

The Thread

Discovering The Thread of the Gospel Through The Big-Picture Story of the Bible

Part 4: The Gospel At Work

Lesson 51: A Revelation, Part 1



Session Snapshot

Narrative Passage: Revelation 1:9-20

Gospel Focus: Isaiah 44:6

Student Takeaways:

- Students will understand that even in the description of Jesus in Revelation, we see evidence of the Gospel message.
- Students will see that all of Scripture points to Jesus as God, the rescuer of His children.
- Students will consider how they view Jesus, personally, and whether or not their view of Him is “big” enough.



Overview

You’re basically to the end of your look at the big-picture story of the Bible. Hopefully, you’re students have learned to see the Gospel as the thread that connects the entire Bible. As you spend the next two lessons in Revelation, you’re essentially going to be learning how the story wraps up, and how the Gospel triumphs in the end. It’s a fitting resolution to such a grand narrative. In this lesson, you’re going to look and see how Jesus is depicted as the victor. But that even in his victory, the Gospel is evident.



Teacher Prep Video

Each *Thread* lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These are short videos designed to help you grasp the main point of the lesson as you prepare to teach.

To access your *Thread* lesson 51 Teacher Prep Video, login to your Lesson Manager, navigate to lesson 51, and click on the “Background” tab. You’ll notice the Teacher Prep Video near the top of the Lesson Manager window.



Bible Background

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide the basic context for the passages you’ll be studying.

- **What do we mean by “context”?** In every ym360 Bible study lesson we encourage teachers to help students know who wrote a particular book, when it was written, and why it was written.
- **Why teach context?** Grasping the big-picture view of God’s story of redemption is difficult for teenagers without understanding the context of the books and passages they’re studying.

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.

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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.

Isaiah

Author: Isaiah, son of Amoz wrote the book of Isaiah.

Time frame: The events of Isaiah occurred between 740 and 681 B.C., though some parts of the book would have been constructed at a later date.

Purpose: The purpose of this book was to call the nation of Judah back to God, to warn of coming judgment, and to tell of God's ultimate salvation through the Messiah.



Lesson Plan

The Lesson Plan contains four elements:

- An introductory activity called Getting Started designed to prepare teenagers to engage with God and the truth of His Word.
- A section entitled The Story featuring a narrative from Scripture that helps teenagers know God better through learning the story of the Bible.
- A special emphasis entitled The Thread where teenagers discover the Gospel thread coursing throughout the story of the Bible.
- An application-focused segment called Wrapping Up helping teenagers ask the question, "How am I impacted by what I learned today"?

Getting Started

- **Goal:** To get students thinking about the use of symbols in communicating messages.
- **Set-Up:** Write the text message abbreviations below on a white board for students to decode.

FIRST, write the following text message abbreviations on the board:

- LOL
- L8R
- IMO
- BTW
- BRB
- IDK
- SUP?

THEN, when students come into the class, ask the students to translate the text message abbreviations. If you're

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an adult over 30 and you need an answer key, here you go:

- LOL - laugh out loud
- L8R - later
- IMO - In my opinion
- BTW - by the way
- BRB - be right back
- IDK - I don't know
- SUP? - What's up?

NEXT, explain to students that many times parents and especially grandparents don't understand many students' text message conversations. Say something like:

- **What would people think in 2,000 years if they found a text message conversation? Would they be able to determine what it means? Would they be able to determine what was being said? They might be able to understand some, but the fullness of the meaning might be lost through the years, unless they had some sort of context to help them understand it.**

FINALLY, explain to students that you'll be looking at the book of Revelation the next couple of weeks. Explain that Revelation has the reputation of being kind of a hard-to-understand book of the Bible. But a lot of it has to do with what John was writing about, and the cultural context in which he was writing. Say something like:

- **John is writing in symbolism throughout the book of Revelation. This is similar to your texting shorthand. The majority of Revelation is peculiar and majestic to our modern ears because John, a human, was trying to describe the things of heaven. It's almost impossible for us to fully grasp the wonder of heaven. But, there is plenty of truth to be gleaned from Revelation. Let's dive in and see what we can learn.**

Transition to The Story.

The Story

- **Goal:** To get students to understand that even in the description of Jesus in Revelation, we see evidence of the Gospel message.
- **Set-Up:** Students will need a Bible or a Bible app.

FIRST, explain that in this lesson you'll be looking at the first vision of Jesus in the book of Revelation. Before you dive into this amazing picture of Jesus, take a minute to share with your students the Connecting the Dots background information about the book of Revelation.

Connecting The Dots

As you teach The Thread, there will naturally be some gaps in the story. This is an optional way for you to fill in some of the gaps between the last lesson you taught and this one. Use it as a way to review and/or to connect the dots to the events surrounding the passage.

- **John is the only disciple who didn't die through persecution for His faith, yet he was exiled on the**

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island of Patmos for preaching the Gospel.

- Revelation is John's final letter to the churches scattered throughout Asia giving them encouragement, and a picture of Jesus as their Savior and Lord to give them hope as they faced persecution.
- The book of Revelation is kind of like John's diary of the vision that God gave Him regarding Jesus as the conquering Lamb, and a picture of what is to come when Jesus reigns as ultimate King.

THEN, have your students turn in their Bibles to Revelation 1, and have a student read Revelation 1:9-11. Once your student has read the passage, explain to the students that John is writing the words that He is receiving from God in this vision. Ask the students the following questions:

- **In verse 9, we see John introducing himself as a "your brother" and "partner." How would these words be comforting to a people facing persecution for their faith in Jesus?**
 - o Answers will vary.
- **In verse 9, John further explains his connection to his readers by saying that their relationship was not just in tribulation and suffering, but it would also be a partnership in sharing in Jesus' Kingdom. How would this give the church hope in the midst of suffering?**
 - o Answers will vary.

Explain to your students that the hope John begins his letter with is the same hope that serves as one of the major themes of the book of Revelation. Say:

- **Many times readers of Revelation get so lost in the vivid imagery that they miss the challenge to stay strong and hold firm in the faith because Jesus' victory is secure. We will now look at the first picture of Jesus in John's amazing vision.**

NEXT, have a student read Revelation 1:12-20. Explain that here we see Jesus as the Messenger who is giving this vision to John. Say:

- **This is a vision that we feel like we have to read several times to get our minds around. Simply put, this is a vision of Jesus ("one like the son of man") standing as a Savior who protects and provides for the church in persecution (see verse 11 and "seven golden lampstands"), to which this letter is written.**

Explain that in this vision of Jesus they just read, we see three truths that we have seen of Jesus throughout our study of God's Word in our Threads study. Work through the three truths with your group.

Truth 1: Jesus stands ready to forgive.

Explain to your students that it is likely that the robe and sash that Jesus is wearing in this vision is the clothing that an Old Testament priest would wear. Explain that the priest would represent the people before God and offer sacrifices to God on their behalf. Remind them that Jesus stands as the ultimate example of forgiveness in that He offered Himself on our behalf at the cross. Then, ask your students the following questions:

- **Why would Jesus' willingness to forgive be an important truth for a church under persecution to remember?**
 - o Answers will vary, but explain that they would remember that their standing before God was only by His grace.
- **How would this truth affect the way that the church responded to their persecutors?**

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- o Answers will vary, but explain that they may pray for their persecutors knowing that Jesus could forgive and rescue even them.

Truth 2: Jesus, the light of the world, calls the Church to be His light.

Explain that in verse 20 the seven lampstands are the seven churches to which John is writing. The single purpose of a lampstand is to be a light in the midst of darkness. Say something like:

- **In our study of the New Testament, we've seen that Jesus was the light of the world. At the end of this section, we see Jesus' face like the sun giving off light. If you have ever been in complete darkness, you know that light shines the brightest in the darkness. This was what the churches were doing as they faced persecution, and this is the same thing we are called to do as the church.**

Ask your students the following questions:

- **In the darkness of your campus, how are you being the light?**
 - o Answers will vary.
- **What is an example of how you can live as light in the darkness this week?**
 - o Answers will vary.

Truth 3: The Word of God cannot be silenced.

Explain that in verse 16, Jesus has a sword coming from His mouth. This sword represents the Word of God. In verse 15, we see that Jesus cannot be silenced. The Word of God cannot be silenced. Say something like:

- **Throughout history, people have tried to diminish, challenge, disprove, and destroy God's Word, yet God's Word has remained. It is our ultimate source of truth and hope, and it contains the words of life on which the churches would stand in the midst of persecution.**

Ask your students the following questions:

- **How do people try to silence God's Word in our day?**
 - o Answers will vary.
- **How do we more fully rely on God's Word as we seek to live for Him?**
 - o Answers will vary.

THEN, explain to students that you are now going to focus on John's response to this vision. Have a student re-read Revelation 1:17-20. Explain to students that John's response to this vision is very similar to Isaiah's response to seeing the glory of God in Isaiah 6. Say something like:

- **John falls to his feet like a dead man! Like Isaiah, John realizes the weightiness of his sin in the presence of a holy God. John is clearly in great fear. But in a loving way, Jesus lays His hand on John and says words of hope. There is no need for John to be afraid. Jesus is the first and the last, died on the cross for John's sin, rose again defeating death, and now controls death. In verses 18-19, Jesus reminds John once again of the truth of the Gospel.**

Ask your students the following questions:

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- **How would you have responded if you had seen what John saw?**

- o Answers will vary.

- **Why is the Gospel the answer of hope when we feel hopeless and afraid?**

- o Answer: The Gospel reminds us that we are totally lost and need to be rescued. The fact that we have been rescued gives us great hope and reminds us that we have nothing to fear.

Remind students that the Gospel message you've seen throughout this Threads study is the same Gospel message that Jesus shows John of in Revelation.

If students don't have any questions, transition into The Thread.

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FIRST, instruct students to turn to Isaiah 44:6. Explain to students that Jesus is the same God in this vision in Revelation that we have seen throughout the Bible. Have a student read Isaiah 44:6 to see what God's message was for His people thousands of years before.

THEN, explain to students that the idea that Jesus is Lord and Savior is the same in Revelation and Isaiah. The picture of Jesus being "the first and the last" is seen in both books. Remind them that the thread of the Gospel throughout Scripture is not something that we have simply been making up this year. It is clearly the theme of the Bible. Jesus is the Hero and everything points to Him. Ask your students the following questions:

- **How does the thread of the Gospel throughout the Bible change your view of God's Word?**

- o Answers will vary.

- **How does Jesus as the "first and the last" strengthen your faith in Him?**

- o Answers will vary.

FINALLY, explain that before you conclude today's lesson, you are going to personally explore how students view Jesus, and if their view of Him is big enough.

If your students don't have any more questions, transition into the Wrapping Up section.

Wrapping Up

- **Goal:** To help students consider if their view of Jesus is "big" enough.

- **Set-Up:** Google pictures of Jesus to share with your class that show cultural views of Jesus.

FIRST, explain to students that they have seen a really big view of Jesus in Revelation today. So often in our culture, we make Jesus to be small. Say something like:

- **We treat Him like a genie that we call on to fix our problems when life does not go like we want. We treat Him like a Savior for our eternity, and not a Lord for our day-to-day. We treat Him like a good teacher who gives good advice.**

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THEN, if you choose, show any Google pictures of Jesus here to discuss how our culture views Jesus. Ask students to respond to what they see. Have them consider what it is about the images you have found that contrast with what you know to be true about Jesus and the nature of His identity. When you've finished your discussion, ask students the following questions:

- **What are other small views of Jesus that we see in our culture?**
 - Answers will vary.
- **How can you make sure you keep a biblical view of Jesus—as God Himself, as Savior, and as Lord—before you this week?**
 - Answers will vary.

FINALLY, close your lesson in prayer that God will give your students a clear picture of who He is, compelling them to follow Him more closely.

- **If you've purchased the *Tracing The Thread* devotional journal, remind students that they'll be working through Week 51 this week. Encourage them to keep up with the daily devotions, and to give memorizing this week's verse their best shot.**
- **If you'll be utilizing the digital devotions included in the *Thread* curriculum, remind students how you'll be making them available, i.e., Instagram, Facebook, etc.**
- **Use the Social Media guide to stay in touch with students via text or Twitter, and to encourage them to follow through with reading their devotions.**

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.