

Lesson 2: The Word In The World

Objective: The point of the lesson is that students would see that Jesus' person, ministry, and teachings represent the fullness of God's Word to us, and that they would understand how they are to be communicating God's Word in their day-to-day lives.

Scripture Focus: John 1:1-2, 14, Revelation 19:11-13, Acts 6:1-7, 8:4, 12:24, 2 Corinthians 4:1-2

Overview: In the first lesson your students learned that the Bible is how we most commonly understand the idea of God's Word. The cool thing is that Jesus is, in essence, the unique and complete Word of God encapsulated in a physical being! Wow! How cool is that? In other words, Jesus was the fullness of God's message of love and redemption walking around on this earth. So while Scripture is God's main way of making Himself known to us, Jesus was the Word incarnate. And the cool thing is that the Gospel, basically the story of Jesus, is God's Word in motion! Jesus came as the Word. The Gospel is the message of Jesus, the "good news" that leads to joy and life. In this lesson your students will come face-to-face with these powerful truths and consider what their response should be as a result.

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 "God's Word Teacher Prep Video," click on the URL below.

- <https://youthministry360.com/gods-word-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 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.

The Details

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.

Revelation

- **Author:** The writer of Revelation identifies himself as John four times. Scholars agree that it is most likely John the Apostle, son of Zebedee, one of Jesus' most beloved disciples.
- **Time frame:** Revelation was written toward the end of John's life somewhere between 90 and 95 AD.
- **Purpose:** The purpose of Revelation was to reveal the fullness of Christ's identity and to provide hope for suffering Believers at the time who were encountering grave persecution and suffering. Today it provides us hope of what is to come, as well as a stark warning of the battle that rages until Christ returns.

Acts

- **Author:** Acts has long been held to be a letter from Luke, a Gentile physician, to a man named Theophilus, possibly a benefactor of some sort.
- **Time frame:** There is some debate over when Acts was written. The suggested dates are between 70 AD and 80 AD.
- **Purpose:** The Book of Acts is a second letter to Theophilus that tells the story of the early Church following Jesus' resurrection. The book begins with Jesus' ascension and His command of His followers to proclaim the Gospel in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. The rest of the book traces this journey as the early church leaders proclaim the Gospel and plant churches.

2 Corinthians

- **Author:** The Apostle Paul wrote 2 Corinthians to the Church in Corinth.
- **Time frame:** Paul wrote 2 Corinthians from Macedonia around 55 or 56 AD, a year or so after writing 1 Corinthians and a year before he wrote his letter to the Romans from Corinth.
- **Purpose:** According to the ESV Study Bible, the main theme of Paul's second letter to the Corinthians was "the relationship between suffering and the power of the Spirit in Paul's apostolic life, ministry, and message."

The Main Point

This lesson will make three main points. First, the lesson will point out that Jesus is the Word of God. He is the physical embodiment of God's message of love, hope, and restoration. Helping your students wrap their brains around this is vital. It's the underlying truth for the entire lesson. The second point is that the story of Jesus' mission to rescue humankind from the punishment of sin, i.e., the Gospel, is God's life saving Word for the world! It's like the Gospel is God's Word in action! Finally, the third point is that in God's Word we see that we are called to not only communicate the Gospel to the world around us, but to do so in a way that is accurate and right.

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 help your students understand that it's important to know exactly what someone said to be able to follow their instructions.
- **Set-Up:** You will need to arrange your students in a circle or if your group is large several small circles.

FIRST, before the session write the following instructions on paper or some 3x5 cards:

- 1) I want you to get something from the youth room and go get me some water.
- 2) I want you to lock your fingers and then count to twelve without odd numbers.
- 3) I want you to stand in front of the church and declare that you are calling for a holiday on every third Tuesday of the month.
- 4) I want you to send a text to ten people asking for ten dollars for a mission project.

NEXT, have the students sit in a circle and choose someone to be the first to give out an instruction. Tell them that the student is going to whisper an instruction to the person to their left and each person will in turn whisper to the person next to them until the instruction comes back to the first student. Explain that the last person will tell the group what they were told. At that time the first student will read the original instruction. The idea is that as the instruction is passed from person to person, it will wind up being totally different from the original. Do this with each of the four instructions.

FINALLY, explain that you would have been in a lot of trouble if you had expected the last person in the circle to follow the exact instruction. Somehow when things pass by word of mouth through lots of people the original message gets all messed up. Then say to the students:

- **We are in the middle of a three-week study on God's Word, the Bible. Today we want to look at Jesus as being the living and breathing fulfillment of God's message of love and redemption. Since He was the Son of God, His words are the words of life. While our activity showed that we need to be careful about following instructions that have been passed down through people or even time, God's Word has been perfectly preserved and is totally accurate and completely reliable. We're going to look at what it means to treat the Word of God correctly. But first, let's look at this fascinating concept of Jesus as the living Word of God.**

The Main Event

- **Goal:** To help your students grasp the that Jesus is the GOOD NEWS and they are to not only receive it but share it and pass it on to their world.
- **Set Up:** No set-up needed.

FIRST, take a few moments to remind your students what was covered in last week's lesson in case any of them were not present. Tell them that as we began the study on God's Word we learned that:

- **God's Word sometimes took the form of commands which detailed what God expected from His people and demonstrated His power.**
- **God's Word sometimes would be personal messages to His people, in both the Old and New Testaments.**
- **The Bible is God's Word and it is the best way for us to know both Him and His ways.**

Explain that this week the lesson will focus specifically on the New Testament and how Jesus is literally God's Word in motion.

NEXT instruct students to find both John and Revelation in their Bibles. Provide some brief context for the books using the Bible Background. Then, read or have a few students read John 1:1, John 1:14, and Revelation 19:11-13. After the passages have been read, ask what similarities there are in the three passages. Tell them all three mention the Word or Word of God. Help your students grasp the following thing these Scriptures tell us about the Word:

- **Jesus is the Word. John 1:1 could read, "In the beginning was Jesus, Jesus was with God, and Jesus was God."**
- **The Word, Jesus, came to Earth as God in human form. Jesus was and is full of grace and truth.**
- **In Revelation 19:11-13 Jesus is the rider on the horse. Knowing that, it connects the dots when we see that He is called Faithful and True and His name is the Word of God.**

THEN, explain that when we take these three passages together the great truth here is that Jesus is the Word of God. Ask what students think that could mean. Help them see that Jesus is God's living message of love and salvation. Say:

- **We tend to think of the Word of God as just the Bible. But it is clear in these verses that the Word is actually a living and breathing entity. God's Word is the Bible. But it's more than the Bible. It is actually alive because the Word of God is Jesus.**

NEXT, help your students see that this Word, Jesus, came to Earth to save humankind from sin. Tell them the first four books of the New Testament are called the Gospels, which means *Good News*. Ask:

- **In your own words, why is the story of Jesus called the Gospel? Why is it Good News?**
 - *Answer:* Jesus preached the Good News of the coming salvation while He lived. Then He became the Good News when He died for our sin. The redemption and peace He offers us make His story the Best news ever.

Choose three students to read Acts 6:1-7, Acts 8:4, and 12:24. While they're finding these passages, walk through the context of the Book of Acts using the Bible Background. Have the students read the passages. Explain that we now see a new phrase in these passages and that is: Ministry of the Word. To help your students understand this point out the following:

- **In the early church the disciples were feeling pressure to do a lot of service type things but spreading the Gospel was their number one focus that is why they choose seven people to serve so they could preach.**
- **The Ministry of the Word is preaching the Gospel or sharing the story of the Word (Jesus) and how He died to bring salvation to mankind.**
- **The disciples were faithful to preach the Gospel wherever they went.**
- **The result of their work is found in Acts 12:24. The word of God started increasing and spreading all over the world.**

THEN, tell your students that after Jesus died and was resurrected, His physical presence left the Earth but the story of what He did lived on through the telling or preaching of His story. Ask:

- **If I told you that the Word was still alive and active, how would you back that statement up?**
 - *Answer:* Though Jesus is in Heaven, the Gospel is alive and well on earth. The Word of God is being spread as it has been for thousands of years. The Gospel is God's Word in motion!

NEXT, remind the students that they have seen that Jesus was the Word, and that the story of His life and death and resurrection, the Gospel, is the active message of God's Word. So what does all this mean to them today?

Read or have a student read 2 Corinthians 4:1-2. Explain that since Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians, false teachers had been trying to undermine his ministry by teaching lies about the Gospel. Use the following guide to help you explain this passage to your students.

- **Paul begins by saying that the ministry of preaching the Gospel is available only because of the mercy of God. What does God's mercy have to do with God's Word and the Gospel?**
 - *Answer:* It was God's mercy in sending Jesus that saved us and it is God's mercy to grant us the privilege to share the story of salvation as preachers, teachers, and students.
- **In verse 2 Paul mentions secret and shameful ways people used to distort the Gospel. Pagans back then used tricks and con games to get people to believe what they were saying, much like magicians today. Can you think of any shameful or sketchy ways that are used by people today to trick people into believing they represent God? (This isn't meant to be judgmental. Separate the negative action from the individual to keep students from making it personal against someone else.)**
 - *Answer:* Some answers might include appealing to greed by promising God's blessings for contributions, faith healers who plant people to be healed in services, etc.
- **Paul also renounced using deception and distorting the Word of God. Can you think of examples of how people are deceptive in how they share the Gospel?**
 - *Answer:* Doing it for personal gain; leaving parts of the Gospel out; emphasizing bad theology such as the prosperity Gospel or works-based salvation, etc.

THEN, lead your students to see that Paul wanted to be clear that the Gospel is wrapped up in speaking truth in the lives of people and letting the Spirit of God take care of the rest. It may be good here to emphasize that when we share the Gospel we are not responsible for the results because that is up to God. Our responsibility is to communicate God's Word to the world around us in a way that is accurate and right.

FINALLY, wrap up this section by reminding the students of the three basic points of this lesson:

- The Word of God is Jesus. He lived on this Earth and brought God's message of love, hope, and restoration through His words and deeds and through His life, death, and resurrection.
- The Ministry of the Word is the preaching and telling of Jesus' mission on this Earth. This word spreads when, with God's help and power, we share the Gospel in the world.
- We need to be careful to communicate God's Word in a way that is accurate and right.

Close by saying something like:

- **The Bible is the Word of God. We have the stories of Jesus' life and His teachings readily available whenever we decide to read the Bible. God has given us the wonderful privilege of sharing the Good News of salvation with our world. But with this privilege we have the responsibility to be accurate and truthful in what we say. The Gospel is not a THING to be toyed with or to use for our own personal gain. God's Word is the story of Jesus. It *is* Jesus. And that is what changes the hearts of people today just as it has for the past two thousand years.**

NEXT, make the transition to the Last Word application activity to wrap things up.

The Last Word

- **Goal:** To help students explore the many different ways they can share the Word of God with people in today's world.
- **Set-Up:** You can use a dry-erase board or a piece of newsprint or poster board for this activity.

FIRST, explain to the students that in today's lesson they had the opportunity to see many different uses of the word *WORD*. We closed the last section by talking about communicating God's word accurately. Ask if anyone can think of the best way to accurately get God's Word to people. (There may be lots of responses but focus on sharing verses with people through social media and giving out Bibles to people. The rest of this activity will focus on helping students share Scripture in these ways. You can use either one or both as a group project.)

NEXT, ask your students to focus on sharing the Gospel through social media. Ask anyone can think of some creative ways to make this happen. Write their ideas on your dry-erase board. Possible ideas might include posting verses on Facebook or Twitter, sending verses out to people through text messages, creating a video using Bible quotes and posting on YouTube, etc. Have the group focus on one or two then select some verses to use such as John 3:16, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, etc. Remind the students to be ready to get some negative feedback from non-Christians since sharing the Gospel strikes at the heart of the non-believing world. Be sure to follow up on this activity next week and ask students what kind of responses they got.

THEN, ask your students to think about a way to give Bibles out to people. Sometimes your denomination may have a campaign to give away Bibles. You can check to see about handing out Bible in the neighborhoods around your church. There are also many organizations on the Internet that specialize in putting God's Word in the hands of people around the world. Your group may want to give to one of those groups.

NEXT, help your students to see that giving away Bibles, or posting Scriptures are great ways to spread God's Word accurately, but there will come times when they have to speak to an individual or a group. Tell them that the best way to know the Bible is to read the Bible. Explain that by reading and studying God's Word, they can be sure to accurately communicate the truths in the Bible. Challenge them to begin becoming a student of the Bible so they can always be ready to share the Gospel in all of its truth and power.

Finally wrap-up the lesson by praying for God's Word to become a vital part of your students lives. Pray that God will place in their hearts a hunger and a yearning for His Word.

- Remember to make the five element devotions on *God's Word* to your students. If you're printing them, have them available for students as you wrap up class. Other possibilities include texting a link to your web page where the devotions are posted or putting them on your page or the student group page on Facebook. It would also help to send out a text during the week to remind students to check out the devotions or send out a Tweet.

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.

