before you jump into the Bible study that you're going to do a little party planning. Hand out the half-sheets of paper and tell the students to number down the left side 1-25. Once they've numbered the paper, tell them to write out a list of 25 friends and family that they would like to invite if they were throwing a huge bash for their birthday.

THEN, when they are done with their list ask them, "Now that you have your list, underline the names on your list that your parents would be surprised or clueless about how they made your list." Give them a minute to accomplish this task.

NEXT, take a survey of the group to find out how many people made the list that their parents would have never considered. The numbers should range from 3-20.

THEN, engage your students in a conversation about their list. Ask something like:

- **What types of people made your list?**
 - *Answers will vary.*
- **If your parents wanted to throw you a surprise party, why might your parents miss the mark on the invite list?**
 - *Answers will vary.*
- **What would be the best way for your parents to find out who should be invited to your party?**
 - *Answers will vary.*

THEN, have the students open their Bibles to John 10:14-17 and ask one of the students to read the passage. Once the passage of Scripture is read, say something like:

- **There are many ways that scripture uses to communicate that God loves the world and wants to be in relationship with everyone. Some of the word pictures are:**
 - Invitation to the banquet table
 - Planting and harvesting
 - Adoption into the family of God
 - In this case being folded into Jesus' flock.
- **Ask the students to identify the players in this story: Shepherd, sheep, the sheep not in this pen.**

FINALLY, explain that this lesson is about understanding that Jesus came to extend the gift of eternal life to all who believe, not just the Jews. The Jews thought that salvation was just for them, and did not even consider that this good news was for others. Looking back we think this is strange, but in the same way our parents wouldn't get who should be on our list, the Jews didn't get who was on God's list. Say something like:

- **Your parents would need you to clarify who your friends are and who should make the list. If you didn't your parents would probably populate your party with the friends you had in 2nd grade. Jesus came to do a similar thing. He came to expand the guest list for Heaven. And it turns out the invitation list is supposed to go out into the entire world. As we jump into the rest of our study we learn Jesus' plan to get the word out. It's a plan so big it involves you and me! Let's take a closer look.**

The Main Event

- **Goal:** The idea is for students understand that God's plan for those outside the fold relies on being God's partners in the task of evangelism.
- **Set Up:** You will need a dry-erase board and some pens to do some math and a word study on the great commission.

FIRST, explain to the students that before we look at Jesus' plan to invite the entire world into Jesus' pen, to the banquet table, and into His family we need to understand one problematic hurdle that Jesus was sent to overcome.

THEN, ask students to turn to Matthew 9:35-38. While they're turning, provide the context for the book using the Bible Background. Ask one of the students to read this passage. After they read this passage ask them something like this:

- **What is Jesus' emotion towards the crowds?**
 - *Answer:* Something like compassion, love, etc.
- **What does Jesus say about how big the harvest is?**
 - *Answer:* He said it was really, really big. Plentiful! Huge!
- **What does Jesus say about the problem with harvesting?**

- *Answer:* Not enough workers.
- **Make sure students are capturing the metaphor here. Then ask: if you were Jesus, what would your plan be for getting the word out?**
 - *Answer:* Don't necessarily make students nail down an answer. Just get them thinking about ways Jesus might have chosen to share the word.

NEXT, explain that you're going to now take a look at Jesus' unique slightly unconventional plan for inviting the entire world into relationship with God. Have students turn to the students turn their Bibles to Matthew 28:16-20. Ask a student to read this passage, then write out verse 19-20 on the whiteboard. Explain to students that when someone dies, their last words are usually their most intentional and most important. This may very well be true in Jesus' last words. What is amazing about this passage of scripture is that in just these two verses, there is a gold mine of information and direction.

THEN, have students write out on the dry-erase board everything these verses tell us about God. If they don't get there, help them arrive on some of these points:

- **Jesus has total authority**
- **The affirmation of the trinity: Father, Son, Holy Spirit**
- **He uses his authority to give us a command**
- **He uses his power to always be with us.**

Ask the students to circle all the things that we are commanded to do in these two verses. If they don't get there, help them arrive on these commands:

- **Go**
- **Make**
- **Baptize**
- **Teach**

NEXT, tell your students that Jesus is not messing around. He has a very unique plan to reach the entire world. For this plan to work, Jesus needs his 11 disciples to multiply themselves to make more disciples who will go out into the world and make more disciples, who will go out into the world and so on, and so on. You get the point. Say something like:

- **Jesus takes a huge risk by not keeping control of the message and simply speaking to millions of people on His own. Maybe He could even have used His God-powers to speak to all people on earth at once! But He didn't. Rather He chose to share the burden with His disciples and sends them out to share the invitation. But Jesus knew what He was doing. Jesus promises to be with them, and with us as we go out and share the Gospel with the world.**

FINALLY, wrap up this section by saying something like:

- **It is mind boggling how quickly the world would be reached if we took Jesus' plan seriously. The harvest is great. But there are SO many Christ-followers who know the Gospel. But too many are too happy to keep it to themselves. Jesus has been given all authority, and as the LORD, He doesn't suggest, but command that we are to GO out into all the world and MAKE disciples. As we wrap this up we must take a quick look at the lynchpin of this entire operation.**

The Last Word

- **Goal:** The idea is for students to consider the task that God has invited them into and whether or not they are prepared and equipped for the challenge.
- **Set Up:** Their original birthday list from the LEAD IN.

FIRST, remind students that God has an enormous heart for the world and wants all people, everywhere to be invited into His family, into His pen, to the banquet table. Explain that Jesus decided to have His disciples be invested partners in this plan. (That's you and me, by the way.) It's a risky strategy, but one that is not left up to us totally. Say something like:

- **All of us are called to GO! And for high school students, the place you are sent is your family and your campus. Someday it might be to the ends of the earth, but for now, for this season, it is these two places. So let us take seriously this invitation to partner with God to bring the love and grace of Jesus to this unique and specific context. Next time we gather we will dive into some scriptures that teach us how to be equipped for this task and strategies to implement this plan. But for now, before we conclude our time together, lets talk through one more important piece of the puzzle. This is the realization and recognition that Jesus goes with us as we go.**

NEXT, ask your students to take out the original birthday list from the LEAD IN. Tell them something like this:

- **This list represents those who are closest to you.** These are the people that you have the most influence in and might actually be the very people who need to be invited into God's family.
- **Circle the people on this list that don't yet know Jesus.**
- **There are also people in your life that might not be in your circle of friends, but God has given you a heart for. Add them to this list.**
 - Hopefully the 3-5 names they prayed for last week made it to this list as well.

THEN, tell them that the task of sharing the Gospel is something that we do not do alone. It is something that we partner with the living God, the Holy Spirit in. Part of how we connect to that power, wisdom, and discernment is through prayer.

FINALLY, tell them that the way we are going to conclude our time is praying to God asking:

- For a heart like Jesus had on the crowds towards our friends.
- For wisdom and discernment in how to go about sharing the Gospel with our friends.
- For opportunities to have spiritual conversations with them.
- For our own walks with Jesus that we would continue to become more and more like Jesus, more and more like disciples, so that we too would be able to make disciples of others.

Depending on your group and group dynamics, students should spend the remainder of their time in prayer for their friends and for the things on this list. This can be one alone, in pairs, in small groups. You know your group and you know the best way to proceed.

FINALLY, ask your students to take this list of friends and family and to put it in their Bibles as a bookmark to Matthew 28:18-20. Tell them that as they do their devotions this week, they should take out this list and pray for the people throughout the week.

After everyone is done with prayer, and you have asked them to hold on to their lists and be praying for the people on it, close your time by distributing the element devotions to your students. Consider texting your students throughout the week reminding them to be praying for their friends on the birthday list.

Close with prayer.

- Don't forget to distribute the element devotions to your students. If you're printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. If you're texting a link, posting them on Facebook, or some

other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.

- Consider texting students a couple of times during the week to encourage them to follow through with reading the devotions.
 - Consider reminding your students throughout the week to be praying for the people on their list.
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We Want To Hear From You . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
- Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at feedback@youthministry360.com.

