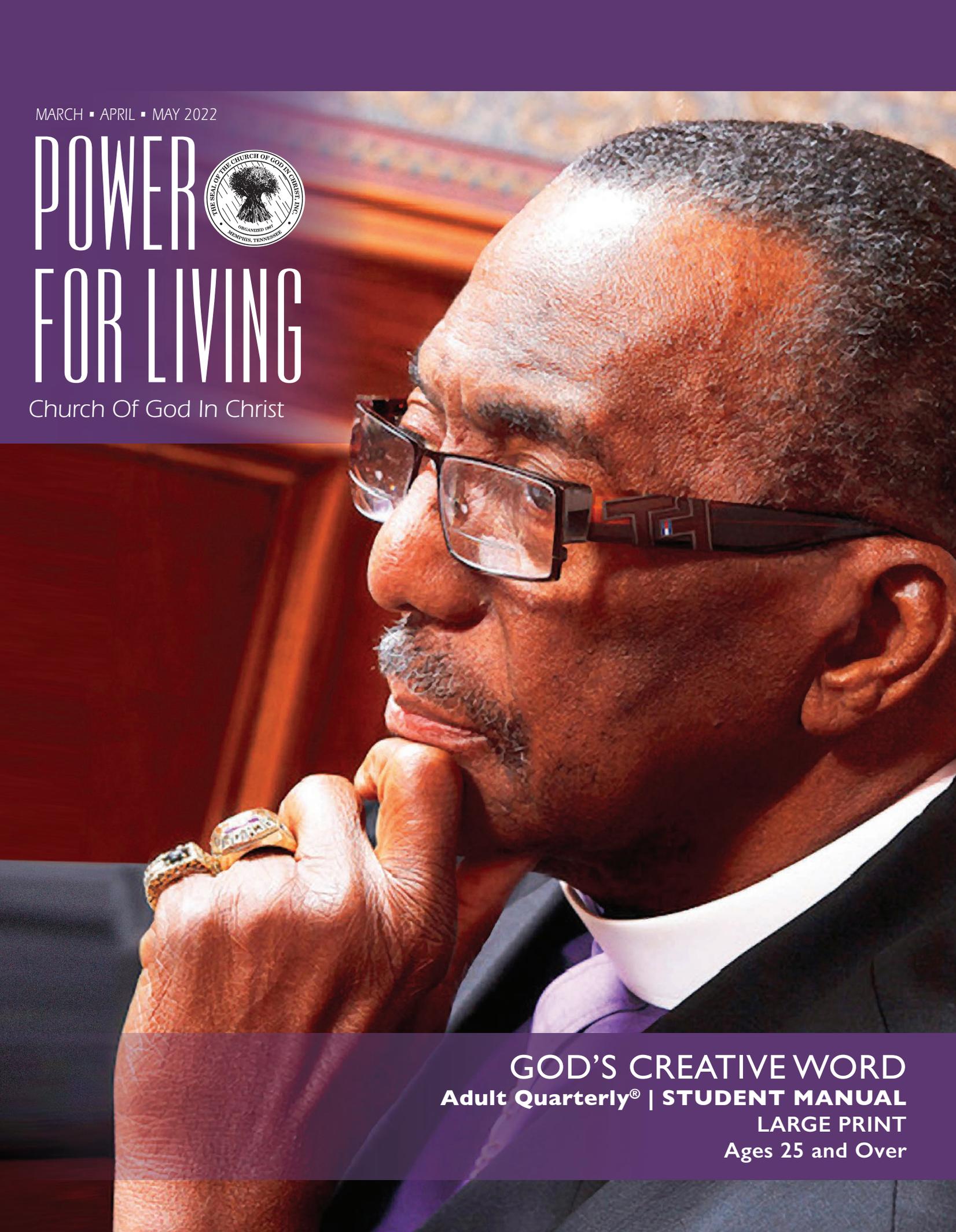


MARCH ■ APRIL ■ MAY 2022

POWER FOR LIVING



Church Of God In Christ



GOD'S CREATIVE WORD
Adult Quarterly® | STUDENT MANUAL
LARGE PRINT
Ages 25 and Over

ADULT QUARTERLY

SPRING QUARTER 2022 MARCH APRIL MAY GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Unit 1 • The Word Was in the Beginning

March 6	Wisdom's Part in Creation	7
March 13	The Word Became Flesh	13
March 20	The Wedding at Cana	20
March 27	God's Word Saves	26
April		
April 3	Jesus Testifies to the Truth	33
April 10	The Living Word	39

Unit 2 • The Word Is Here and Now

April 17	Cleansing the Temple	44
April 24	Woman of Samaria	51
May 1	Healing the Blind Man	60

Unit 3 • The Word Will Be

May 8	The Bread of Life	68
May 15	The Good Shepherd	77
May 22	The Resurrection and the Life	85
May 29	The Way, the Truth, and the Life	94

Special Features: Teaching Tips and Ideas, Quarterly Quiz

Bishop J. Drew Sheard
Presiding Bishop
Church Of God In Christ, Inc.

Bishop Uleses Henderson Jr., Esq.
Chairman, Publishing Board
Church Of God In Christ, Inc.

WISDOM'S PART IN CREATION

BIBLE BASIS: Proverbs 8:22–35

BIBLE TRUTH: Proverbs speaks of wisdom having a divine origin.

MEMORY VERSE: Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not (Proverbs 8:33,KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson, we will: **EXPLAIN** what God's wisdom is; **REFLECT** on God's wisdom in our lives; and **PRAY** for wisdom in our everyday life experiences.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Proverbs 8—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

PROVERBS 8:22-35, KJV

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. Hypostatize (Hy-POST-a-tize)—To think of a concept, abstraction, etc., as having a real, objective existence.

B. Metaphor—A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is likened to something, but is not to be taken literally.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

AIM: That your students will appreciate the role that wisdom played in creation.

INTRODUCTION

In this passage wisdom is personified. Some have called this a “hypostatization”—thinking of a concept, abstraction, as having real objective existence. It seems more appropriate to think of this passage merely as a metaphor, that is a personification of an attribute of God but not an actual being in any way.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will desire to acquire wisdom in their lives.

I. WISDOM'S STORY (Proverbs 8:22–31)

In **Proverbs 8**, we see wisdom existing eternally. A sweeping panorama of creation is covered in **verses 24** through **29**, following the order of God's work listed in **Genesis**. Wisdom was with God before there was anything created. Wisdom was with God before there were oceans and rivers, before there were mountains and

hills. Wisdom was there when God created the heavens and when He “set a compass” (**verse 27**) or “marked out the horizon” (NIV). What an indescribably beautiful picture!

The Beauty of Wisdom (verses 22-31)

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. 23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, Or ever the earth was. 24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: 26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. 27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: 28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: 29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: 30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; 31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

The everlasting wisdom of God, an intrinsic fiber of His nature and character that was with Him as He created the world is available to us! When God set the world into motion, wisdom was there. Wisdom was there when God set the boundaries for the oceans, when He set the stars in

motion, wisdom was there when He placed the clouds in the sky (**verse 28**). Wisdom is like a skilled artisan, rejoicing in the Master's presence and His creation (**verses 30–31**). Wisdom flowed from God's character, and His wonderful creation was the result. God desires to give wisdom to those who seek Him. What an incredible thought!

The Hebrew word in **Proverbs 8:30** translated as “brought up” means “architect,” “master workman,” or “skilled workman.” The picture is that of wisdom, the faithful master artisan, standing at God's side as He created the universe. “How many are your works, LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures” (**Psalms 104:24, NIV**).

Wisdom was ecstatic, as she was able to enjoy the “handiwork” of God (**Psalms 19:1, NKJV**). This implies a wonderful gathering of wisdom and humankind—do we dare envision a party? We celebrate God's creation in many ways. Each time we enjoy a ride through the countryside and see the bursting forth of the springtime flowers, view snowcapped mountains, or enjoy a picnic on a bright sunny day, we share wisdom's pleasure and joy in Creation. As we look at God's creation, we should praise our Creator: “Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” (**Psalms 107:8**).

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

Wisdom was present when God placed the _____ in the sky.

II. WISDOM'S INVITATION (Proverbs 8:32–35)

So the plea goes out to all people: “Listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways” (**verse 32, NIV**). Receive instruction—don't refuse it. **Proverbs 19:20 (NIV)** says, “Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise.” Only fools reject instruction that will improve their lives. Respond to God's wisdom! He has made it available to us for our good, and we will be blessed when we choose to live by God's wisdom.

The Blessings of Wisdom (verses 32–35)

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. 33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. 34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. 35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

What kind of blessings can we expect from living a wise life? Peace with God is certainly high on the list, a good reputation is also a benefit. Wisdom affects every area of our lives. If we conduct our interpersonal relationships with wisdom, we will have meaningful friendships and strong family ties. If we practice our business policies with wisdom we will enjoy the blessing of a reputable business. If we live our Christian lives with wisdom we will draw others to Christ. The blessings of wisdom may not always be tangible, but they far outweigh the material blessings that we often desire. Wisdom is worth it.

Wisdom does have another aspect however, it is not only something that

God possesses it is something that God gives. We also see that Jesus demonstrates wisdom in the New Testament. Jesus is viewed as the ultimate fulfillment of the Old Testament. **Proverbs 8:22** tells us that wisdom was with God in the beginning before any of His “works of old.” Does this have a familiar ring to it? **John 1:1** says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Proverbs speaks of wisdom’s eternal existence in a way that parallels John’s words about Christ. In the Incarnation, Jesus is the complete demonstration of all that is divine including wisdom.

Proverbs 8:23 says that wisdom was “appointed” (NIV) or “set up” (KJV) from eternity before the beginning! Jesus is the Anointed One, the Everlasting God, He was with God in the beginning, before time began. He has always been and always will be. In fact, without Him, “nothing was made that has been made” (**John 1:3, NIV**). He is and was first. He is and was supreme. He was “rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part” (**Proverbs 8:30–31**). Jesus, Wisdom Himself, rejoices over those who choose Him.

When we choose Jesus, we avail ourselves of a tremendous infinite amount of wisdom. Christ is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (**1 Corinthians 1:24**). “Blessed are they that keep my [wisdom’s or Jesus’] ways” (**Proverbs 8:32**). Hallelujah! What a treasure! When we seek Jesus, we gain wisdom. He is our all in all.

QUESTION 2

According to Proverbs 8:35, “whoso findeth me [wisdom] findeth _____.”

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will learn to seek God’s wisdom.

How would your life be different if you sought God’s wisdom on a regular basis? This week, try an experiment. Make a conscious effort to gain Godly wisdom before you make a decision or tackle a problem.

STUDENTS’ RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will know that God’s wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

Christ, family, and friendship were the most important things in life for Diane a successful high school principal. She and her best friend, Asia, had gone to high school and college together. Asia had dropped out of college and ran off with her “dream man” without marrying him. It had been a shock because Asia had been president of the College Christian Fellowship. Shortly after that, they had lost touch. One Thursday night, Diane received a call from Asia.

“Asia, is it really you?” Diane cried. “It’s been 20 years.”

“Girl, it’s me!” said Asia. “I’m in town. I’d like to swing by your house later.”

When Diane opened the door, Asia’s face stole her breath away. Asia was scrawny thin, and her eyes reflected a life of drug abuse and pain.

Suddenly, Diane realized that at some point in her life, Asia had chosen a life quite different from the one they had shared as young girls in Bible study. The

folly of a life consumed by narcotics had blinded Asia and robbed her of the ability to make wise decisions.

Again, God's wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

PRAYER

God wisdom is precious and wonderful to have and to keep. Show us how to use wisdom in our personal and collective lives. Help us to see Jesus as true wisdom for us to have each and every day. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

The Authorship of Proverbs

The Bible records that when given the rare opportunity to request to receive anything from God that Solomon asked for "an understanding mind to govern [God's] people" (1 Kings 3:3-9). Evidence of the fulfillment is given in the account of how he handles a dispute between two prostitutes (1 Kings 3:16-28). As a result, Solomon is considered the wisest man to have ever lived (1 Kings 4:29-31). The Bible states that Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. The best of Solomon's songs is the Song of Solomon, identified as "the Song of Songs which is Solomon's" (1:1), in other words, his greatest one.

There is no doubt that the book of Proverbs reflects many of Solomon's 3,000 proverbs. From the first verse of Proverbs, we would assume that Solomon was the sole author of Proverbs. However, other authors are also identified throughout the book. For example, the words of Agur, the son of Jakeh (or the man of Massa), are recorded in chapter 30. And the words of

King Lemuel are recorded in chapter 31.

Also included in Proverbs are the collected sayings simply identified as the "words of the wise" (22:17-24:22), and the "sayings of the wise" (24:23-34)

Besides being wise, the Preacher [i.e., Solomon] also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care (Eccl 12:9).

Therefore, we can conclude that Proverbs is an edited work that includes the sayings of Agur, King Lemuel, and other wise people, among whom Solomon was the wisest.

HOW TO SAY IT

Hypostatize. Hy-POST-a-tize.

Metaphor. MET-a-for.

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

BIBLE BASIS: John 1:1–14

BIBLE TRUTH: Jesus has always been in existence.

MEMORY VERSE: And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth (John 1:14, KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson,

we will: **KNOW** the importance of the divinity and humanity of Jesus; **TRUST** in a Savior who is eternal and shares the divine nature with God; and **IMAGINE** and **SHARE** how Jesus is the Light in our lives and in the world.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: John 1:1–14—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

JOHN 1:1-14, KJV

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. Word (John 1:1, 14) *logos* (Gk.)—The Word; denotes the expression of thought, not the mere name of an object. In John 1:1 and 1:14, Jesus is called “the Word.”

B. Witness (v. 7) *martus or marturia* (Gk.)—Someone who has seen or heard or knows.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY’S LESSON

AIM: That your students will trust that our Savior is divine and is God.

INTRODUCTION

Gnosticism

Many of the early Gentile believers had been exposed to varying strains of Gnosticism (an early heresy) and did not believe in the humanity of Jesus. As people from diverse backgrounds became part of the church, it became necessary for the apostles to correct errors in doctrine as well as encourage the existing believers. In the Gospel of John, the writer seems to be addressing a mixed audience of believers, unbelievers, Jews, and Greeks.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will learn that Jesus is eternal and human.

I. JESUS IS THE WORD (John 1:1–3)

The first 14 verses of the book of John summarize the whole Gospel. In these verses, we are introduced to Jesus who He is, what He does, and the role He plays in the eternal plan of God for the world.

Jesus Is the Word (verses 1-3)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John began his book with the words “In the beginning,” he then introduced Jesus as the Word.” The word used here is *logos*. The Greeks understood *logos* to mean not only the written or spoken word, but also the thought or reasoning in the mind. John’s Greek readers would have understood the nuances of *logos*, realizing that John was presenting Jesus as the power that controlled all things.

The Jewish believers used the word *logos* to refer to God and would have connected this concept to the wisdom personified in the Old Testament (see **Proverbs 8**). In tandem with wisdom was ability; in this case, God’s wisdom was used to create the universe. Jesus is that wisdom personified, all of these concepts are bound up in the word *logos*.

John begins the second verse by reiterating the divine pre-existent nature of the Word. He proceeds to explain the role of the Word in the beginning. The word “made” means “came into being, happened, or became.” John is communicating the idea that this creative work happened out of nothing, that the Word did not rely on pre-existing material to create the universe (**Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2**).

John also begins to give us a hint as to the name of the Word by referring to the Word as “him.” The Word is more than just an expression of the personality of

God; it is the person of Jesus Christ. So John is saying that the Word, which was pre-existent with God, was in complete fellowship with God, possessed all the divine nature and characteristics of deity and created everything.

As believers today, when we read **John 1:1–3**, we may not realize all the nuances that the author intended. But what we must learn from **verse 1** is clear: Jesus was, is, and always will be. He is God, and He is the Creator and the Source of all life. The entirety of our Christian faith rests upon accepting these truths.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

In John 1:1, John calls Jesus

“_____.”

II. JESUS IS THE LIGHT (John 1:4-9)

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

“Life” in Greek is used throughout the Bible to refer to both physical and spiritual life. It is frequently qualified with the word “eternal.” Jesus was the embodiment of the fullness and quality of life that God offers to those who believe (**John 14:6; cp. 10:10**). The life that Jesus was to offer would be the light of all humanity.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

John uses the metaphors of “light” and “darkness” to illustrate the differences between a life of grace, mercy, and forgiveness and a life of sin and death. The

word “comprehended” has two possible meanings. One meaning is “understood, perceived, or learned” it communicates the fact that those who live in the darkness do not receive the light because of a lack of understanding they don’t get it. Another meaning is the idea “lay hold of or seized” and communicates the fact that the darkness (perhaps Satan or more generally sinful humanity) will never have the ultimate victory over the light of Jesus.

John is saying that some who see the light will be unable to understand and receive it because Satan has blinded them (**2 Corinthians 4:4**). However, John says that no matter how dark the darkness of evil seems in the world, no matter how the global circumstances seem to indicate that the darkness of evil is winning, the darkness cannot overcome the light that comes from the life of Christ.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

The apostle John goes on to talk about John the Baptist, the ministry of John the Baptist is prominent in the Gospel of John. Here, the apostle John is affirming the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist. Jesus echoed this assertion when He said that John the Baptist was the last of the great Old Testament prophets, who came in the spirit of Elijah (**Matthew 11:9–10; Mark 9:13**). John the Baptist had a unique call and ministry to be a witness of Jesus, the Light (**cp. Matthew 4:4; John 1:4**).

In **verse 7**, the word “witness” means to affirm by testimony what one has seen, heard, experienced, or known. Therefore,

John the Baptist had the prophetic duty of preparing the way for Jesus by preaching the testimonies of God.

The goal of John the Baptist was the same as the goal of John the apostle, to bring humanity to a place of faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. The author is careful to specify that John the Baptist was not the genuine light, but that he came to “bear witness,” to testify of, or report of the One to come. John the Baptist testified to the world of the nature and character of Jesus so that “all men through him might believe.”

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

The apostle John makes it clear that John the Baptist was not the Light, he was only to bear witness of the Light. Like the moon that does not shine its own light but only reflects the light of the sun, so John the Baptist reflects the Light of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus would be the true Light that would light every person. The word “true” refers to that which is sincere or genuine. The apostle John is saying that John the Baptist pointed others to the light to come, and that Jesus Christ was the authentic Light.

QUESTION 2

What role did John the Baptist fulfill before Jesus came?

III. JESUS REVEALS GOD’S CHARACTER (John 1:10–14)

Although He had always been omnipresent, Jesus had now come to be

one of us. He came to live with us, to feel our pain, to experience our joy, and to know our sorrow. He experienced human life fully. John and the other disciples knew Him intimately as Teacher and Friend. They ate with Him, talked with Him, laughed with Him, and cried with Him.

Rejection and Glory (verses 10-14)
10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

His gift of salvation is offered freely to all, but unless one accepts that salvation, the darkness will continue to obscure the light. When we do receive Jesus, God gives us the right to become His children (**verse 12**). What an amazing statement! We have the right to become God’s children. It’s not because of anything we have done to deserve it, but because God’s grace makes it possible for us to choose to believe and receive Jesus. We are not children in the physical sense; we are spiritual children of our Father. When we receive Christ, we are adopted into the family of God (**see I John 3:1**). We are considered heirs of God (**Galatians 3:29**), eligible to receive all of His promised blessings.

We cannot become God’s children by any

other means than through salvation in Jesus Christ.

John 1:13 makes it clear that God's children are not born in the natural way of conception and birth. We are born of God spiritually, and He chose us. God chose to send His Son, Jesus, to the earth to take on the form of human flesh. John first introduced us to Jesus as the eternally existing Word of God. Now he reveals another facet of logos Jesus. The One who has always existed, the One who is God, has become a human being (**verse 14**).

Verse 14 says, "The Word dwelt among us." John's Jewish readers would have understood the word "dwelling" to be connected to the word for "tabernacle." In Old Testament times, the tabernacle was where God's glory dwelled. The disciples watched Him perform miracles, and they knew Him as the Messiah.

QUESTION 3

In John 1:14, John records that Jesus is full of ____ and ____.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will understand that Jesus came to give a meaningful, real life to all who will receive Him.

Jesus came into this world in the form of human flesh, yet those around Him did not acknowledge Him for who He is. They chose to continue living in darkness rather than receiving the Light. Things aren't so different in our world today. In modern society, especially in America and other modern societies, many people have become accustomed to a fast-paced hectic lifestyle. They are easily distracted, often bored, or generally dissatisfied with life.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will learn that the right theology keeps us in right relationship with God.

For the past 16 years, Greg had been a member of a group that did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God; they did not believe that Jesus was truly God and truly man. Greg tried and tried to be good enough to be in the number that would go to heaven, however he often slipped. It may have been in small ways, but he knew he was slipping and was not good enough to be in that number.

Then Greg began looking into the Bible for himself, because he desperately wanted to have a right relationship with God. He looked at **John 1:1** where he saw that the Word was God and then at **verse 14** where it said that the Word was made flesh. He wondered to himself: Who else could that be but Jesus? Then it hit him that the Bible was saying Jesus is God! This is not what those in the group had told him about Jesus.

The clincher was when he read in verse 12 that all he had to do to have that elusive relationship with God was to believe and receive Jesus! Right then and there, that's what Greg did.

PRAYER

Lord, keep us in Your care, and remind us of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. We bless You, and we praise You. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

Heresies regarding the nature of Jesus

Gnosticism (from the Greek *gnosis*, meaning knowledge) reflects the teachings of a diverse group of people who claimed that they had inside knowledge into various truth regarding the nature of Jesus. Specifically, they taught that the material world was evil and that by knowledge, one could ascend to the pure spirituality of the heavenly realm. We see Paul's initial attempts to address this heresy in Colossians.

Docetism reflects the teachings of a subset of Gnosticism. Docetism comes from the Greek word *dokeo*, which means to seem or to appear. Docetists taught that Jesus was not a human being with flesh and blood. Rather he was actually a ghost or an apparition who appeared to be human. John addresses this heresy in his epistles, where he endeavors to reaffirm the full humanity and deity of Jesus. Those who deny this teaching are deemed antichrists.

Finally, Arianism was a heresy that developed in the 4th century. As opposed to Docetism that denied the full humanity of Jesus, Arianism denied the full deity of Jesus. In essence, they taught that Jesus was a demigod, i.e., less than God but more than human. This teaching is memorialized in the words of Arius, speaking of Jesus: "There was a time when he (i.e., Jesus) was not." In other words, Arius taught that Jesus was some kind of created being. This heresy is reflected in the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses, who believe that Jesus was the first of God's created beings.

HOW TO SAY IT

Dualistic.	Du-al-IST-ic.
Emanation.	Em-a-NA-shun.
Preexistence.	Pre-ex-IST-ens.
Incarnation.	In-car-NA-shun.

DAILY HOME BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY

The Beginning of the Year
(Exodus 12:1–8)

TUESDAY

The Beginning of Wisdom
(Psalm 111)

WEDNESDAY

In the Beginning, God
(Genesis 1:1–5)

THURSDAY

From the Foundations of the Earth
(Isaiah 40:21–26)

FRIDAY

The Beginning of the Gospel
(Mark 1:1–8)

SATURDAY

Beginning from Jerusalem
(Luke 24:44–49)

SUNDAY

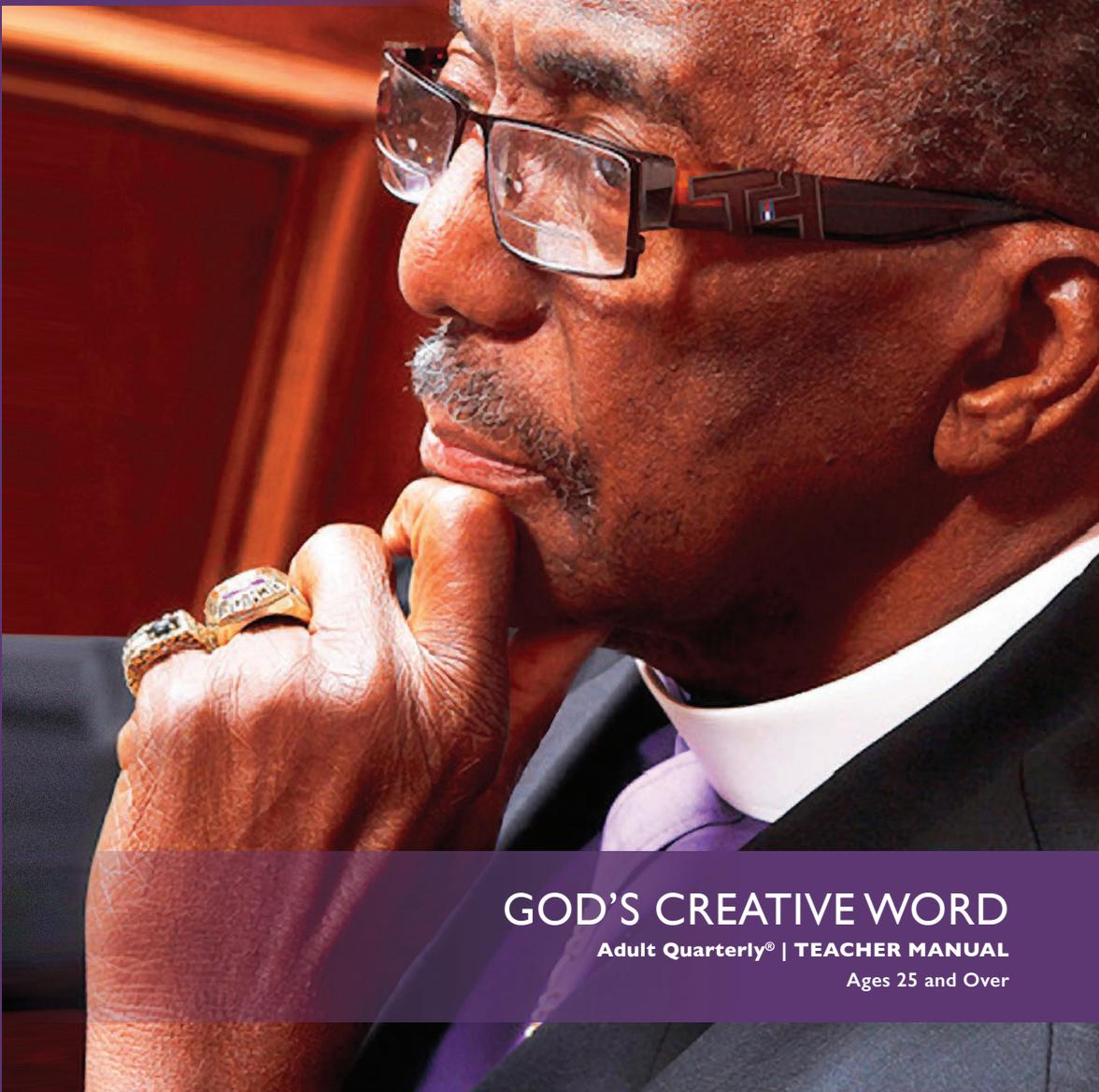
In the Beginning, the Word
(John 1:1–14)

MARCH ▪ APRIL ▪ MAY 2022

POWER FOR LIVING



Church Of God In Christ



GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Adult Quarterly® | **TEACHER MANUAL**

Ages 25 and Over

WISDOM'S PART IN CREATION

BIBLE BASIS: Proverbs 8:22–35

BIBLE TRUTH: Proverbs speaks of wisdom having a divine origin.

MEMORY VERSE: Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not (Proverbs 8:33,KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson, we will: **EXPLAIN** what God's wisdom is; **REFLECT** on God's wisdom in our lives; and **PRAY** for wisdom in our everyday life experiences.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Proverbs 8—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

TEACHER PREPARATION

MATERIALS NEEDED: Bibles (several different versions), Quarterly Commentary/Teacher Manual, Adult Quarterly, teaching resources such as charts, worksheets/handouts, paper, pens, and pencils.

OTHER MATERIALS NEEDED / TEACHER'S NOTES:

LESSON OVERVIEW

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

To know that wisdom is an important aspect with God in God's creation.

BIBLE LEARNING

To remember that wisdom is to be gained and not wasted.

BIBLE APPLICATION

To better understand how we can apply wisdom in our daily lives.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

Students will share thoughts on how wisdom is obtained.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

PROVERBS 8:22-35, KJV

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. Hypostatize (Hy-POST-a-tize)—To think of a concept, abstraction, etc., as having a real, objective existence.

B. Metaphor—A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is likened to something, but is not to be taken literally.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

The book of Proverbs was written as instructional material, to be used as a type of “how to” manual for life. As such the book of Proverbs consists of succinct statements about life and human nature. Similes, metaphors, and other figures of speech are used generously to help give the reader a memorable word picture of a particular truth. In today’s passage, wisdom is portrayed as “Lady Wisdom,” giving us a unique, down-to-earth perspective on an intangible commodity. We will see wisdom is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ, He is wisdom.

TEACHING THE BIBLE LESSON

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY’S LESSON

AIM: That your students will appreciate the role that wisdom played in creation.

INTRODUCTION

In this passage wisdom is personified. Some have called this a “hypostatization”—thinking of a concept, abstraction, as having real objective existence. It seems more appropriate to think of this passage merely as a metaphor, that is a personification of an attribute of God but not an actual being in any way.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will desire to acquire wisdom in their lives.

I. WISDOM'S STORY (Proverbs 8:22–31)

In **Proverbs 8**, we see wisdom existing eternally. A sweeping panorama of creation is covered in **verses 24** through **29**, following the order of God's work listed in Genesis. Wisdom was with God before there was anything created. Wisdom was with God before there were oceans and rivers, before there were mountains and hills. Wisdom was there when God created the heavens and when He "set a compass" (**verse 27**) or "marked out the horizon" (NIV). What an indescribably beautiful picture!

The Beauty of Wisdom (verses 22-31)

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. 23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, Or ever the earth was. 24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: 26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. 27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: 28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: 29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when

he appointed the foundations of the earth: 30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; 31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

The everlasting wisdom of God, an intrinsic fiber of His nature and character that was with Him as He created the world is available to us! When God set the world into motion, wisdom was there. Wisdom was there when God set the boundaries for the oceans, when He set the stars in motion, wisdom was there when He placed the clouds in the sky (**verse 28**). Wisdom is like a skilled artisan, rejoicing in the Master's presence and His creation (**verses 30–31**). Wisdom flowed from God's character, and His wonderful, creation was the result. God desires to give wisdom to those who seek Him. What an incredible thought!

The Hebrew word in **Proverbs 8:30** translated as "brought up" means "architect," "master workman," or "skilled workman." The picture is that of wisdom, the faithful master artisan, standing at God's side as He created the universe. "How many are your works, LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures" (**Psalms 104:24**, NIV).

Wisdom was ecstatic, as she was able to enjoy the "handiwork" of God (**Psalms 19:1**, NKJV). This implies a wonderful gathering of wisdom and humankind—do we dare envision a party? We celebrate God's creation in many ways. Each time we enjoy a ride through the countryside and see the bursting forth of the springtime

flowers, view snowcapped mountains, or enjoy a picnic on a bright sunny day, we share wisdom's pleasure and joy in Creation. As we look at God's creation, we should praise our Creator: "Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" (Psalm 107:8).

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

Wisdom was present when God placed the _____ in the sky.

clouds

LIGHT ON THE WORD

The Delights of Wisdom

God's creative wisdom is available for the asking. In fact, wisdom "delights" in those who choose her (verse 31). Through wisdom, God set the creation in motion; likewise, through wisdom He orders our lives. He is aware of every detail of our lives and delights in giving us the wisdom to know Him more. As we know Him more, we begin to walk in wisdom. It's a circular principle, but one that God longs for us to take hold of. The more we know Him, the more wisdom we receive, and the more wisdom we receive, the more we seek Him.

II. WISDOM'S INVITATION (Proverbs 8:32–35)

So the plea goes out to all people: "Listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways" (verse 32, NIV). Receive instruction—don't refuse it. **Proverbs 19:20 (NIV)** says, "Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise." Only fools reject instruction that will improve their lives. Respond to God's

wisdom! He has made it available to us for our good, and we will be blessed when we choose to live by God's wisdom.

The Blessings of Wisdom (verses 32-35)

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. 33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. 34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. 35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

What kind of blessings can we expect from living a wise life? Peace with God is certainly high on the list, a good reputation is also a benefit. Wisdom affects every area of our lives. If we conduct our interpersonal relationships with wisdom, we will have meaningful friendships and strong family ties. If we practice our business policies with wisdom we will enjoy the blessing of a reputable business. If we live our Christian lives with wisdom we will draw others to Christ. The blessings of wisdom may not always be tangible, but they far outweigh the material blessings that we often desire. Wisdom is worth it.

Wisdom does have another aspect however, it is not only something that God possesses it is something that God gives. We also see that Jesus demonstrates wisdom in the New Testament. Jesus is viewed as the ultimate fulfillment of the Old Testament. **Proverbs 8:22** tells us that wisdom was with God in the beginning before any of His "works of old." Does this have a familiar ring to it? **John 1:1** says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was

God.” Proverbs speaks of wisdom’s eternal existence in a way that parallel John’s words about Christ. In the Incarnation, Jesus is the complete demonstration of all that is divine including wisdom.

Proverbs 8:23 says that wisdom was “appointed” (NIV) or “set up” (KJV) from eternity before the beginning! Jesus is the Anointed One, the Everlasting God, He was with God in the beginning, before time began. He has always been and always will be. In fact, without Him, “nothing was made that has been made” (**John 1:3, NIV**). He is and was first. He is and was supreme. He was “rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part” (**Proverbs 8:30–31**). Jesus, Wisdom Himself, rejoices over those who choose Him.

When we choose Jesus, we avail ourselves of a tremendous infinite amount of wisdom. Christ is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (**1 Corinthians 1:24**). “Blessed are they that keep my [wisdom’s or Jesus’] ways” (**Proverbs 8:32**). Hallelujah! What a treasure! When we seek Jesus, we gain wisdom. He is our all in all.

QUESTION 2

According to Proverbs 8:35, “whoso findeth me [wisdom] findeth _____.”

life. Answers will vary.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

The Hebrew word for “life” means to be alive in a physical sense. Although we see hints in the Old Testament of eternal life, this idea was not yet fully developed. When Jesus came, our understanding of life after death became clear. We read in **John 3:36** that those who believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, have everlasting

life. Those who do not believe in Him do not have everlasting life in heaven, but God’s wrath is on them. The book of Proverbs focuses on wisdom, wisdom that comes from God. This wisdom is incomplete until we receive Jesus Christ, who rightly claims that He is life.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will learn to seek God’s wisdom.

How would your life be different if you sought God’s wisdom on a regular basis? This week, try an experiment. Make a conscious effort to gain Godly wisdom before you make a decision or tackle a problem.

STUDENTS’ RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will know that God’s wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

Christ, family, and friendship were the most important things in life for Diane a successful high school principal. She and her best friend, Asia, had gone to high school and college together. Asia had dropped out of college and ran off with her “dream man” without marrying him. It had been a shock because Asia had been president of the College Christian Fellowship. Shortly after that, they had lost touch. One Thursday night, Diane received a call from Asia.

“Asia, is it really you?” Diana cried. “It’s been 20 years.”

“Girl, it’s me!” said Asia. “I’m in town. I’d like to swing by your house later.”

When Diane opened the door, Asia's face stole her breath away. Asia was scarecrow thin, and her eyes reflected a life of drug abuse and pain.

Suddenly, Diane realized that at some point in her life, Asia had chosen a life quite different from the one they had shared as young girls in Bible study. The folly of a life consumed by narcotics had blinded Asia and robbed her of the ability to make wise decisions.

Again, God's wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

PRAYER

God wisdom is precious and wonderful to have and to keep. Show us how to use wisdom in our personal and collective lives. Help us to see Jesus as true wisdom for us to have each and every day. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

The Authorship of Proverbs

The Bible records that when given the rare opportunity to request to receive anything from God that Solomon asked for "an understanding mind to govern [God's] people" (1 Kings 3:3-9). Evidence of the fulfillment is given in the account of how he handles a dispute between two prostitutes (1 Kings 3:16-28). As a result, Solomon is considered the wisest man to have ever lived (1 Kings 4:29-31). The Bible states that Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. The best of Solomon's songs is the Song of Solomon, identified as "the Song of Songs which is Solomon's" (1:1), in other words, his greatest one.

There is no doubt that the book of Proverbs reflects many of Solomon's 3,000 proverbs. From the first verse of Proverbs, we would assume that Solomon was the sole author of Proverbs. However, other authors are also identified throughout the book. For example, the words of Agur, the son of Jakeh (or the man of Massa), are recorded in chapter 30. And the words of King Lemuel are recorded in chapter 31.

Also included in Proverbs are the collected sayings simply identified as the "words of the wise" (22:17-24:22), and the "sayings of the wise" (24:23-34)

Besides being wise, the Preacher [i.e., Solomon] also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care (Eccl 12:9).

Therefore, we can conclude that Proverbs is an edited work that includes the sayings of Agur, King Lemuel, and other wise people, among whom Solomon was the wisest.

HOW TO SAY IT

Hypostatize. Hy-POST-a-tize.

Metaphor. MET-a-for.

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

BIBLE BASIS: John 1:1–14

BIBLE TRUTH: Jesus has always been in existence.

MEMORY VERSE: And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth (John 1:14, KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson,

we will: **KNOW** the importance of the divinity and humanity of Jesus; **TRUST** in a Savior who is eternal and shares the divine nature with God; and **IMAGINE** and **SHARE** how Jesus is the Light in our lives and in the world.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: John 1:1–14—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

TEACHER PREPARATION

MATERIALS NEEDED: Bibles (several different versions), Quarterly Commentary/Teacher Manual, Adult Quarterly, teaching resources such as charts, worksheets/handouts, paper, pens, and pencils.

OTHER MATERIALS NEEDED / TEACHER'S NOTES:

LESSON OVERVIEW

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

To understand that Jesus is fully divine and fully human.

BIBLE LEARNING

To remember that Jesus was personally involved in creation from the beginning.

BIBLE APPLICATION

To better understand the role of Jesus as God's agent in creation.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

Students will discuss ways that Jesus is real in their lives.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

JOHN 1:1-14, KJV

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. Word (John 1:1, 14) *logos* (Gk.)—The Word; denotes the

expression of thought, not the mere name of an object. In John 1:1 and 1:14, Jesus is called “the Word.”

B. Witness (v. 7) *martus* or *marturia* (Gk.)—Someone who has seen or heard or knows.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

The author of the book of John identifies himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23; 19:26; 21:7, 20, NIV). Most scholars agree that the apostle John is the author of this book. John was well-known in the early church and was intimately familiar with Jewish life. He would have been an eyewitness to many of the events recorded in the Gospel of John.

TEACHING THE BIBLE LESSON

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY’S LESSON

AIM: That your students will trust that our Savior is divine and is God.

INTRODUCTION

Gnosticism

Many of the early Gentile believers had been exposed to varying strains of Gnosticism (an early heresy) and did not believe in the humanity of Jesus. As people from diverse backgrounds became part of the church, it became necessary for the apostles to correct errors in doctrine as well as encourage the existing believers. In the Gospel of John, the writer seems to be addressing a mixed audience of believers, unbelievers, Jews, and Greeks.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will learn that Jesus is eternal and human.

I. JESUS IS THE WORD (John 1:1–3)

The first 14 verses of the book of John summarize the whole Gospel. In these verses, we are introduced to Jesus who He is, what He does, and the role He plays in the eternal plan of God for the world.

Jesus Is the Word (verses 1-3)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John began his book with the words “In the beginning,” he then introduced Jesus as the Word.” The word used here is *logos*. The Greeks understood *logos* to mean not only the written or spoken word, but also the thought or reasoning in the mind. John’s Greek readers would have understood the nuances of *logos*, realizing that John was presenting Jesus as the power that controlled all things.

The Jewish believers used the word *logos* to refer to God and would have connected this concept to the wisdom personified in the Old Testament (see **Proverbs 8**). In tandem with wisdom was ability; in this case, God’s wisdom was used to create the universe. Jesus is that wisdom personified, all of these concepts are bound up in the word *logos*.

John begins the second verse by reiterating the divine pre-existent nature of the Word. He proceeds to explain the role of the Word in the beginning. The word “made” means “came into being, happened, or became.” John is communicating the idea

that this creative work happened out of nothing, that the Word did not rely on pre-existing material to create the universe (**Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2**).

John also begins to give us a hint as to the name of the Word by referring to the Word as “him.” The Word is more than just an expression of the personality of God; it is the person of Jesus Christ. So John is saying that the Word, which was pre-existent with God, was in complete fellowship with God, possessed all the divine nature and characteristics of deity and created everything.

As believers today, when we read **John 1:1–3**, we may not realize all the nuances that the author intended. But what we must learn from **verse 1** is clear: Jesus was, is, and always will be. He is God, and He is the Creator and the Source of all life. The entirety of our Christian faith rests upon accepting these truths.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

In John 1:1, John calls Jesus

“_____.”

the Word

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Jesus Is Everything to Us

Through Jesus, all things were created. The Bible says, “Without him nothing was made that has been made” (**John 1:3, NIV**). To understand the creation, we must know the Creator.

II. JESUS IS THE LIGHT (John 1:4-9)

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

“Life” in Greek is used throughout the Bible to refer to both physical and spiritual life. It is frequently qualified with the word “eternal.” Jesus was the embodiment of the fullness and quality of life that God offers to those who believe (**John 14:6; cp. 10:10**). The life that Jesus was to offer would be the light of all humanity.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

John uses the metaphors of “light” and “darkness” to illustrate the differences between a life of grace, mercy, and forgiveness and a life of sin and death. The word “comprehended” has two possible meanings. One meaning is “understood, perceived, or learned” it communicates the fact that those who live in the darkness do not receive the light because of a lack of understanding they don’t get it. Another meaning is the idea “lay hold of or seized” and communicates the fact that the darkness (perhaps Satan or more generally sinful humanity) will never have the ultimate victory over the light of Jesus.

John is saying that some who see the light will be unable to understand and receive it because Satan has blinded them (**II Corinthians 4:4**). However, John says that no matter how dark the darkness of evil seems in the world, no matter how the global circumstances seem to indicate that the darkness of evil is winning, the darkness cannot overcome the light that comes from the life of Christ.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

The apostle John goes on to talk about John the Baptist, the ministry of John the Baptist is prominent in the Gospel of John. Here, the apostle John is affirming the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist. Jesus echoed this assertion when He said that John the Baptist was the last of the great Old Testament prophets, who came in the spirit of Elijah (**Matthew 11:9–10; Mark 9:13**). John the Baptist had a unique call and ministry to be a witness of Jesus, the Light (**cp. Matthew 4:4; John 1:4**).

In **verse 7**, the word “witness” means to affirm by testimony what one has seen, heard, experienced, or known. Therefore, John the Baptist had the prophetic duty of preparing the way for Jesus by preaching the testimonies of God.

The goal of John the Baptist was the same as the goal of John the apostle, to bring humanity to a place of faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. The author is careful to specify that John the Baptist was not the genuine light, but that he came to “bear witness,” to testify of, or report of the One to come. John the Baptist testified to the world of the nature and character of Jesus so that “all men through him might believe.”

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

The apostle John makes it clear that John

the Baptist was not the Light, he was only to bear witness of the Light. Like the moon that does not shine its own light but only reflects the light of the sun, so John the Baptist reflects the Light of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus would be the true Light that would light every person. The word “true” refers to that which is sincere or genuine. The apostle John is saying that John the Baptist pointed others to the light to come, and that Jesus Christ was the authentic Light.

QUESTION 2

What role did John the Baptist fulfill before Jesus came?

He was sent to bear witness of the Light. Answers will vary.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Jesus Denied by the World

Although Jesus created the world (**Colossians 1:16**), the world did not recognize Him as Savior (**John 1:10**). Verse 11 says, “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” Jesus came to the Jews first but most of them rejected Him as their Messiah.

III. JESUS REVEALS GOD’S CHARACTER (John 1:10–14)

Although He had always been omnipresent, Jesus had now come to be one of us. He came to live with us, to feel our pain, to experience our joy, and to know our sorrow. He experienced human life fully. John and the other disciples knew Him intimately as Teacher and Friend. They ate with Him, talked with Him, laughed with Him, and cried with Him.

Rejection and Glory (verses 10-14)
10 He was in the world, and the

world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

His gift of salvation is offered freely to all, but unless one accepts that salvation, the darkness will continue to obscure the light. When we do receive Jesus, God gives us the right to become His children (**verse 12**). What an amazing statement! We have the right to become God’s children. It’s not because of anything we have done to deserve it, but because God’s grace makes it possible for us to choose to believe and receive Jesus. We are not children in the physical sense; we are spiritual children of our Father. When we receive Christ, we are adopted into the family of God (**see I John 3:1**). We are considered heirs of God (**Galatians 3:29**), eligible to receive all of His promised blessings.

We cannot become God’s children by any other means than through salvation in Jesus Christ.

John 1:13 makes it clear that God’s children are not born in the natural way of conception and birth. We are born of God spiritually, and He chose us. God chose to send His Son, Jesus, to the earth to take on the form of human flesh. John first introduced us to Jesus as the eternally

existing Word of God. Now he reveals another facet of logos Jesus. The One who has always existed, the One who is God, has become a human being (**verse 14**).

Verse 14 says, “The Word dwelt among us.” John’s Jewish readers would have understood the word “dwelling” to be connected to the word for “tabernacle.” In Old Testament times, the tabernacle was where God’s glory dwelled. The disciples watched Him perform miracles, and they knew Him as the Messiah.

QUESTION 3

In John 1:14, John records that Jesus is full of ____ and ____.

grace, truth.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

The Power of Salvation

As modern-day believers, we can’t physically touch Jesus. He is no longer here in the flesh, yet we can see His glory. We can testify to the miracles He has worked in our lives and the lives of others. We can bear witness to the power of salvation, and we can become like Him. In fact, we should strive to become like Him, because we are frail humans. When we receive the logos, we will begin to reflect the likeness of Him who is the Living Word.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will understand that Jesus came to give a meaningful, real life to all who will receive Him.

Jesus came into this world in the form of human flesh, yet those around Him did not acknowledge Him for who He is. They chose to continue living in darkness rather than receiving the Light. Things

aren’t so different in our world today. In modern society, especially in America and other modern societies, many people have become accustomed to a fast-paced hectic lifestyle. They are easily distracted, often bored, or generally dissatisfied with life.

STUDENTS’ RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will learn that the right theology keeps us in right relationship with God.

For the past 16 years, Greg had been a member of a group that did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God; they did not believe that Jesus was truly God and truly man. Greg tried and tried to be good enough to be in the number that would go to heaven, however he often slipped. It may have been in small ways, but he knew he was slipping and was not good enough to be in that number.

Then Greg began looking into the Bible for himself, because he desperately wanted to have a right relationship with God. He looked at **John 1:1** where he saw that the Word was God and then at **verse 14** where it said that the Word was made flesh. He wondered to himself: Who else could that be but Jesus? Then it hit him that the Bible was saying Jesus is God! This is not what those in the group had told him about Jesus.

The clincher was when he read in verse 12 that all he had to do to have that elusive relationship with God was to believe and receive Jesus! Right then and there, that’s what Greg did.

PRAYER

Lord, keep us in Your care, and remind us of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of

our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. We bless You, and we praise You. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

Heresies regarding the nature of Jesus

Gnosticism (from the Greek *gnosis*, meaning knowledge) reflects the teachings of a diverse group of people who claimed that they had inside knowledge into various truth regarding the nature of Jesus. Specifically, they taught that the material world was evil and that by knowledge, one could ascend to the pure spirituality of the heavenly realm. We see Paul's initial attempts to address this heresy in Colossians.

Docetism reflects the teachings of a subset of Gnosticism. Docetism comes from the Greek word *dokeo*, which means to seem or to appear. Docetists taught that Jesus was not a human being with flesh and blood. Rather he was actually a ghost or an apparition who appeared to be human. John addresses this heresy in his epistles, where he endeavors to reaffirm the full humanity and deity of Jesus. Those who deny this teaching are deemed antichrists.

Finally, Arianism was a heresy that developed in the 4th century. As opposed to Docetism that denied the full humanity of Jesus, Arianism denied the full deity of Jesus. In essence, they taught that Jesus was a demigod, i.e., less than God but more than human. This teaching is memorialized in the words of Arius, speaking of Jesus: "There was a time when he (i.e., Jesus) was not." In other words, Arius taught that Jesus was some kind of created being. This heresy is reflected in the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses, who

believe that Jesus was the first of God's created beings.

HOW TO SAY IT

Dualistic.	Du-al-IST-ic.
Emanation.	Em-a-NA-shun.
Preexistence.	Pre-ex-IST-ens.
Incarnation.	In-car-NA-shun.

DAILY HOME BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY

The Beginning of the Year
(Exodus 12:1–8)

TUESDAY

The Beginning of Wisdom
(Psalm 111)

WEDNESDAY

In the Beginning, God
(Genesis 1:1–5)

THURSDAY

From the Foundations of the Earth
(Isaiah 40:21–26)

FRIDAY

The Beginning of the Gospel
(Mark 1:1–8)

SATURDAY

Beginning from Jerusalem
(Luke 24:44–49)

SUNDAY

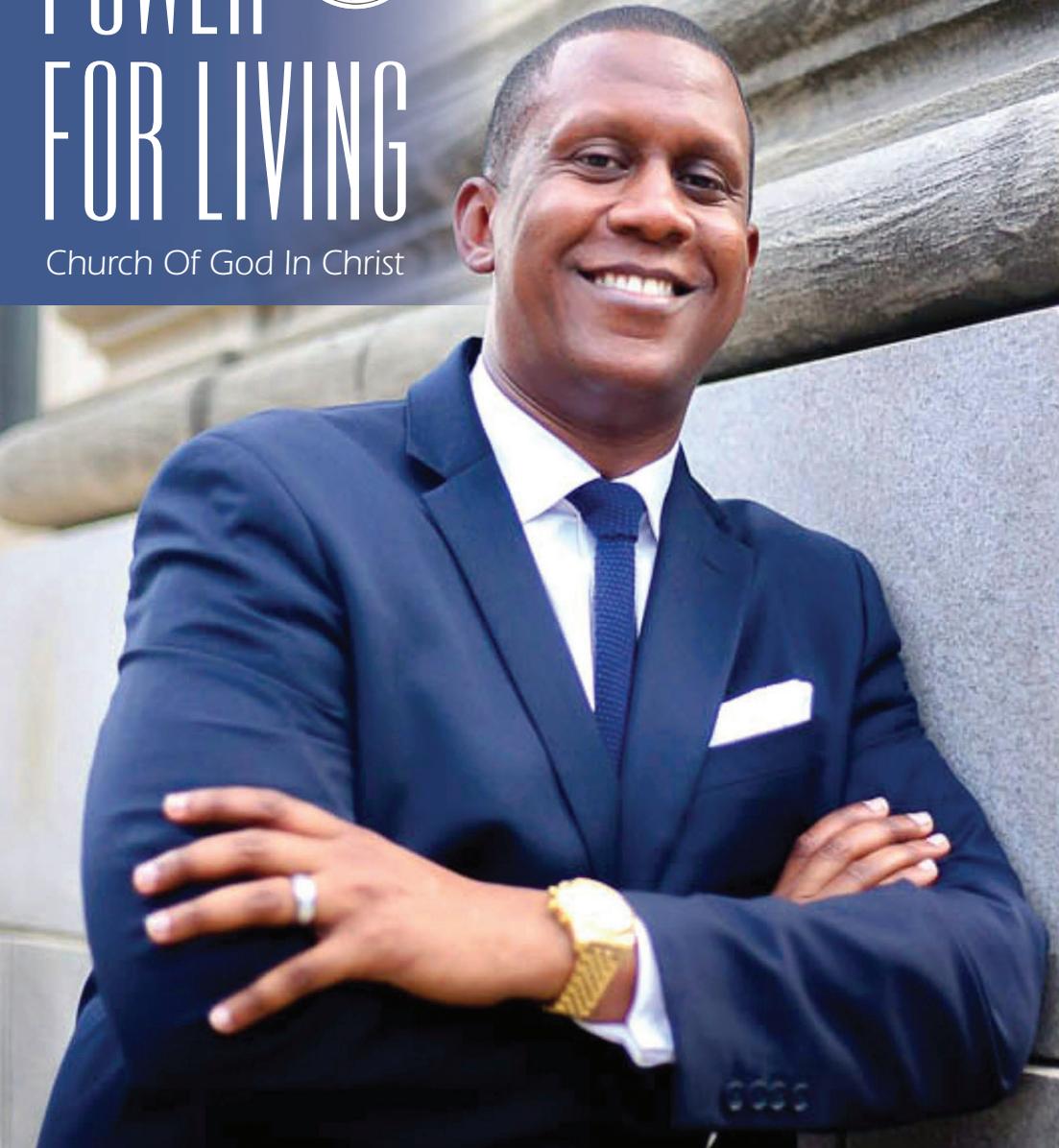
In the Beginning, the Word
(John 1:1–14)

MARCH ▪ APRIL ▪ MAY 2022

POWER FOR LIVING



Church Of God In Christ



GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Young Adult/Young People Quarterly® | STUDENT MANUAL

Ages 18-24

YOUNG ADULT YOUNG PEOPLE QUARTERLY

SPRING QUARTER 2022
MARCH APRIL MAY
GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Unit 1 • The Word Was in the Beginning

March 6	Wisdom's Part in Creation	7
March 13	The Word Became Flesh	13
March 20	The Wedding at Cana	20
March 27	God's Word Saves	26
April		
April 3	Jesus Testifies to the Truth	33
April 10	The Living Word	39

Unit 2 • The Word Is Here and Now

April 17	Cleansing the Temple	44
April 24	Woman of Samaria	51
May 1	Healing the Blind Man	60

Unit 3 • The Word Will Be

May 8	The Bread of Life	68
May 15	The Good Shepherd	77
May 22	The Resurrection and the Life	85
May 29	The Way, the Truth, and the Life	94

Bishop J. Drew Sheard
Presiding Bishop
Church Of God In Christ, Inc.

Bishop Uleses Henderson Jr., Esq.
Chairman, Publishing Board
Church Of God In Christ, Inc.

WISDOM'S PART IN CREATION

BIBLE BASIS: Proverbs 8:22–35

BIBLE TRUTH: Proverbs speaks of wisdom having a divine origin.

MEMORY VERSE: Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not (Proverbs 8:33,KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson, we will: **EXPLAIN** what God's wisdom is; **REFLECT** on God's wisdom in our lives; and **PRAY** for wisdom in our everyday life experiences.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Proverbs 8—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

PROVERBS 8:22-35, KJV

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. Hypostatize (Hy-POST-a-tize)—To think of a concept, abstraction, etc., as having a real, objective existence.

B. Metaphor—A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is likened to something, but is not to be taken literally.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

AIM: That your students will appreciate the role that wisdom played in creation.

INTRODUCTION

In this passage wisdom is personified. Some have called this a “hypostatization”—thinking of a concept, abstraction, as having real objective existence. It seems more appropriate to think of this passage merely as a metaphor, that is a personification of an attribute of God but not an actual being in any way.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will desire to acquire wisdom in their lives.

I. WISDOM'S STORY (Proverbs 8:22–31)

In **Proverbs 8**, we see wisdom existing eternally. A sweeping panorama of creation is covered in **verses 24** through **29**, following the order of God's work listed in Genesis. Wisdom was with God before there was anything created. Wisdom was with God before there were oceans and rivers, before there were mountains and

hills. Wisdom was there when God created the heavens and when He “set a compass” (**verse 27**) or “marked out the horizon” (NIV). What an indescribably beautiful picture!

The Beauty of Wisdom (verses 22-31)

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. 23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, Or ever the earth was. 24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: 26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. 27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: 28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: 29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: 30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; 31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

The everlasting wisdom of God, an intrinsic fiber of His nature and character that was with Him as He created the world is available to us! When God set the world into motion, wisdom was there. Wisdom was there when God set the boundaries for the oceans, when He set the stars in

motion, wisdom was there when He placed the clouds in the sky (**verse 28**). Wisdom is like a skilled artisan, rejoicing in the Master's presence and His creation (**verses 30–31**). Wisdom flowed from God's character, and His wonderful creation was the result. God desires to give wisdom to those who seek Him. What an incredible thought!

The Hebrew word in **Proverbs 8:30** translated as “brought up” means “architect,” “master workman,” or “skilled workman.” The picture is that of wisdom, the faithful master artisan, standing at God's side as He created the universe. “How many are your works, LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures” (**Psalm 104:24, NIV**).

Wisdom was ecstatic, as she was able to enjoy the “handiwork” of God (**Psalm 19:1, NKJV**). This implies a wonderful gathering of wisdom and humankind—do we dare envision a party? We celebrate God's creation in many ways. Each time we enjoy a ride through the countryside and see the bursting forth of the springtime flowers, view snowcapped mountains, or enjoy a picnic on a bright sunny day, we share wisdom's pleasure and joy in Creation. As we look at God's creation, we should praise our Creator: “Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” (**Psalm 107:8**).

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

Wisdom was present when God placed the _____ in the sky.

II. WISDOM'S INVITATION (Proverbs 8:32–35)

So the plea goes out to all people: “Listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways” (**verse 32, NIV**). Receive instruction—don't refuse it. **Proverbs 19:20 (NIV)** says, “Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise.” Only fools reject instruction that will improve their lives. Respond to God's wisdom! He has made it available to us for our good, and we will be blessed when we choose to live by God's wisdom.

The Blessings of Wisdom (verses 32-35)

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. 33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. 34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. 35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

What kind of blessings can we expect from living a wise life? Peace with God is certainly high on the list, a good reputation is also a benefit. Wisdom affects every area of our lives. If we conduct our interpersonal relationships with wisdom, we will have meaningful friendships and strong family ties. If we practice our business policies with wisdom we will enjoy the blessing of a reputable business. If we live our Christian lives with wisdom we will draw others to Christ. The blessings of wisdom may not always be tangible, but they far outweigh the material blessings that we often desire. Wisdom is worth it.

Wisdom does have another aspect however, it is not only something that

God possesses it is something that God gives. We also see that Jesus demonstrates wisdom in the New Testament. Jesus is viewed as the ultimate fulfillment of the Old Testament. **Proverbs 8:22** tells us that wisdom was with God in the beginning before any of His “works of old.” Does this have a familiar ring to it? **John 1:1** says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Proverbs speaks of wisdom’s eternal existence in a way that parallels John’s words about Christ. In the Incarnation, Jesus is the complete demonstration of all that is divine including wisdom.

Proverbs 8:23 says that wisdom was “appointed” (NIV) or “set up” (KJV) from eternity before the beginning! Jesus is the Anointed One, the Everlasting God, He was with God in the beginning, before time began. He has always been and always will be. In fact, without Him, “nothing was made that has been made” (**John 1:3, NIV**). He is and was first. He is and was supreme. He was “rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part” (**Proverbs 8:30–31**). Jesus, Wisdom Himself, rejoices over those who choose Him.

When we choose Jesus, we avail ourselves of a tremendous infinite amount of wisdom. Christ is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (**1 Corinthians 1:24**). “Blessed are they that keep my [wisdom’s or Jesus’] ways” (**Proverbs 8:32**). Hallelujah! What a treasure! When we seek Jesus, we gain wisdom. He is our all in all.

QUESTION 2

According to Proverbs 8:35, “whoso findeth me [wisdom] findeth _____.”

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will learn to seek God’s wisdom.

How would your life be different if you sought God’s wisdom on a regular basis? This week, try an experiment. Make a conscious effort to gain Godly wisdom before you make a decision or tackle a problem.

STUDENTS’ RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will know that God’s wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

Christ, family, and friendship were the most important things in life for Diane a successful high school principal. She and her best friend, Asia, had gone to high school and college together. Asia had dropped out of college and ran off with her “dream man” without marrying him. It had been a shock because Asia had been president of the College Christian Fellowship. Shortly after that, they had lost touch. One Thursday night, Diane received a call from Asia.

“Asia, is it really you?” Diana cried. “It’s been 20 years.”

“Girl, it’s me!” said Asia. “I’m in town. I’d like to swing by your house later.”

When Diane opened the door, Asia’s face stole her breath away. Asia was scarecrow thin, and her eyes reflected a life of drug abuse and pain.

Suddenly, Diane realized that at some point in her life, Asia had chosen a life quite different from the one they had shared as young girls in Bible study. The

folly of a life consumed by narcotics had blinded Asia and robbed her of the ability to make wise decisions.

Again, God’s wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

PRAYER

God wisdom is precious and wonderful to have and to keep. Show us how to use wisdom in our personal and collective lives. Help us to see Jesus as true wisdom for us to have each and every day. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

The Authorship of Proverbs

The Bible records that when given the rare opportunity to request to receive anything from God that Solomon asked for “an understanding mind to govern [God’s] people” (1 Kings 3:3-9). Evidence of the fulfillment is given in the account of how he handles a dispute between two prostitutes (1 Kings 3:16-28). As a result, Solomon is considered the wisest man to have ever lived (1 Kings 4:29-31). The Bible states that Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. The best of Solomon’s songs is the Song of Solomon, identified as “the Song of Songs which is Solomon’s” (1:1), in other words, his greatest one.

There is no doubt that the book of Proverbs reflects many of Solomon’s 3,000 proverbs. From the first verse of Proverbs, we would assume that Solomon was the sole author of Proverbs. However, other authors are also identified throughout the book. For example, the words of Agur, the son of Jakeh (or the man of Massa), are recorded in chapter 30. And the words of

King Lemuel are recorded in chapter 31.

Also included in Proverbs are the collected sayings simply identified as the “words of the wise” (22:17-24:22), and the “sayings of the wise” (24:23-34)

Besides being wise, the Preacher [i.e., Solomon] also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care (Eccl 12:9).

Therefore, we can conclude that Proverbs is an edited work that includes the sayings of Agur, King Lemuel, and other wise people, among whom Solomon was the wisest.

HOW TO SAY IT

Hypostatize. Hy-POST-a-tize.

Metaphor. MET-a-for.

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

BIBLE BASIS: John 1:1–14

BIBLE TRUTH: Jesus has always been in existence.

MEMORY VERSE: And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth (John 1:14, KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson,

we will: **KNOW** the importance of the divinity and humanity of Jesus; **TRUST** in a Savior who is eternal and shares the divine nature with God; and **IMAGINE** and **SHARE** how Jesus is the Light in our lives and in the world.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: John 1:1–14—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

JOHN 1:1-14, KJV

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. Word (John 1:1, 14) *logos* (Gk.)—The Word; denotes the expression of thought, not the mere name of an object. In John 1:1 and 1:14, Jesus is called “the Word.”

B. Witness (v. 7) *martus or marturia* (Gk.)—Someone who has seen or heard or knows.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY’S LESSON

AIM: That your students will trust that our Savior is divine and is God.

INTRODUCTION

Gnosticism

Many of the early Gentile believers had been exposed to varying strains of Gnosticism (an early heresy) and did not believe in the humanity of Jesus. As people from diverse backgrounds became part of the church, it became necessary for the apostles to correct errors in doctrine as well as encourage the existing believers. In the Gospel of John, the writer seems to be addressing a mixed audience of believers, unbelievers, Jews, and Greeks.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will learn that Jesus is eternal and human.

I. JESUS IS THE WORD (John 1:1–3)

The first 14 verses of the book of John summarize the whole Gospel. In these verses, we are introduced to Jesus who He is, what He does, and the role He plays in the eternal plan of God for the world.

Jesus Is the Word (verses 1-3)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John began his book with the words “In the beginning,” he then introduced Jesus as the Word.” The word used here is *logos*. The Greeks understood *logos* to mean not only the written or spoken word, but also the thought or reasoning in the mind. John’s Greek readers would have understood the nuances of *logos*, realizing that John was presenting Jesus as the power that controlled all things.

The Jewish believers used the word *logos* to refer to God and would have connected this concept to the wisdom personified in the Old Testament (**see Proverbs 8**). In tandem with wisdom was ability; in this case, God’s wisdom was used to create the universe. Jesus is that wisdom personified, all of these concepts are bound up in the word *logos*.

John begins the second verse by reiterating the divine pre-existent nature of the Word. He proceeds to explain the role of the Word in the beginning. The word “made” means “came into being, happened, or became.” John is communicating the idea that this creative work happened out of nothing, that the Word did not rely on pre-existing material to create the universe (**Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2**).

John also begins to give us a hint as to the name of the Word by referring to the Word as “him.” The Word is more than just an expression of the personality of

God; it is the person of Jesus Christ. So John is saying that the Word, which was pre-existent with God, was in complete fellowship with God, possessed all the divine nature and characteristics of deity and created everything.

As believers today, when we read **John 1:1–3**, we may not realize all the nuances that the author intended. But what we must learn from **verse 1** is clear: Jesus was, is, and always will be. He is God, and He is the Creator and the Source of all life. The entirety of our Christian faith rests upon accepting these truths.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

In John 1:1, John calls Jesus

“_____.”

II. JESUS IS THE LIGHT (John 1:4-9)

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

“Life” in Greek is used throughout the Bible to refer to both physical and spiritual life. It is frequently qualified with the word “eternal.” Jesus was the embodiment of the fullness and quality of life that God offers to those who believe (**John 14:6; cp. 10:10**). The life that Jesus was to offer would be the light of all humanity.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

John uses the metaphors of “light” and “darkness” to illustrate the differences between a life of grace, mercy, and forgiveness and a life of sin and death. The

word “comprehended” has two possible meanings. One meaning is “understood, perceived, or learned” it communicates the fact that those who live in the darkness do not receive the light because of a lack of understanding they don’t get it. Another meaning is the idea “lay hold of or seized” and communicates the fact that the darkness (perhaps Satan or more generally sinful humanity) will never have the ultimate victory over the light of Jesus.

John is saying that some who see the light will be unable to understand and receive it because Satan has blinded them (**2 Corinthians 4:4**). However, John says that no matter how dark the darkness of evil seems in the world, no matter how the global circumstances seem to indicate that the darkness of evil is winning, the darkness cannot overcome the light that comes from the life of Christ.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

The apostle John goes on to talk about John the Baptist, the ministry of John the Baptist is prominent in the Gospel of John. Here, the apostle John is affirming the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist. Jesus echoed this assertion when He said that John the Baptist was the last of the great Old Testament prophets, who came in the spirit of Elijah (**Matthew 11:9–10; Mark 9:13**). John the Baptist had a unique call and ministry to be a witness of Jesus, the Light (**cp. Matthew 4:4; John 1:4**).

In **verse 7**, the word “witness” means to affirm by testimony what one has seen, heard, experienced, or known. Therefore,

John the Baptist had the prophetic duty of preparing the way for Jesus by preaching the testimonies of God.

The goal of John the Baptist was the same as the goal of John the apostle, to bring humanity to a place of faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. The author is careful to specify that John the Baptist was not the genuine light, but that he came to “bear witness,” to testify of, or report of the One to come. John the Baptist testified to the world of the nature and character of Jesus so that “all men through him might believe.”

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

The apostle John makes it clear that John the Baptist was not the Light, he was only to bear witness of the Light. Like the moon that does not shine its own light but only reflects the light of the sun, so John the Baptist reflects the Light of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus would be the true Light that would light every person. The word “true” refers to that which is sincere or genuine. The apostle John is saying that John the Baptist pointed others to the light to come, and that Jesus Christ was the authentic Light.

QUESTION 2

What role did John the Baptist fulfill before Jesus came?

III. JESUS REVEALS GOD’S CHARACTER (John 1:10–14)

Although He had always been omnipresent, Jesus had now come to be

one of us. He came to live with us, to feel our pain, to experience our joy, and to know our sorrow. He experienced human life fully. John and the other disciples knew Him intimately as Teacher and Friend. They ate with Him, talked with Him, laughed with Him, and cried with Him.

Rejection and Glory (verses 10-14)
10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

His gift of salvation is offered freely to all, but unless one accepts that salvation, the darkness will continue to obscure the light. When we do receive Jesus, God gives us the right to become His children (**verse 12**). What an amazing statement! We have the right to become God’s children. It’s not because of anything we have done to deserve it, but because God’s grace makes it possible for us to choose to believe and receive Jesus. We are not children in the physical sense; we are spiritual children of our Father. When we receive Christ, we are adopted into the family of God (**see I John 3:1**). We are considered heirs of God (**Galatians 3:29**), eligible to receive all of His promised blessings.

We cannot become God’s children by any

other means than through salvation in Jesus Christ.

John 1:13 makes it clear that God's children are not born in the natural way of conception and birth. We are born of God spiritually, and He chose us. God chose to send His Son, Jesus, to the earth to take on the form of human flesh. John first introduced us to Jesus as the eternally existing Word of God. Now he reveals another facet of logos Jesus. The One who has always existed, the One who is God, has become a human being (**verse 14**).

Verse 14 says, "The Word dwelt among us." John's Jewish readers would have understood the word "dwelling" to be connected to the word for "tabernacle." In Old Testament times, the tabernacle was where God's glory dwelled. The disciples watched Him perform miracles, and they knew Him as the Messiah.

QUESTION 3

In John 1:14, John records that Jesus is full of ____ and ____.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will understand that Jesus came to give a meaningful, real life to all who will receive Him.

Jesus came into this world in the form of human flesh, yet those around Him did not acknowledge Him for who He is. They chose to continue living in darkness rather than receiving the Light. Things aren't so different in our world today. In modern society, especially in America and other modern societies, many people have become accustomed to a fast-paced hectic lifestyle. They are easily distracted, often bored, or generally dissatisfied with life.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will learn that the right theology keeps us in right relationship with God.

For the past 16 years, Greg had been a member of a group that did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God; they did not believe that Jesus was truly God and truly man. Greg tried and tried to be good enough to be in the number that would go to heaven, however he often slipped. It may have been in small ways, but he knew he was slipping and was not good enough to be in that number.

Then Greg began looking into the Bible for himself, because he desperately wanted to have a right relationship with God. He looked at **John 1:1** where he saw that the Word was God and then at **verse 14** where it said that the Word was made flesh. He wondered to himself: Who else could that be but Jesus? Then it hit him that the Bible was saying Jesus is God! This is not what those in the group had told him about Jesus.

The clincher was when he read in verse 12 that all he had to do to have that elusive relationship with God was to believe and receive Jesus! Right then and there, that's what Greg did.

PRAYER

Lord, keep us in Your care, and remind us of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. We bless You, and we praise You. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

Heresies regarding the nature of Jesus

Gnosticism (from the Greek *gnosis*, meaning knowledge) reflects the teachings of a diverse group of people who claimed that they had inside knowledge into various truth regarding the nature of Jesus. Specifically, they taught that the material world was evil and that by knowledge, one could ascend to the pure spirituality of the heavenly realm. We see Paul's initial attempts to address this heresy in Colossians.

Docetism reflects the teachings of a subset of Gnosticism. Docetism comes from the Greek word *dokeo*, which means to seem or to appear. Docetists taught that Jesus was not a human being with flesh and blood. Rather he was actually a ghost or an apparition who appeared to be human. John addresses this heresy in his epistles, where he endeavors to reaffirm the full humanity and deity of Jesus. Those who deny this teaching are deemed antichrists.

Finally, Arianism was a heresy that developed in the 4th century. As opposed to Docetism that denied the full humanity of Jesus, Arianism denied the full deity of Jesus. In essence, they taught that Jesus was a demigod, i.e., less than God but more than human. This teaching is memorialized in the words of Arius, speaking of Jesus: "There was a time when he (i.e., Jesus) was not." In other words, Arius taught that Jesus was some kind of created being. This heresy is reflected in the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses, who believe that Jesus was the first of God's created beings.

HOW TO SAY IT

Dualistic.	Du-al-IST-ic.
Emanation.	Em-a-NA-shun.
Preexistence.	Pre-ex-IST-ens.
Incarnation.	In-car-NA-shun.

DAILY HOME BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY

The Beginning of the Year
(Exodus 12:1–8)

TUESDAY

The Beginning of Wisdom
(Psalm 111)

WEDNESDAY

In the Beginning, God
(Genesis 1:1–5)

THURSDAY

From the Foundations of the Earth
(Isaiah 40:21–26)

FRIDAY

The Beginning of the Gospel
(Mark 1:1–8)

SATURDAY

Beginning from Jerusalem
(Luke 24:44–49)

SUNDAY

In the Beginning, the Word
(John 1:1–14)

MARCH • APRIL • MAY 2022

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Senior High Quarterly® | **TEACHER MANUAL**

Ages 15-17

SENIOR HIGH QUARTERLY

SPRING QUARTER 2022

MARCH APRIL MAY

GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Unit 1 • The Word Was in the Beginning

March 6	Student Lesson: Think Ahead	14
	Bible Study: Wisdom's Part In Creation	16
March 13	Student Lesson: Something To Blog About	22
	Bible Study: The Word Became Flesh	24
March 20	Student Lesson: Momma Knows	31
	Bible Study: The Wedding At Cana	33
March 27	Student Lesson: Love Unconditional	40
	Bible Study: God's Word Saves	42
April		
April 3	Student Lesson: Speak Up	48
	Bible Study: Jesus Testifies To The Truth	50
April 10	Student Lesson: Pleasant Surprise	56
	Bible Study: The Living Word	58

Unit 2 • The Word Is Here and Now

April 17	Student Lesson: Forgetting The Past	63
	Bible Study: Cleansing The Temple	65
April 24	Student Lesson: They're All Different, But They're All Green	72
	Bible Study: Woman of Samaria	74
May 1	Student Lesson: It's The Law	83
	Bible Study: Healing The Blind Man	85

Unit 3 • The Word Will Be

May 8	Student Lesson: Something's Missing	93
	Bible Study: The Bread Of Life	95
May 15	Student Lesson: The Best Book Ever	104
	Bible Study: The Good Shepherd	106
May 22	Student Lesson: Getting My Friend Back	114
	Bible Study: The Resurrection And The Life	116
May 29	Student Lesson: Don't Follow Me	123
	Bible Study: The Way, The Truth, And The Life	125

THINK AHEAD

BIBLE BASIS:

Proverbs 8:22–35

BIBLE TRUTH:

WISDOM'S PART IN CREATION

MEMORY VERSE:

Proverbs 8:33

LESSON AIM:

By the end of the lesson, students will:
(1) explain God's wisdom; (2) reflect on God's wisdom in their lives; and (3) pray for wisdom in their everyday life experiences.

TEACHER PREPARATION MATERIALS NEEDED

Bibles, Student Magazines, dry erase/ chalkboard, dry erase markers/ chalk, pens, and paper

LIFE NEED

A. Ask your students where wisdom comes from. Discuss their answers and stimulate conversation. Students may not be sure how to answer the question without some help. Ask them to consider the difference between wisdom and knowledge, and then encourage them to think about how wisdom relates to God. Give a dictionary to a student, and then have him or her look up and read aloud the definitions of wisdom and knowledge.

B. Ask the class to name some “words of wisdom” that are used frequently in everyday life. Some common ones are: “a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush,” “early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise,” and “variety is the spice of life.” Then, have your class discuss what the phrases mean and why they are considered wise.

PRESENT THE SCRIPTURE

Have the students read out loud and discuss the story “Think Ahead,” the Lesson Scripture, and the Bible Learning. Then,

have the students answer the questions in the Check It and Think It sections to make sure they understand the lesson and the issues involved. Answer any questions they may have about the lesson.

BIBLE LEARNING AND APPLICATION

Ask the students how the issue Adam faced is common among Senior High students today. Discuss the importance of preparing for the future and whether or not that is a wise thing to do. Challenge the students to review their lives and specify any unwise habits. Ask them to address these areas in their lives and offer them wise solutions.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

In this activity, students must make a list of wise people—either real or fictional. Some may list their parents, grandparents, pastors, historical figures, literary characters, and so forth. Then, have each student pick one person from his or her list and share why he or she thinks this particular person is wise. Once everyone has shared, ask the students to name some ways they plan to seek out wisdom in their lives.

WORSHIP GUIDE

For the Superintendent or Teacher

Bible Truth: Wisdom’s Part in Creation

Theme Song: “God Is Wisdom, God Is Love”

Scripture: Proverbs 8:22–35

Song: “How Great the Wisdom”

Prayer: Use the Lesson Aim

FROM THE STUDENT MANUAL

Think Ahead

Adam lounged on his bed in his room while he played his favorite video game. His textbooks sat on the floor nearby, along with a study guide for his Stats test. Adam’s mom knocked on the door and stuck her head into the room.

“How are things going?” Adam’s mom asked, stepping into the room. She noticed cookie crumbs and a spilled bag of potato chips sitting next to her son. Meanwhile, Adam frantically clicked away on the game controller, entranced by the blue glow of the TV screen.

“Have you studied for your test yet?” Adam’s mom asked.

“Nope.”

“And why not?”

Adam rolled his eyes, ignored his mom, and continued to focus on his video game.

Adam’s mom crossed her arms. “Excuse me? Adam Eugene Turner, look at me when I’m talking to you!”

With a scowl on his face, Adam paused his game and turned toward his mom.

“Adam, you need to make studying a priority,” his mom said. “We’re talking about your future here. The decisions you make today can affect you for the rest of your life. If you want to go to college, you had better hit the books now.”

Bible Learning

The Book of Proverbs is a collection of tips used to encourage people to seek wis-

dom. In Proverbs 8, Solomon personifies wisdom as a woman in order for readers to understand her purpose. Today’s passage reveals the origins of wisdom and how the Lord brought her forth before anything else (Proverbs 8:22). Solomon stresses the importance of wisdom; people are to seek her out and follow her ways. “For whoso findeth me [wisdom] findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD” (Proverbs 8:35, KJV).

Wisdom comes from God and it pleases Him. It is not always easy to follow wisdom because of humankind’s sinful ways. As Senior High students, your students are entering a new phase in life as they mature into adulthood. There is a sense of eagerness to try new things and claim their independence, but it is important to have wisdom in their life and seek God’s counsel. A wise path may not always look fun, but it glorifies the Lord and blesses those who follow it.

NOTES

WISDOM'S PART IN CREATION

BIBLE BASIS: Proverbs 8:22–35

BIBLE TRUTH: Proverbs speaks of wisdom having a divine origin.

MEMORY VERSE: Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not (Proverbs 8:33,KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson, we will: **EXPLAIN** what God's wisdom is; **REFLECT** on God's wisdom in our lives; and **PRAY** for wisdom in our everyday life experiences.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Proverbs 8—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

PROVERBS 8:22-35, KJV

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. **Hypostatize** (Hy-POST-a-tize)—To think of a concept, abstraction, etc., as having a real, objective existence.

B. **Metaphor**—A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is likened to something, but is not to be taken literally.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

AIM: That your students will appreciate the role that wisdom played in creation.

INTRODUCTION

In this passage wisdom is personified. Some have called this a “hypostatization”--thinking of a concept, abstraction, as having real objective existence. It seems more appropriate to think of this passage merely as a metaphor, that is a personification of an attribute of God but not an actual being in any way.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will desire to acquire wisdom in their lives.

I. WISDOM'S STORY (Proverbs 8:22–31)

In **Proverbs 8**, we see wisdom existing eternally. A sweeping panorama of creation is covered in **verses 24** through **29**, following the order of God's work listed in Genesis. Wisdom was with God before there was anything created. Wisdom was with God before there were oceans and rivers, before there were mountains and

hills. Wisdom was there when God created the heavens and when He “set a compass” (**verse 27**) or “marked out the horizon” (NIV). What an indescribably beautiful picture!

The Beauty of Wisdom (verses 22-31)

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. 23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, Or ever the earth was. 24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: 26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. 27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: 28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: 29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: 30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; 31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

The everlasting wisdom of God, an intrinsic fiber of His nature and character that was with Him as He created the world is available to us! When God set the world into motion, wisdom was there. Wisdom was there when God set the boundaries for the oceans, when He set the stars in

motion, wisdom was there when He placed the clouds in the sky (**verse 28**). Wisdom is like a skilled artisan, rejoicing in the Master's presence and His creation (**verses 30–31**). Wisdom flowed from God's character, and His wonderful, creation was the result. God desires to give wisdom to those who seek Him. What an incredible thought!

The Hebrew word in **Proverbs 8:30** translated as “brought up” means “architect,” “master workman,” or “skilled workman.” The picture is that of wisdom, the faithful master artisan, standing at God's side as He created the universe. “How many are your works, LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures” (**Psalms 104:24, NIV**).

Wisdom was ecstatic, as she was able to enjoy the “handiwork” of God (**Psalms 19:1, NKJV**). This implies a wonderful gathering of wisdom and humankind—do we dare envision a party? We celebrate God's creation in many ways. Each time we enjoy a ride through the countryside and see the bursting forth of the springtime flowers, view snowcapped mountains, or enjoy a picnic on a bright sunny day, we share wisdom's pleasure and joy in Creation. As we look at God's creation, we should praise our Creator: “Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” (**Psalms 107:8**).

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

Wisdom was present when God placed the _____ in the sky.

II. WISDOM'S INVITATION (Proverbs 8:32–35)

So the plea goes out to all people: “Listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways” (**verse 32, NIV**). Receive instruction—don't refuse it. **Proverbs 19:20 (NIV)** says, “Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise.” Only fools reject instruction that will improve their lives. Respond to God's wisdom! He has made it available to us for our good, and we will be blessed when we choose to live by God's wisdom.

The Blessings of Wisdom (verses 32–35)

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. 33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. 34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. 35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

What kind of blessings can we expect from living a wise life? Peace with God is certainly high on the list, a good reputation is also a benefit. Wisdom affects every area of our lives. If we conduct our interpersonal relationships with wisdom, we will have meaningful friendships and strong family ties. If we practice our business policies with wisdom we will enjoy the blessing of a reputable business. If we live our Christian lives with wisdom we will draw others to Christ. The blessings of wisdom may not always be tangible, but they far outweigh the material blessings that we often desire. Wisdom is worth it.

Wisdom does have another aspect however, it is not only something that

God possesses it is something that God gives. We also see that Jesus demonstrates wisdom in the New Testament. Jesus is viewed as the ultimate fulfillment of the Old Testament. **Proverbs 8:22** tells us that wisdom was with God in the beginning before any of His “works of old.” Does this have a familiar ring to it? **John 1:1** says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Proverbs speaks of wisdom’s eternal existence in a way that parallels John’s words about Christ. In the Incarnation, Jesus is the complete demonstration of all that is divine including wisdom.

Proverbs 8:23 says that wisdom was “appointed” (NIV) or “set up” (KJV) from eternity before the beginning! Jesus is the Anointed One, the Everlasting God, He was with God in the beginning, before time began. He has always been and always will be. In fact, without Him, “nothing was made that has been made” (**John 1:3, NIV**). He is and was first. He is and was supreme. He was “rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part” (**Proverbs 8:30–31**). Jesus, Wisdom Himself, rejoices over those who choose Him.

When we choose Jesus, we avail ourselves of a tremendous infinite amount of wisdom. Christ is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (**1 Corinthians 1:24**). “Blessed are they that keep my [wisdom’s or Jesus’] ways” (**Proverbs 8:32**). Hallelujah! What a treasure! When we seek Jesus, we gain wisdom. He is our all in all.

QUESTION 2

According to Proverbs 8:35, “whoso findeth me [wisdom] findeth _____.”

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will learn to seek God’s wisdom.

How would your life be different if you sought God’s wisdom on a regular basis? This week, try an experiment. Make a conscious effort to gain Godly wisdom before you make a decision or tackle a problem.

STUDENTS’ RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will know that God’s wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

Christ, family, and friendship were the most important things in life for Diane a successful high school principal. She and her best friend, Asia, had gone to high school and college together. Asia had dropped out of college and ran off with her “dream man” without marrying him. It had been a shock because Asia had been president of the College Christian Fellowship. Shortly after that, they had lost touch. One Thursday night, Diane received a call from Asia.

“Asia, is it really you?” Diane cried. “It’s been 20 years.”

“Girl, it’s me!” said Asia. “I’m in town. I’d like to swing by your house later.”

When Diane opened the door, Asia’s face stole her breath away. Asia was scrawny thin, and her eyes reflected a life of drug abuse and pain.

Suddenly, Diane realized that at some point in her life, Asia had chosen a life quite different from the one they had shared as young girls in Bible study. The

folly of a life consumed by narcotics had blinded Asia and robbed her of the ability to make wise decisions.

Again, God’s wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

PRAYER

God wisdom is precious and wonderful to have and to keep. Show us how to use wisdom in our personal and collective lives. Help us to see Jesus as true wisdom for us to have each and every day. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

The Authorship of Proverbs

The Bible records that when given the rare opportunity to request to receive anything from God that Solomon asked for “an understanding mind to govern [God’s] people” (1 Kings 3:3-9). Evidence of the fulfillment is given in the account of how he handles a dispute between two prostitutes (1 Kings 3:16-28). As a result, Solomon is considered the wisest man to have ever lived (1 Kings 4:29-31). The Bible states that Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. The best of Solomon’s songs is the Song of Solomon, identified as “the Song of Songs which is Solomon’s” (1:1), in other words, his greatest one.

There is no doubt that the book of Proverbs reflects many of Solomon’s 3,000 proverbs. From the first verse of Proverbs, we would assume that Solomon was the sole author of Proverbs. However, other authors are also identified throughout the book. For example, the words of Agur, the son of Jakeh (or the man of Massa), are recorded in chapter 30. And the words of

King Lemuel are recorded in chapter 31.

Also included in Proverbs are the collected sayings simply identified as the “words of the wise” (22:17-24:22), and the “sayings of the wise” (24:23-34)

Besides being wise, the Preacher [i.e., Solomon] also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care (Eccl 12:9).

Therefore, we can conclude that Proverbs is an edited work that includes the sayings of Agur, King Lemuel, and other wise people, among whom Solomon was the wisest.

HOW TO SAY IT

Hypostatize. Hy-POST-a-tize.

Metaphor. MET-a-for.

SOMETHING TO BLOG ABOUT

BIBLE BASIS:

John 1:1-14

BIBLE TRUTH:

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

MEMORY VERSE:

John 1:14

LESSON AIM:

By the end of this lesson, students will: (1) know the importance of the divinity and humanity of Jesus; (2) trust in a Savior who is eternal and shares deity with God; and (3) imagine and share how Jesus is the light in their lives and in the world.

TEACHER PREPARATION MATERIALS NEEDED

Bibles, Student Magazines, dry erase/chalkboard, dry erase markers/ chalk, pens, and paper

LIFE NEED

A. Give a flashlight to every student in your class. (Make sure the flashlights have batteries and they all work). Close the window shades and turn off the lights in the room. Try to make the room as dark as possible. Then, select one student to turn on his or her flashlight and read John 1:1-14. After the Lesson Scripture has been read, call out different students to turn on their flashlights until everyone's flashlight is shining in the dark room. Ask your students how this activity relates to today's Lesson Scripture.

B. Ask the students to imagine what the world would be like if Jesus had never come. Tell them to consider how things would be affected on a personal, national, and global level. Direct students to think about the previous activity and have them write down their thoughts. They should realize that hopelessness (darkness) would fill the world without the light (Jesus). Let students share their thoughts and concerns.

PRESENT THE SCRIPTURE

Have the students read aloud and discuss the story "Something to Blog About," the Lesson Scripture, and the Bible Learning. Then, have the students answer the questions in the Check It and Think It sections to make sure they understand the lesson and the issues involved. Answer any questions they may have about the lesson.

BIBLE LEARNING AND APPLICATION

In today's world, technology has opened up new avenues of communication and has created some wonderful tools to help present the Gospel. Ask the students how Stephanie and Chad were taking on the role of John the Baptist in today's story. Discuss Stephanie and Chad's idea and consider their motivation behind it. Ask the students if they liked the idea, and discuss ways to make it better. Perhaps this may be an idea that your class would like to adopt as well.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

In this activity, students must list some ways they can be a light in a dark world. Jesus commands us to go out and witness to all people. Students must realize that this includes the things we do every day, no matter how big or small. Encourage students to be intentional about sharing the

light of Christ with others. Service projects, random acts of kindness, and uplifting speech are some simple ways to show Jesus' love.

WORSHIP GUIDE

For the Superintendent or Teacher

Bible Truth: The Word Became Flesh

Theme Song: "Light Shining Out of Darkness"

Scripture: John 1:1-14

Song: "Jesus, Light of the World"

Prayer: Use the Lesson Aim

FROM THE STUDENT MANUAL

Something to Blog About

Stephanie and Chad anxiously knocked on Pastor Wilson's office door, and they rushed inside when he answered. Pastor Wilson gestured for the two students to each take a seat, and then he sat down behind his desk. Stephanie anxiously wrung her hands while Chad nervously tapped his foot.

Pastor Wilson removed his glasses and said, "What's this all about? It must be pretty important if you feel the need to talk to me about it."

"Well, Chad and I have a great idea for our youth group," Stephanie said. "We want to start a blog."

"Oh really? I do know what a blog is," Pastor Wilson said, smiling, "but explain to me what you have in mind. And why exactly do you want to do this? It sounds like a lot of work."

"We want to connect and communicate with the youth in our church and in our community," Chad said. "It'll be a great way for us to get organized and out into the community. It's also a great way to share the Gospel."

"And we'll feature articles written by local youth that deal with issues of faith that youth can relate to," Stephanie added.

Pastor Wilson leaned back in his chair and propped his hands behind his head. "I

think this is a great idea."

"For real?" Chad asked, sounding surprised and relieved.

Pastor Wilson chuckled. "Absolutely! I'd like to supervise the project and help out in any way I can. Now let's launch this blog!"

Bible Learning

The author of the Book of John is not stated but the disciple John, brother of James and son of Zebedee (Matthew 4:21), is typically attributed as the writer. Written around A.D. 90, the book of John focuses on the humanity and divinity of Jesus. Unlike the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), John does not record the parables and only mentions seven miracles. Instead, John discusses why Jesus came to earth. John wanted people to understand that Jesus was both fully human and fully God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1, KJV).

NOTES

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

BIBLE BASIS: John 1:1–14

BIBLE TRUTH: Jesus has always been in existence.

MEMORY VERSE: And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth (John 1:14, KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson,

we will: **KNOW** the importance of the divinity and humanity of Jesus; **TRUST** in a Savior who is eternal and shares the divine nature with God; and **IMAGINE** and **SHARE** how Jesus is the Light in our lives and in the world.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: John 1:1–14—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

JOHN 1:1-14, KJV

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. Word (John 1:1, 14) *logos* (Gk.)—The Word; denotes the expression of thought, not the mere name of an object. In John 1:1 and 1:14, Jesus is called “the Word.”

B. Witness (v. 7) *martus or marturia* (Gk.)—Someone who has seen or heard or knows.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY’S LESSON

AIM: That your students will trust that our Savior is divine and is God.

INTRODUCTION

Gnosticism

Many of the early Gentile believers had been exposed to varying strains of Gnosticism (an early heresy) and did not believe in the humanity of Jesus. As people from diverse backgrounds became part of the church, it became necessary for the apostles to correct errors in doctrine as well as encourage the existing believers. In the Gospel of John, the writer seems to be addressing a mixed audience of believers, unbelievers, Jews, and Greeks.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will learn that Jesus is eternal and human.

I. JESUS IS THE WORD (John 1:1–3)

The first 14 verses of the book of John summarize the whole Gospel. In these verses, we are introduced to Jesus who He is, what He does, and the role He plays in the eternal plan of God for the world.

Jesus Is the Word (verses 1-3)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John began his book with the words “In the beginning,” he then introduced Jesus as the Word.” The word used here is *logos*. The Greeks understood *logos* to mean not only the written or spoken word, but also the thought or reasoning in the mind. John’s Greek readers would have understood the nuances of *logos*, realizing that John was presenting Jesus as the power that controlled all things.

The Jewish believers used the word *logos* to refer to God and would have connected this concept to the wisdom personified in the Old Testament (**see Proverbs 8**). In tandem with wisdom was ability; in this case, God’s wisdom was used to create the universe. Jesus is that wisdom personified, all of these concepts are bound up in the word *logos*.

John begins the second verse by reiterating the divine pre-existent nature of the Word. He proceeds to explain the role of the Word in the beginning. The word “made” means “came into being, happened, or became.” John is communicating the idea that this creative work happened out of nothing, that the Word did not rely on pre-existing material to create the universe (**Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2**).

John also begins to give us a hint as to the name of the Word by referring to the Word as “him.” The Word is more than just an expression of the personality of

God; it is the person of Jesus Christ. So John is saying that the Word, which was pre-existent with God, was in complete fellowship with God, possessed all the divine nature and characteristics of deity and created everything.

As believers today, when we read **John 1:1–3**, we may not realize all the nuances that the author intended. But what we must learn from **verse 1** is clear: Jesus was, is, and always will be. He is God, and He is the Creator and the Source of all life. The entirety of our Christian faith rests upon accepting these truths.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

In John 1:1, John calls Jesus

“_____.”

II. JESUS IS THE LIGHT (John 1:4-9)

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

“Life” in Greek is used throughout the Bible to refer to both physical and spiritual life. It is frequently qualified with the word “eternal.” Jesus was the embodiment of the fullness and quality of life that God offers to those who believe (**John 14:6; cp. 10:10**). The life that Jesus was to offer would be the light of all humanity.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

John uses the metaphors of “light” and “darkness” to illustrate the differences between a life of grace, mercy, and forgiveness and a life of sin and death. The

word “comprehended” has two possible meanings. One meaning is “understood, perceived, or learned” it communicates the fact that those who live in the darkness do not receive the light because of a lack of understanding they don’t get it. Another meaning is the idea “lay hold of or seized” and communicates the fact that the darkness (perhaps Satan or more generally sinful humanity) will never have the ultimate victory over the light of Jesus.

John is saying that some who see the light will be unable to understand and receive it because Satan has blinded them (**2 Corinthians 4:4**). However, John says that no matter how dark the darkness of evil seems in the world, no matter how the global circumstances seem to indicate that the darkness of evil is winning, the darkness cannot overcome the light that comes from the life of Christ.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

The apostle John goes on to talk about John the Baptist, the ministry of John the Baptist is prominent in the Gospel of John. Here, the apostle John is affirming the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist. Jesus echoed this assertion when He said that John the Baptist was the last of the great Old Testament prophets, who came in the spirit of Elijah (**Matthew 11:9–10; Mark 9:13**). John the Baptist had a unique call and ministry to be a witness of Jesus, the Light (**cp. Matthew 4:4; John 1:4**).

In **verse 7**, the word “witness” means to affirm by testimony what one has seen, heard, experienced, or known. Therefore,

John the Baptist had the prophetic duty of preparing the way for Jesus by preaching the testimonies of God.

The goal of John the Baptist was the same as the goal of John the apostle, to bring humanity to a place of faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. The author is careful to specify that John the Baptist was not the genuine light, but that he came to “bear witness,” to testify of, or report of the One to come. John the Baptist testified to the world of the nature and character of Jesus so that “all men through him might believe.”

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

The apostle John makes it clear that John the Baptist was not the Light, he was only to bear witness of the Light. Like the moon that does not shine its own light but only reflects the light of the sun, so John the Baptist reflects the Light of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus would be the true Light that would light every person. The word “true” refers to that which is sincere or genuine. The apostle John is saying that John the Baptist pointed others to the light to come, and that Jesus Christ was the authentic Light.

QUESTION 2

What role did John the Baptist fulfill before Jesus came?

III. JESUS REVEALS GOD’S CHARACTER (John 1:10–14)

Although He had always been omnipresent, Jesus had now come to be

one of us. He came to live with us, to feel our pain, to experience our joy, and to know our sorrow. He experienced human life fully. John and the other disciples knew Him intimately as Teacher and Friend. They ate with Him, talked with Him, laughed with Him, and cried with Him.

Rejection and Glory (verses 10-14)
10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

His gift of salvation is offered freely to all, but unless one accepts that salvation, the darkness will continue to obscure the light. When we do receive Jesus, God gives us the right to become His children (**verse 12**). What an amazing statement! We have the right to become God’s children. It’s not because of anything we have done to deserve it, but because God’s grace makes it possible for us to choose to believe and receive Jesus. We are not children in the physical sense; we are spiritual children of our Father. When we receive Christ, we are adopted into the family of God (**see I John 3:1**). We are considered heirs of God (**Galatians 3:29**), eligible to receive all of His promised blessings.

We cannot become God’s children by any

other means than through salvation in Jesus Christ.

John 1:13 makes it clear that God's children are not born in the natural way of conception and birth. We are born of God spiritually, and He chose us. God chose to send His Son, Jesus, to the earth to take on the form of human flesh. John first introduced us to Jesus as the eternally existing Word of God. Now he reveals another facet of logos Jesus. The One who has always existed, the One who is God, has become a human being (**verse 14**).

Verse 14 says, "The Word dwelt among us." John's Jewish readers would have understood the word "dwelling" to be connected to the word for "tabernacle." In Old Testament times, the tabernacle was where God's glory dwelled. The disciples watched Him perform miracles, and they knew Him as the Messiah.

QUESTION 3

In John 1:14, John records that Jesus is full of ____ and ____.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will understand that Jesus came to give a meaningful, real life to all who will receive Him.

Jesus came into this world in the form of human flesh, yet those around Him did not acknowledge Him for who He is. They chose to continue living in darkness rather than receiving the Light. Things aren't so different in our world today. In modern society, especially in America and other modern societies, many people have become accustomed to a fast-paced hectic lifestyle. They are easily distracted, often bored, or generally dissatisfied with life.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will learn that the right theology keeps us in right relationship with God.

For the past 16 years, Greg had been a member of a group that did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God; they did not believe that Jesus was truly God and truly man. Greg tried and tried to be good enough to be in the number that would go to heaven, however he often slipped. It may have been in small ways, but he knew he was slipping and was not good enough to be in that number.

Then Greg began looking into the Bible for himself, because he desperately wanted to have a right relationship with God. He looked at **John 1:1** where he saw that the Word was God and then at **verse 14** where it said that the Word was made flesh. He wondered to himself: Who else could that be but Jesus? Then it hit him that the Bible was saying Jesus is God! This is not what those in the group had told him about Jesus.

The clincher was when he read in verse 12 that all he had to do to have that elusive relationship with God was to believe and receive Jesus! Right then and there, that's what Greg did.

PRAYER

Lord, keep us in Your care, and remind us of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. We bless You, and we praise You. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

Heresies regarding the nature of Jesus

Gnosticism (from the Greek *gnosis*, meaning knowledge) reflects the teachings of a diverse group of people who claimed that they had inside knowledge into various truth regarding the nature of Jesus. Specifically, they taught that the material world was evil and that by knowledge, one could ascend to the pure spirituality of the heavenly realm. We see Paul's initial attempts to address this heresy in Colossians.

Docetism reflects the teachings of a subset of Gnosticism. Docetism comes from the Greek word *dokeo*, which means to seem or to appear. Docetists taught that Jesus was not a human being with flesh and blood. Rather he was actually a ghost or an apparition who appeared to be human. John addresses this heresy in his epistles, where he endeavors to reaffirm the full humanity and deity of Jesus. Those who deny this teaching are deemed antichrists.

Finally, Arianism was a heresy that developed in the 4th century. As opposed to Docetism that denied the full humanity of Jesus, Arianism denied the full deity of Jesus. In essence, they taught that Jesus was a demigod, i.e., less than God but more than human. This teaching is memorialized in the words of Arius, speaking of Jesus: "There was a time when he (i.e., Jesus) was not." In other words, Arius taught that Jesus was some kind of created being. This heresy is reflected in the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses, who believe that Jesus was the first of God's created beings.

HOW TO SAY IT

Dualistic.	Du-al-IST-ic.
Emanation.	Em-a-NA-shun.
Preexistence.	Pre-ex-IST-ens.
Incarnation.	In-car-NA-shun.

DAILY HOME BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY

The Beginning of the Year
(Exodus 12:1–8)

TUESDAY

The Beginning of Wisdom
(Psalm 111)

WEDNESDAY

In the Beginning, God
(Genesis 1:1–5)

THURSDAY

From the Foundations of the Earth
(Isaiah 40:21–26)

FRIDAY

The Beginning of the Gospel
(Mark 1:1-8)

SATURDAY

Beginning from Jerusalem
(Luke 24:44-49)

SUNDAY

In the Beginning, the Word
(John 1:1-14)

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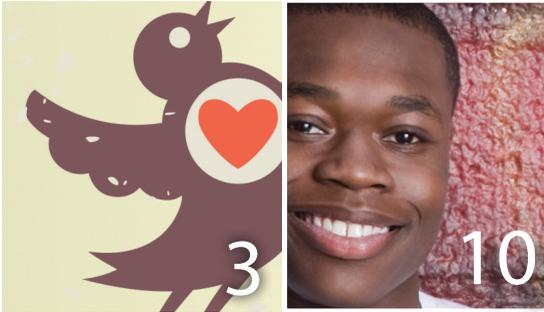
GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Senior High Quarterly® | STUDENT MANUAL

Ages 15-17

Theme:

Co-creators With God



Bible study pages

March

- 4 Think Ahead
- 6 Something to Blog About
- 8 Mama Knows
- 12 Love Unconditional

April

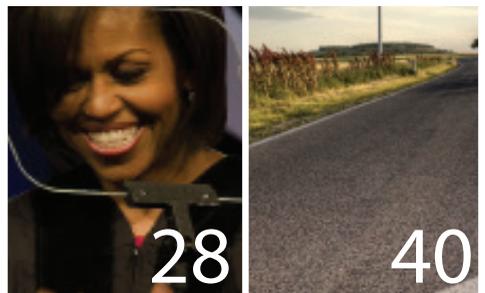
- 18 Speak Up
- 20 Pleasant Surprise
- 24 Forgetting the Past
- 26 They're All Different, but They're All Green

May

- 34 It's the Law
- 36 Something's Missing
- 38 The Best Book Ever
- 44 Getting My Friend Back
- 46 Don't Follow Me

Features

- 1 Senior High Reader
- 3 I Love You Lord, You Set Me Free
- 10 Improve Your Life
- 16 Real Stories Real Teens
- 20 Senior High Survey
- 28 Scenic
- 29 Getting Into College
- 31 Spotlight on Senior High Reader
- 38 Rap Up!



Think Ahead

Bible Basis: Proverbs 8:22–35
Bible Truth: Wisdom’s Part in Creation

Adam lounged on his bed in his room while he played his favorite video game. His textbooks sat on the floor nearby, along with a study guide for his Stats test. Adam’s mom knocked on the door and stuck her head into the room. “How are things going?” Adam’s mom asked, stepping into the room. She noticed cookie crumbs and a spilled bag of potato chips sitting next to her son. Meanwhile, Adam frantically clicked away on the game controller, entranced by the blue glow of the TV screen.

“Have you studied for your test yet?” Adam’s mom asked.

“Nope.”

“And why not?”

Adam rolled his eyes, ignored his mom, and continued to focus on his video game.

Adam’s mom crossed her arms. “Excuse me? Adam Eugene Turner, look at me when I’m talking to you!”

With a scowl on his face, Adam paused his game and turned toward his mom.

“Adam, you need to make studying a priority,” his mom said. “We’re talking about your future here. The decisions you make today can affect you for the rest of your life. If you want to go to college, you had better hit the books now.”

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 8:22–35, KJV

- 22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.
23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.
24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.
25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:
26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.
27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:
28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:
29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:
30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

- 31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.
32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.
33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.
34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.
35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

BIBLE LEARNING

The book of Proverbs is a collection of tips used to encourage people to seek wisdom. In Proverbs 8, Solomon personifies wisdom as a woman in order for readers to understand her purpose. Today's passage reveals the origins of wisdom and how the Lord brought her forth before anything else (Proverbs 8:22). Solomon stresses the importance of wisdom; people are to seek her out and follow her ways. "For whoso findeth me [wisdom] findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD" (Proverbs 8:35, KJV).

Wisdom comes from God and it pleases Him. It is not always easy to follow wisdom because of humankind's sinful ways. As a teen, you are entering a new phase in life as you mature into adulthood. There is a sense of eagerness to try new things and claim your independence, but it is important to have wisdom in life and seek God's counsel. A wise path may not always look fun, but it glorifies the Lord and blesses those who follow it.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

Check it

1. What was Adam supposed to be doing instead of playing video games?
2. How did Adam react toward his mom?
3. What points did Adam's mom make in her argument?
4. Did Adam's mom give wise advice? Explain.

Think it

1. What was appointed from eternity (verse 23)?
2. What are we to do with wisdom (verses 32–34)?
3. If people find wisdom, what else do they find (verse 35)?

Do it

List some of your goals. These may include going to college, spending more time with family, growing stronger in your faith, etc. Now, make a list of all the things that hinder or distract you from achieving these goals. These may include video games, poor motivation, self-doubt, peer pressure, and so forth. Challenge yourself to make wise decisions in order to reach your goals and benefit your future.

Keep it

"Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not" (Proverbs 8:33, KJV).

Something to Blog About



Bible Basis: John 1:1–14
Bible Truth: The Word Became Flesh

Stephanie and Chad anxiously knocked on Pastor Wilson’s office door, and they rushed inside when he answered. Pastor Wilson gestured for the two students to each take a seat, and then he sat down behind his desk. Stephanie anxiously wrung her hands while Chad nervously tapped his foot.

Pastor Wilson removed his glasses and said, “What’s this all about? It must be pretty important if you feel the need to talk to me about it.”

“Well, Chad and I have a great idea for our youth group,” Stephanie said. “We want to start a blog.”

“Oh really? I do know what a blog is,” Pastor Wilson said, smiling, “but explain to me what you have in mind. And why exactly do you want to do this? It sounds like a lot of work.”

“We want to connect and communicate with the youth in our church and in our community,” Chad said. “It’ll be a great way for us to get organized and out into the community. It’s also a great way to share the gospel.”

“And we’ll feature articles written by local youth that deal with issues of faith that youth can relate to,” Stephanie added.

Pastor Wilson leaned back in his chair and propped his hands behind his head. “I think this is a great idea.”

“For real?” Chad asked, sounding surprised and relieved.

Pastor Wilson chuckled. “Absolutely! I’d like to supervise the project and help out in any way I can. Now let’s launch this blog!”

LESSON SCRIPTURE: John 1:1–14, KJV

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

BIBLE LEARNING

The author of the book of John is not stated but the disciple John, brother of James and son of Zebedee (Matthew 4:21), is typically attributed as the writer. Written around A.D. 90, the book of John focuses on the humanity and divinity of Jesus. Unlike the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), John does not record the parables and only mentions seven miracles. Instead, John discusses why Jesus came to earth. John wanted people to understand that Jesus was both fully human and fully God. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1, KJV).

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

Check it

1. Why were Stephanie and Chad so anxious to see Pastor Wilson?
2. What did they want to accomplish with their idea?
3. How did Pastor Wilson respond to the idea?
4. What do you think about their idea?

Think it

1. Who was with God in the beginning (verse 1)?
2. Who or what does not understand or recognize the light (verses 5, 10)?
3. Who came as a witness to the light (verses 6–8)?
4. How did the Word become flesh (verse 14)?

Do it

List some ways you can be a light in a dark world. Jesus commands everyone to go out and witness to all people. Teens can witness to others while doing the things they do every day, no matter how big or small. Be intentional about sharing the light of Christ with others. Service projects, random acts of kindness, and uplifting speech are some simple ways to show Jesus' love. Post some of your ideas on our Facebook wall and see how other teens around the country are being lights for Christ in a dark world.

Keep it

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14, KJV).

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GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Junior High Quarterly® | **TEACHER MANUAL**

Ages 12-14

JUNIOR HIGH QUARTERLY

SPRING QUARTER 2022

MARCH APRIL MAY

GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Unit 1 • The Word Was in the Beginning

March 6	Student Lesson: Clever Speech	16
	Bible Study: Wisdom's Part In Creation	18
March 13	Student Lesson: A Prayer Of Protection	24
	Bible Study: The Word Became Flesh	26
March 20	Student Lesson: A Miracle	33
	Bible Study: The Wedding At Cana	35
March 27	Student Lesson: A Time For Change	42
	Bible Study: God's Word Saves	44
April		
April 3	Student Lesson: Doint The Right Thing	50
	Bible Study: Jesus Testifies Of The Truth	52
April 10	Student Lesson: Mannys Mother	58
	Bible Study: The Living Word	60

Unit 2 • The Word Is Here and Now

April 17	Student Lesson: Benched	65
	Bible Study: Cleansing The Temple	67
April 24	Student Lesson: Lauren's Turn To Shine	74
	Bible Study: Woman of Samaria	76
May 1	Student Lesson: The Rosa Parks Youth Activist Group	85
	Bible Study: Healing The Blind Man	87

Unit 3 • The Word Will Be

May 8	Student Lesson: You Shall Not Steal	95
	Bible Study: The Bread Of Life	97
May 15	Student Lesson: Follow The Leader	106
	Bible Study: The Good Shepherd	108
May 22	Student Lesson: Happy Endings	116
	Bible Study: The Resurrection And The Life	118
May 29	Student Lesson: The Best Way	125
	Bible Study: The Way, The Truth, And The Life	127

CLEVER SPEECH

BIBLE BASIS:

Proverbs 8:22-35

BIBLE TRUTH:

WISDOM'S PART IN CREATION

MEMORY VERSE:

Proverbs 8:33

LESSON AIM:

By the end of this lesson, the students will:

Knowledge: Explain what God's wisdom is.

Attitude: Reflect on God's wisdom in their lives.

Action: Pray for wisdom in their everyday life experiences.

TEACHER PREPARATION TARGET

The personification of wisdom in this Scripture describes its importance before Creation. Wisdom is a gift from God that must be accepted by humans. Scripture tells us that God delights in wisdom and our ability to seek and use it in our lives (Proverbs 8:22-35).

TOOLS

Student manuals, Bibles, pencils, and index cards.

OPEN THE LESSON

Ask your students the following questions:

1. What is creation?
2. Who can create?
3. How important is it to be wise?
4. Do you think young people lack wisdom?

LIFE NEED

Clever Speech

The sound of Ray's favorite gospel rap group filled his bedroom as he talked with Makita on the telephone. "I can't believe I have one day to write this speech for our class," Ray expressed to Makita.

"You're an excellent writer, Ray. You'll have no problem doing this!" Makita said in an encouraging tone.

"Thanks, Makita. I have to get off the phone and start picking my brain," Ray said as he turned on his laptop.

Ray was a member of the debate team and his teacher believed he could write a winning

speech to motivate his class to improve their grades. A lot of the 9th graders were not doing well in their science class, and Mr. Junes thought they could use some wise words from one of their own.

Ray stared at the blank page on his laptop. He was growing sleepy, when all of sudden he had a great title: "Science: Important in Our Everyday Lives." Before he knew it, Ray was finished with the speech. He was happy he could incorporate African-American scientists and inventors into it.

Wow! Those words came like a flood! Ray thought to himself. Now I can get a good night's rest.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What kind of homework was Ray doing?
2. Why do you think Ray was listening to his favorite gospel rap group before he did his homework?
3. Explain how Ray was being creative.

PRESENT THE SCRIPTURE

MEMORY VERSE

Recite this verse: "Hear instruction, and be wise and refuse it not" (Proverbs 8:33, KJV).

LESSON SCRIPTURE

Use "Target" to help you teach this lesson. Write the Scripture on the board and have students repeat it. Next, erase words from the Scripture and see if your students can memorize it. Continue to remove words until the class memorizes the Scripture.

WISDOM'S PART IN CREATION

BIBLE BASIS: Proverbs 8:22–35

BIBLE TRUTH: Proverbs speaks of wisdom having a divine origin.

MEMORY VERSE: Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not (Proverbs 8:33,KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson, we will: **EXPLAIN** what God's wisdom is; **REFLECT** on God's wisdom in our lives; and **PRAY** for wisdom in our everyday life experiences.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Proverbs 8—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

PROVERBS 8:22-35, KJV

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. **Hypostatize** (Hy-POST-a-tize)—To think of a concept, abstraction, etc., as having a real, objective existence.

B. **Metaphor**—A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is likened to something, but is not to be taken literally.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

AIM: That your students will appreciate the role that wisdom played in creation.

INTRODUCTION

In this passage wisdom is personified. Some have called this a “hypostatization”—thinking of a concept, abstraction, as having real objective existence. It seems more appropriate to think of this passage merely as a metaphor, that is a personification of an attribute of God but not an actual being in any way.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will desire to acquire wisdom in their lives.

I. WISDOM'S STORY (Proverbs 8:22–31)

In **Proverbs 8**, we see wisdom existing eternally. A sweeping panorama of creation is covered in **verses 24** through **29**, following the order of God's work listed in Genesis. Wisdom was with God before there was anything created. Wisdom was with God before there were oceans and rivers, before there were mountains and

hills. Wisdom was there when God created the heavens and when He “set a compass” (**verse 27**) or “marked out the horizon” (NIV). What an indescribably beautiful picture!

The Beauty of Wisdom (verses 22-31)

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. 23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, Or ever the earth was. 24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: 26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. 27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: 28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: 29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: 30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; 31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

The everlasting wisdom of God, an intrinsic fiber of His nature and character that was with Him as He created the world is available to us! When God set the world into motion, wisdom was there. Wisdom was there when God set the boundaries for the oceans, when He set the stars in

motion, wisdom was there when He placed the clouds in the sky (**verse 28**). Wisdom is like a skilled artisan, rejoicing in the Master's presence and His creation (**verses 30–31**). Wisdom flowed from God's character, and His wonderful creation was the result. God desires to give wisdom to those who seek Him. What an incredible thought!

The Hebrew word in **Proverbs 8:30** translated as “brought up” means “architect,” “master workman,” or “skilled workman.” The picture is that of wisdom, the faithful master artisan, standing at God's side as He created the universe. “How many are your works, LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures” (**Psalms 104:24, NIV**).

Wisdom was ecstatic, as she was able to enjoy the “handiwork” of God (**Psalms 19:1, NKJV**). This implies a wonderful gathering of wisdom and humankind—do we dare envision a party? We celebrate God's creation in many ways. Each time we enjoy a ride through the countryside and see the bursting forth of the springtime flowers, view snowcapped mountains, or enjoy a picnic on a bright sunny day, we share wisdom's pleasure and joy in Creation. As we look at God's creation, we should praise our Creator: “Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” (**Psalms 107:8**).

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

Wisdom was present when God placed the _____ in the sky.

II. WISDOM'S INVITATION (Proverbs 8:32–35)

So the plea goes out to all people: “Listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways” (**verse 32, NIV**). Receive instruction—don't refuse it. **Proverbs 19:20 (NIV)** says, “Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise.” Only fools reject instruction that will improve their lives. Respond to God's wisdom! He has made it available to us for our good, and we will be blessed when we choose to live by God's wisdom.

The Blessings of Wisdom (verses 32–35)

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. 33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. 34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. 35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

What kind of blessings can we expect from living a wise life? Peace with God is certainly high on the list, a good reputation is also a benefit. Wisdom affects every area of our lives. If we conduct our interpersonal relationships with wisdom, we will have meaningful friendships and strong family ties. If we practice our business policies with wisdom we will enjoy the blessing of a reputable business. If we live our Christian lives with wisdom we will draw others to Christ. The blessings of wisdom may not always be tangible, but they far outweigh the material blessings that we often desire. Wisdom is worth it.

Wisdom does have another aspect however, it is not only something that

God possesses it is something that God gives. We also see that Jesus demonstrates wisdom in the New Testament. Jesus is viewed as the ultimate fulfillment of the Old Testament. **Proverbs 8:22** tells us that wisdom was with God in the beginning before any of His “works of old.” Does this have a familiar ring to it? **John 1:1** says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Proverbs speaks of wisdom’s eternal existence in a way that parallels John’s words about Christ. In the Incarnation, Jesus is the complete demonstration of all that is divine including wisdom.

Proverbs 8:23 says that wisdom was “appointed” (NIV) or “set up” (KJV) from eternity before the beginning! Jesus is the Anointed One, the Everlasting God, He was with God in the beginning, before time began. He has always been and always will be. In fact, without Him, “nothing was made that has been made” (**John 1:3, NIV**). He is and was first. He is and was supreme. He was “rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part” (**Proverbs 8:30–31**). Jesus, Wisdom Himself, rejoices over those who choose Him.

When we choose Jesus, we avail ourselves of a tremendous infinite amount of wisdom. Christ is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (**1 Corinthians 1:24**). “Blessed are they that keep my [wisdom’s or Jesus’] ways” (**Proverbs 8:32**). Hallelujah! What a treasure! When we seek Jesus, we gain wisdom. He is our all in all.

QUESTION 2

According to Proverbs 8:35, “whoso findeth me [wisdom] findeth _____.”

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will learn to seek God’s wisdom.

How would your life be different if you sought God’s wisdom on a regular basis? This week, try an experiment. Make a conscious effort to gain Godly wisdom before you make a decision or tackle a problem.

STUDENTS’ RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will know that God’s wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

Christ, family, and friendship were the most important things in life for Diane a successful high school principal. She and her best friend, Asia, had gone to high school and college together. Asia had dropped out of college and ran off with her “dream man” without marrying him. It had been a shock because Asia had been president of the College Christian Fellowship. Shortly after that, they had lost touch. One Thursday night, Diane received a call from Asia.

“Asia, is it really you?” Diana cried. “It’s been 20 years.”

“Girl, it’s me!” said Asia. “I’m in town. I’d like to swing by your house later.”

When Diane opened the door, Asia’s face stole her breath away. Asia was scarecrow thin, and her eyes reflected a life of drug abuse and pain.

Suddenly, Diane realized that at some point in her life, Asia had chosen a life quite different from the one they had shared as young girls in Bible study. The

folly of a life consumed by narcotics had blinded Asia and robbed her of the ability to make wise decisions.

Again, God’s wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

PRAYER

God wisdom is precious and wonderful to have and to keep. Show us how to use wisdom in our personal and collective lives. Help us to see Jesus as true wisdom for us to have each and every day. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

The Authorship of Proverbs

The Bible records that when given the rare opportunity to request to receive anything from God that Solomon asked for “an understanding mind to govern [God’s] people” (1 Kings 3:3-9). Evidence of the fulfillment is given in the account of how he handles a dispute between two prostitutes (1 Kings 3:16-28). As a result, Solomon is considered the wisest man to have ever lived (1 Kings 4:29-31). The Bible states that Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. The best of Solomon’s songs is the Song of Solomon, identified as “the Song of Songs which is Solomon’s” (1:1), in other words, his greatest one.

There is no doubt that the book of Proverbs reflects many of Solomon’s 3,000 proverbs. From the first verse of Proverbs, we would assume that Solomon was the sole author of Proverbs. However, other authors are also identified throughout the book. For example, the words of Agur, the son of Jakeh (or the man of Massa), are recorded in chapter 30. And the words of

King Lemuel are recorded in chapter 31.

Also included in Proverbs are the collected sayings simply identified as the “words of the wise” (22:17-24:22), and the “sayings of the wise” (24:23-34)

Besides being wise, the Preacher [i.e., Solomon] also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care (Eccl 12:9).

Therefore, we can conclude that Proverbs is an edited work that includes the sayings of Agur, King Lemuel, and other wise people, among whom Solomon was the wisest.

HOW TO SAY IT

Hypostatize. Hy-POST-a-tize.

Metaphor. MET-a-for.

A PRAYER OF PROTECTION

BIBLE BASIS:

John 1:1-14

BIBLE TRUTH:

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

MEMORY VERSE:

John 1:14

LESSON AIM:

By the end of this lesson, the students will:

Knowledge: The importance of the divinity and humanity of Jesus.

Attitude: Trust in a Savior who is eternal and shares deity with God.

Action: Imagine and share how Jesus is the light in their lives and in the world.

TEACHER PREPARATION TARGET

In the Gospel of John, light and darkness are significant themes. John uses light and darkness to symbolize articles of faith (John 1:1-14).

TOOLS

Student manuals, Bibles, pencils, and paper.

OPEN THE LESSON

1. Ask your Junior High Students the following questions:
2. Can you imagine the world without light? Why is light important?
3. What is the Word of God?
4. Did you know that Jesus was present with God in the beginning?
5. What was John the Baptist's relationship to Jesus?

LIFE NEED

A Prayer of Protection

"Jesus, protect my children as they go to school today. Send your angels to shield them from hurt, harm, and danger. In Jesus' Name, Amen," Candy's mom prayed that chilly spring morning. Prayer was a part of the Lewis family's morning routine. Candy, her three little brothers, and their mom shared a morning ritual that included showers, breakfast, and prayer. Candy could not remember a morning that did not include prayer.

Juanita, Christian, and Dana were waiting outside for Candy so they could walk to the bus stop together.

"Girl, your mother has to cut those prayers short before we miss the bus," Juanita said to Candy.

"Yes, those early morning prayers should be done at night only," giggled Dana. Candy didn't respond to her friends; she just walked to the bus stop in silence.

The next morning, Candy's mom prayed over her children, but this time it was a little longer. Juanita, Christian, and Dana came inside to wait for Candy.

Candy's mom said, "Is it alright if I pray for you all today? It won't take long."

"Sure!" they all giggled.

"We have to hurry up to catch the bus," yelled Dana as they ran to the corner.

While on the bus, something very strange happened. The bus driver's steering became bizarre. Christian and Candy ran to the front of the bus to see what was going on. The bus driver was having a heart attack! The bus driver managed to steer the bus out of traffic. Candy called the paramedics and Christian kept the students calm until they arrived. Miraculously, no one got hurt. After everything was over, Christian, Candy, and Dana looked at each other.

"Prayer works!" Candy said.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How many times per week did Candy's mom pray with her children?
2. How did they feel about the prayer?
3. What happened after Candy and her friends got on the bus?

4. How did the kids explain the miracle?
5. How important is the Bible and prayer in your life?

PRESENT THE SCRIPTURE

MEMORY VERSE

Recite this verse: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14, KJV).

LESSON SCRIPTURE

Use “Target” to help you teach this lesson as the students read the Scripture in a dramatic tone, along with gestures and motions for emphasis.

BIBLE LEARNING

The Word Became Flesh

The life of Jesus Christ has been the focus of many books, essays, poems, debates, television programs, and more. He has been understood, misunderstood, criticized, and praised. The Bible states that He was God in the flesh but unbelievers suggest He was just a man who did good deeds. One thing is for sure: Jesus is the most talked about man who ever lived. An essayist, Dr. James Allan Francis, said this about Jesus: “I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that were ever built, all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life.” Jesus’ solitary life changed the world.

EXPLORE THE MEANING

How to Know Jesus Better

Junior High Students are given points to better their relationship with Jesus.

1. Read and study the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John).
2. Keep notes of new things you have learned.
3. Talk to others about what you have learned.

BIBLE APPLICATION

A. The Light Of All Mankind

Junior High Students will use LESSON SCRIPTURE to answer the following ques-

tions:

1. Jesus is full of what two things? Grace and Truth
2. Jesus gave what right to every believer? The right to become children of God
3. Who came as Jesus’ witness? John
4. Jesus came to the world, but the world did not do what? recognize Him
5. Jesus is identified as this word that begins with “W”? The Word

B. Jesus Among Us

Separate the students into partners, seated with chairs facing each other.

Ask the students to discuss with their partner what the world would be like if Jesus never came.

Once they have discussed their ideas with their partner, direct the students to find another partner and exchange thoughts.

Come together as a class and have the students share their thoughts.

STUDENTS’ RESPONSES KEEPING IT REAL

From the Beginning

Junior High Students will see how Jesus was God’s agent in the earth, and learn that He left instructions on how to live. Students will understand that He showed believers how to be a light in a dark world. Candy’s family is a light in her community, and Junior High Students will see how that light shined during a dark situation.

NEXT STEPS FOR APPLICATION ACTION

Light and Darkness

Junior High Students will choose one relative and one friend who does not know Jesus, and share how Jesus can be the light in their lives.

NOTES

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

BIBLE BASIS: John 1:1–14

BIBLE TRUTH: Jesus has always been in existence.

MEMORY VERSE: And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth (John 1:14, KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson,

we will: **KNOW** the importance of the divinity and humanity of Jesus; **TRUST** in a Savior who is eternal and shares the divine nature with God; and **IMAGINE** and **SHARE** how Jesus is the Light in our lives and in the world.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: John 1:1–14—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

JOHN 1:1-14, KJV

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. Word (John 1:1, 14) *logos* (Gk.)—The Word; denotes the expression of thought, not the mere name of an object. In John 1:1 and 1:14, Jesus is called “the Word.”

B. Witness (v. 7) *martus or marturia* (Gk.)—Someone who has seen or heard or knows.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY’S LESSON

AIM: That your students will trust that our Savior is divine and is God.

INTRODUCTION

Gnosticism

Many of the early Gentile believers had been exposed to varying strains of Gnosticism (an early heresy) and did not believe in the humanity of Jesus. As people from diverse backgrounds became part of the church, it became necessary for the apostles to correct errors in doctrine as well as encourage the existing believers. In the Gospel of John, the writer seems to be addressing a mixed audience of believers, unbelievers, Jews, and Greeks.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will learn that Jesus is eternal and human.

I. JESUS IS THE WORD (John 1:1–3)

The first 14 verses of the book of John summarize the whole Gospel. In these verses, we are introduced to Jesus who He is, what He does, and the role He plays in the eternal plan of God for the world.

Jesus Is the Word (verses 1-3)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John began his book with the words “In the beginning,” he then introduced Jesus as the Word.” The word used here is *logos*. The Greeks understood *logos* to mean not only the written or spoken word, but also the thought or reasoning in the mind. John’s Greek readers would have understood the nuances of *logos*, realizing that John was presenting Jesus as the power that controlled all things.

The Jewish believers used the word *logos* to refer to God and would have connected this concept to the wisdom personified in the Old Testament (**see Proverbs 8**). In tandem with wisdom was ability; in this case, God’s wisdom was used to create the universe. Jesus is that wisdom personified, all of these concepts are bound up in the word *logos*.

John begins the second verse by reiterating the divine pre-existent nature of the Word. He proceeds to explain the role of the Word in the beginning. The word “made” means “came into being, happened, or became.” John is communicating the idea that this creative work happened out of nothing, that the Word did not rely on pre-existing material to create the universe (**Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2**).

John also begins to give us a hint as to the name of the Word by referring to the Word as “him.” The Word is more than just an expression of the personality of

God; it is the person of Jesus Christ. So John is saying that the Word, which was pre-existent with God, was in complete fellowship with God, possessed all the divine nature and characteristics of deity and created everything.

As believers today, when we read **John 1:1–3**, we may not realize all the nuances that the author intended. But what we must learn from **verse 1** is clear: Jesus was, is, and always will be. He is God, and He is the Creator and the Source of all life. The entirety of our Christian faith rests upon accepting these truths.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

In John 1:1, John calls Jesus

“_____.”

II. JESUS IS THE LIGHT (John 1:4-9)

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

“Life” in Greek is used throughout the Bible to refer to both physical and spiritual life. It is frequently qualified with the word “eternal.” Jesus was the embodiment of the fullness and quality of life that God offers to those who believe (**John 14:6; cp. 10:10**). The life that Jesus was to offer would be the light of all humanity.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

John uses the metaphors of “light” and “darkness” to illustrate the differences between a life of grace, mercy, and forgiveness and a life of sin and death. The

word “comprehended” has two possible meanings. One meaning is “understood, perceived, or learned” it communicates the fact that those who live in the darkness do not receive the light because of a lack of understanding they don’t get it. Another meaning is the idea “lay hold of or seized” and communicates the fact that the darkness (perhaps Satan or more generally sinful humanity) will never have the ultimate victory over the light of Jesus.

John is saying that some who see the light will be unable to understand and receive it because Satan has blinded them (**2 Corinthians 4:4**). However, John says that no matter how dark the darkness of evil seems in the world, no matter how the global circumstances seem to indicate that the darkness of evil is winning, the darkness cannot overcome the light that comes from the life of Christ.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

The apostle John goes on to talk about John the Baptist, the ministry of John the Baptist is prominent in the Gospel of John. Here, the apostle John is affirming the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist. Jesus echoed this assertion when He said that John the Baptist was the last of the great Old Testament prophets, who came in the spirit of Elijah (**Matthew 11:9–10; Mark 9:13**). John the Baptist had a unique call and ministry to be a witness of Jesus, the Light (**cp. Matthew 4:4; John 1:4**).

In **verse 7**, the word “witness” means to affirm by testimony what one has seen, heard, experienced, or known. Therefore,

John the Baptist had the prophetic duty of preparing the way for Jesus by preaching the testimonies of God.

The goal of John the Baptist was the same as the goal of John the apostle, to bring humanity to a place of faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. The author is careful to specify that John the Baptist was not the genuine light, but that he came to “bear witness,” to testify of, or report of the One to come. John the Baptist testified to the world of the nature and character of Jesus so that “all men through him might believe.”

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

The apostle John makes it clear that John the Baptist was not the Light, he was only to bear witness of the Light. Like the moon that does not shine its own light but only reflects the light of the sun, so John the Baptist reflects the Light of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus would be the true Light that would light every person. The word “true” refers to that which is sincere or genuine. The apostle John is saying that John the Baptist pointed others to the light to come, and that Jesus Christ was the authentic Light.

QUESTION 2

What role did John the Baptist fulfill before Jesus came?

III. JESUS REVEALS GOD’S CHARACTER (John 1:10–14)

Although He had always been omnipresent, Jesus had now come to be

one of us. He came to live with us, to feel our pain, to experience our joy, and to know our sorrow. He experienced human life fully. John and the other disciples knew Him intimately as Teacher and Friend. They ate with Him, talked with Him, laughed with Him, and cried with Him.

Rejection and Glory (verses 10-14)
10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

His gift of salvation is offered freely to all, but unless one accepts that salvation, the darkness will continue to obscure the light. When we do receive Jesus, God gives us the right to become His children (**verse 12**). What an amazing statement! We have the right to become God’s children. It’s not because of anything we have done to deserve it, but because God’s grace makes it possible for us to choose to believe and receive Jesus. We are not children in the physical sense; we are spiritual children of our Father. When we receive Christ, we are adopted into the family of God (**see I John 3:1**). We are considered heirs of God (**Galatians 3:29**), eligible to receive all of His promised blessings.

We cannot become God’s children by any

other means than through salvation in Jesus Christ.

John 1:13 makes it clear that God's children are not born in the natural way of conception and birth. We are born of God spiritually, and He chose us. God chose to send His Son, Jesus, to the earth to take on the form of human flesh. John first introduced us to Jesus as the eternally existing Word of God. Now he reveals another facet of logos Jesus. The One who has always existed, the One who is God, has become a human being (**verse 14**).

Verse 14 says, "The Word dwelt among us." John's Jewish readers would have understood the word "dwelling" to be connected to the word for "tabernacle." In Old Testament times, the tabernacle was where God's glory dwelled. The disciples watched Him perform miracles, and they knew Him as the Messiah.

QUESTION 3

In John 1:14, John records that Jesus is full of ____ and ____.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will understand that Jesus came to give a meaningful, real life to all who will receive Him.

Jesus came into this world in the form of human flesh, yet those around Him did not acknowledge Him for who He is. They chose to continue living in darkness rather than receiving the Light. Things aren't so different in our world today. In modern society, especially in America and other modern societies, many people have become accustomed to a fast-paced hectic lifestyle. They are easily distracted, often bored, or generally dissatisfied with life.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will learn that the right theology keeps us in right relationship with God.

For the past 16 years, Greg had been a member of a group that did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God; they did not believe that Jesus was truly God and truly man. Greg tried and tried to be good enough to be in the number that would go to heaven, however he often slipped. It may have been in small ways, but he knew he was slipping and was not good enough to be in that number.

Then Greg began looking into the Bible for himself, because he desperately wanted to have a right relationship with God. He looked at **John 1:1** where he saw that the Word was God and then at **verse 14** where it said that the Word was made flesh. He wondered to himself: Who else could that be but Jesus? Then it hit him that the Bible was saying Jesus is God! This is not what those in the group had told him about Jesus.

The clincher was when he read in verse 12 that all he had to do to have that elusive relationship with God was to believe and receive Jesus! Right then and there, that's what Greg did.

PRAYER

Lord, keep us in Your care, and remind us of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. We bless You, and we praise You. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

Heresies regarding the nature of Jesus

Gnosticism (from the Greek *gnosis*, meaning knowledge) reflects the teachings of a diverse group of people who claimed that they had inside knowledge into various truth regarding the nature of Jesus. Specifically, they taught that the material world was evil and that by knowledge, one could ascend to the pure spirituality of the heavenly realm. We see Paul's initial attempts to address this heresy in Colossians.

Docetism reflects the teachings of a subset of Gnosticism. Docetism comes from the Greek word *dokeo*, which means to seem or to appear. Docetists taught that Jesus was not a human being with flesh and blood. Rather he was actually a ghost or an apparition who appeared to be human. John addresses this heresy in his epistles, where he endeavors to reaffirm the full humanity and deity of Jesus. Those who deny this teaching are deemed antichrists.

Finally, Arianism was a heresy that developed in the 4th century. As opposed to Docetism that denied the full humanity of Jesus, Arianism denied the full deity of Jesus. In essence, they taught that Jesus was a demigod, i.e., less than God but more than human. This teaching is memorialized in the words of Arius, speaking of Jesus: "There was a time when he (i.e., Jesus) was not." In other words, Arius taught that Jesus was some kind of created being. This heresy is reflected in the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses, who believe that Jesus was the first of God's created beings.

HOW TO SAY IT

Dualistic.	Du-al-IST-ic.
Emanation.	Em-a-NA-shun.
Preexistence.	Pre-ex-IST-ens.
Incarnation.	In-car-NA-shun.

DAILY HOME BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY

The Beginning of the Year
(Exodus 12:1–8)

TUESDAY

The Beginning of Wisdom
(Psalm 111)

WEDNESDAY

In the Beginning, God
(Genesis 1:1–5)

THURSDAY

From the Foundations of the Earth
(Isaiah 40:21–26)

FRIDAY

The Beginning of the Gospel
(Mark 1:1-8)

SATURDAY

Beginning from Jerusalem
(Luke 24:44-49)

SUNDAY

In the Beginning, the Word
(John 1:1-14)

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Church Of God In Christ



GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Junior High Quarterly® | STUDENT MANUAL

Ages 12-14

LIT PICK

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian

by Sherman Alexie

“Life is a constant struggle between being an individual and being a member of the community.”

This sentence from Gordy, one of the characters in “The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian,” summarizes the journey of Arnold Spirit—nicknamed Junior—throughout the book. Junior is a Native American who lives between two worlds. One world is the world on “the rez”—the Spokane Indian Reservation that is the only world Junior’s ever known. The other world is the town of Reardan, Washington—the outside community where an all-white school is both a place of challenge and promise for Junior.

Junior is a freshman in high school, who has dreams that seem too big for the reservation to hold and nurture. One of those dreams is to become a cartoonist. Junior shares his honest, humorous, sad, emotional, and quirky journey with the reader through his words and his cartoons. He does the hard work of balancing between two worlds, all while trying to figure out if either world defines him.

The book’s author, Sherman Alexie, uses his own experiences to tell the story of an adolescent Native American boy who, despite challenges, grows into a man. You will enjoy this book—giggling at times, being surprised, experiencing sadness, being inspired, and learning a new perspective that you might realize is similar to your own. For example, one quote from the book reads, “What we are is God’s gift to you, what you become is your gift to God.”

You’ll enjoy Junior’s thoughtful and hilarious journey as he discovers who he is and who he is determined to become. “The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian” will inspire you to consider what type of gift you are determined to be to God and to those around you.

Clever Speech



The sound of Ray's favorite gospel rap group filled his bedroom as he talked with Makita on the telephone. "I can't believe I have one day to write this speech for our class," Ray expressed to Makita.

"You're an excellent writer, Ray. You'll have no problem doing this!" Makita said in an encouraging tone.

"Thanks, Makita. I have to get off the phone and start picking my brain," Ray said as he turned on his laptop.

Ray was a member of the debate team and his teacher believed he could write a winning speech to motivate his class to improve their grades. A lot of the 9th graders were not doing well in their science class, and Mr. Junes thought they could use some wise words from one of their own.

Ray stared at the blank page on his laptop. He was growing sleepy, when all of sudden he had a great title: "Science: Important in Our Everyday Lives." Before he knew it, Ray was finished with the speech. He was happy he could incorporate African-American scientists and inventors into it.

Wow! Those words came like a flood! Ray thought to himself. Now I can get a good night's rest.

MEMORY VERSE

*"Hear instruction, and be wise,
and refuse it not"
(Proverbs 8:33, KJV).*

LESSON SCRIPTURE

Proverbs 8:22-35, KJV—The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. **24** When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. **25** Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: **26** While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. **27** When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: **29** When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: **30** Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; **31** Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men. **32** Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. **33** Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. **34** Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. **35** For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

BIBLE LEARNING

Wisdom's Part in Creation

Some scholars say that God created wisdom before He created the earth. Whether or not it was created, we do recognize that the earth and the universe were designed according to God's wisdom. One of the reasons Christians disagree with the theory of evolution is because it takes God out of the equation. Without God in the picture, it would force the idea that all things were accidentally and haphazardly created. Genesis 1:1 states, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

How to Implement Wisdom

W- Write down your plans.

I-Increase your study time of the Bible.

S-Search for knowledge from wise people.

E-Educate yourself with new ideas.

BIBLE APPLICATION

A. Wisdom-The First of His Works

Use LESSON SCRIPTURE to help you with this activity. Write a brief paragraph describing wisdom from today's Scripture. The opening statement is done for you.

Wisdom was the Lord's first works. _____

Wisdom On My Side

- 1 Divide into three groups.
- 2 Write your own words of wisdom on index cards. These could be words you have read in the Bible or heard from a parent, teacher, older sibling, or peer.
- 3 Exchange index cards with others in your group, then share with the whole class.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

KEEPING IT REAL

Wise Up

People appreciate wisdom and yearn for a depth of wisdom for themselves and others. *What is the root of this longing for wisdom?* The writer of Proverbs speaks of wisdom having a divine origin, being present as God created all things, and having a role with God in creation.

Ray's class was failing because many of his classmates did not appreciate science. His teacher thought Ray could give a motivating speech to perhaps charge his fellow students to get good grades. Ray completed a great speech filled with wise words about the extraordinary achievements African-American inventors made in science. *Has someone ever encouraged you with wise words?* Often, all we have to do is "Wise Up" and things will become easier.

ACTION

Wisdom Leads

Find a popular magazine and make a list of what is considered valuable in today's society. Determine which is more valuable—material things or wisdom. Pray that you will receive godly wisdom

ACTION-PACKED FACT

I will search for wisdom daily.

Feb. 28	M	Proverbs 8:1-11	The Call of Wisdom
Mar. 1	T	Proverbs 8:12-21	The Gifts of Wisdom
Mar. 2	W	Ephesians 1:3-10	Before the Foundation of the World
Mar. 3	T	Psalms 8	The Handiwork of God
Mar. 4	F	Colossians 1:15-19	The Firstborn of all Creation
Mar. 5	S	Romans 8:18-25	Creation Awaits Glory
Mar. 6	S	Proverbs 8:22-35	Find Wisdom, Find Life

A Prayer of Protection



“Jesus, protect my children as they go to school today. Send your angels to shield them from hurt, harm, and danger. In Jesus’ Name, Amen,” Candy’s mom prayed that chilly spring morning. Prayer was a part of the Lewis family’s morning routine. Candy, her three little brothers, and their mom shared a morning ritual that included showers, breakfast, and prayer. Candy could not remember a morning that did not include prayer.

Juanita, Christian, and Dana were waiting outside for Candy so they could walk to the bus stop together.

“Girl, your mother has to cut those prayers short before we miss the bus,” Juanita said to Candy.

“Yes, those early morning prayers should be done at night only,” giggled Dana. Candy didn’t respond to her friends; she just walked to the bus stop in silence.

The next morning, Candy’s mom prayed over her children, but this time it was a little longer. Juanita, Christian, and Dana came inside to wait for Candy.

Candy’s mom said, “Is it alright if I pray for you all today? It won’t take long.”

“Sure!” they all giggled.

“We have to hurry up to catch the bus,” yelled Dana as they ran to the corner.

While on the bus, something very strange happened. The bus driver’s steering became bizarre. Christian and Candy ran to the front of the bus to see what was going on. The bus driver was having a heart attack! The bus driver managed to steer the bus out of traffic. Candy called the paramedics and Christian kept the students calm until they arrived. Miraculously, no one got hurt. After everything was over, Christian, Candy, and Dana looked at each other.

“Prayer works!” Candy said.

MEMORY VERSE

*“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth”
(John 1:14, KJV)..*

LESSON SCRIPTURE

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BIBLE LEARNING

The Word Became Flesh

The life of Jesus Christ has been the focus of many books, essays, poems, debates, television programs, and more. He has been understood, misunderstood, criticized, and praised. The Bible states that He was God in the flesh but unbelievers suggest He was just a man who did good deeds. One thing is for sure: Jesus is the most talked about man who ever lived. An essayist, Dr. James Allan Francis, said this about Jesus:

“I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that were ever built, all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life.” Jesus’ solitary life changed the world.

How to Know Jesus Better

1. Read and study the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John).
2. Keep notes of new things you have learned.
3. Talk to others about what you have learned.

BIBLE APPLICATION

A. The Light Of All Mankind

Use LESSON SCRIPTURE to help you answer the following questions:

1. Jesus is full of what two things?

2. Jesus gave what right to every believer?

3. Who came as Jesus’ witness?

4. Jesus came to the world, but the world did not do what? _____

5. Jesus is identified as this word that begins with “W”? _____

B. Jesus Among Us

- 1 Separate into partners, seated with chairs facing each other.
- 2 With your partner, discuss what the world would be like if Jesus never came.
- 3 Once you have discussed your ideas with your partner, find another partner and exchange thoughts.
- 4 Come together as a class and share your thoughts.

STUDENTS’ RESPONSES

KEEPING IT REAL

From the Beginning

People are often curious about how things began. *How are we to answer questions about the origins of faith?* Jesus, who was fully human and fully involved in human society, was also personally divine from the beginning and was God’s agent in the world.

When Jesus walked the earth, He showed mankind how to live. The teachings of Jesus were practiced in Candy’s household. Her mother believed in the power of prayer and she taught her children the same. In today’s lesson, Candy’s friends (who did not believe in the power of prayer) were given a great lesson in the authority of prayer. *Have you ever experienced the power of prayer?*

ACTION

Light and Darkness

Think about the characteristic and purpose of light, and what effect the light has on darkness. Jesus wants everyone to know that He is the light in this dark world. We see a lot of darkness in those we love. This week, choose one relative and one friend who don’t know Jesus, and share how Jesus can be the light in their lives.

ACTION-PACKED FACT

I will search for wisdom daily.

Mar. 7	M	Exodus 12:1–8	The Beginning of the Year
Mar. 8	T	Psalms 111	The Beginning of Wisdom
Mar. 9	W	Genesis 1:1–5	In the Beginning, God
Mar. 10	T	Isaiah 40:21–26	From the Foundations of the Earth
Mar. 11	F	Mark 1:1–8	The Beginning of the Gospel
Mar. 12	S	Luke 24:44–49	Beginning from Jerusalem
Mar. 13	S	John 1:1–14	In the Beginning, the Word

MARCH ▪ APRIL ▪ MAY 2022

POWER FOR LIVING



Church Of God In Christ

GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Junior Quarterly® | **TEACHER MANUAL**

Ages 9-11

JUNIOR QUARTERLY

SPRING QUARTER 2022

MARCH APRIL MAY

GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Unit 1 • The Word Was in the Beginning

March 6	Student Lesson: Wise Choices	16
	Bible Study: Wisdom's Part In Creation	18
March 13	Student Lesson: From The Beginning	24
	Bible Study: The Word Became Flesh	26
March 20	Student Lesson: Ask Jesus For Help	33
	Bible Study: The Wedding At Cana	35
March 27	Student Lesson: A Fresh Start	42
	Bible Study: God's Word Saves	44
April		
April 3	Student Lesson: What Is Truth?	50
	Bible Study: Jesus Testifies To The Truth	52
April 10	Student Lesson: Joy	58
	Bible Study: The Living Word	60

Unit 2 • The Word Is Here and Now

April 17	Student Lesson: God In You	65
	Bible Study: Cleansing The Temple	67
April 24	Student Lesson: Changing Others' View	74
	Bible Study: Woman of Samaria	76
May 1	Student Lesson: Her Need Came First	85
	Bible Study: Healing The Blind Man	87

Unit 3 • The Word Will Be

May 8	Student Lesson: I Feel Empty	95
	Bible Study: The Bread Of Life	97
May 15	Student Lesson: A Trustworthy Leader?	106
	Bible Study: The Good Shepherd	108
May 22	Student Lesson: Death Is Not The End	116
	Bible Study: The Resurrection And The Life	118
May 29	Student Lesson: Are You Going The Right Way?	125
	Bible Study: The Way, The Truth, And The Life	127

WISE CHOICES

BIBLE TRUTH:

WISDOM'S PART IN CREATION

BIBLE BASIS:

Proverbs 8:22-35

MEMORY VERSE:

Proverbs 8:33

LESSON SCRIPTURE:

The Scripture text is in the student lesson under "Bible Study."

LESSON AIM

During this lesson, Junior students will explain what God's wisdom is, reflect on God's wisdom in their lives, and pray for wisdom in their everyday life experiences.

TEACHER PREPARATION

1. **Materials Needed**—Bibles, student manuals, paper, pencils, and Black History material.

2. **Lesson Background**—For background information, read Proverbs 8. Be sure to read the student lesson. Also, see Bible Study Manual 1 in the white pages of this book.

3. **Light on the Word**—God has always existed and always will. His essential characteristics have always remained the same. God is all-powerful, and omnipresent, and the wisdom of God has always existed. The personification of wisdom in this Scripture describes its importance before creation. Wisdom is a gift from God that must be accepted by humans. Scripture tells us that God delights in wisdom and our ability to seek and use it in our lives.

OPEN THE LESSON

Introduction

Review last week's "Doing My Part"

activity. Then, ask your students to identify the smartest person they have ever known or heard of. You may display some Black History information to show Junior students people who have demonstrated great wisdom. Discuss the ways the students think those people gained wisdom.

Bible Learning

Teaching time about 4–8 minutes

Student Story:

"I figured I had studied enough. I thought I was ready for that test," Sam whined.

"Sit down, Sam," Dad said. "You're getting older, and Mom and I realize that you will start making more of your own decisions. But do you think your decision not to study harder for a big test — and then cheat — was a good decision?"

Sam was embarrassed. He shook his head.

"You need to understand, son, that every decision you make has an impact on your life. The key is to make wise decisions. Do you know how to make wise decisions?"

"I think so."

"Well," Dad said, "The only way any of us can make wise decisions is to pray for God's help each day to make those decisions."

"I will, Dad," Sam said.

“How about we pray for wisdom now? Oh, and you should pray for mercy, too, because you are in big trouble!”

How important is godly wisdom? Do you believe that the only way to make truly wise decisions about your life is to seek God’s help? Why or why not?

PRESENT THE SCRIPTURE

Bible Study

Teaching time about 10–15 minutes

Begin by defining and providing examples of some personifications that the students may have heard before, such as Old Man Winter or Mother Nature. In Proverbs, wisdom is portrayed as a person even though wisdom is not a person. These verses show us that God used His wisdom when He created the world. Have the students give specific examples from the verses. Then, discuss the importance of godly wisdom in our daily lives. Have volunteers identify some things mentioned in these verses that God’s wisdom can do for us. Finally, allow volunteers to explain, in their own words, what verse 35 means.

Bible Application

Teaching time about 5–8 minutes

The wisdom of God came first. Then God created everything. Students will unscramble the letters to see some things God made, according to Proverbs 8.

llhsi	hills
aewrt	water
stainmoun	mountains
tareh	earth

vaheens	heavens
soulde	clouds

Let’s Memorize God’s Word

Teaching time about 2–3 minutes

Give the students time to study the verse silently, then see how well volunteers can recite it aloud.

EXPLORE THE MEANING

STUDENTS’ RESPONSES

Choosing What’s Best

Teaching time about 4–8 minutes

Students are asked to consider how some of the choices they have made reflect God’s wisdom in their life. If they feel that their choices are not reflective of God’s wisdom, they are asked to think of things they can do to change that. Let volunteers respond.

NEXT STEPS FOR APPLICATION

Doing My Part

Teaching time about 2–3 minutes

Students are challenged to pray for godly wisdom to help them in their daily life. They are also encouraged to ask Jesus to be their Lord and Savior if they haven’t done so already. Offer to pray with interested students.

WISDOM'S PART IN CREATION

BIBLE BASIS: Proverbs 8:22–35

BIBLE TRUTH: Proverbs speaks of wisdom having a divine origin.

MEMORY VERSE: Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not (Proverbs 8:33,KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson, we will: **EXPLAIN** what God's wisdom is; **REFLECT** on God's wisdom in our lives; and **PRAY** for wisdom in our everyday life experiences.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Proverbs 8—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

PROVERBS 8:22-35, KJV

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. **Hypostatize** (Hy-POST-a-tize)—To think of a concept, abstraction, etc., as having a real, objective existence.

B. **Metaphor**—A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is likened to something, but is not to be taken literally.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

AIM: That your students will appreciate the role that wisdom played in creation.

INTRODUCTION

In this passage wisdom is personified. Some have called this a “hypostatization”—thinking of a concept, abstraction, as having real objective existence. It seems more appropriate to think of this passage merely as a metaphor, that is a personification of an attribute of God but not an actual being in any way.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will desire to acquire wisdom in their lives.

I. WISDOM'S STORY (Proverbs 8:22–31)

In **Proverbs 8**, we see wisdom existing eternally. A sweeping panorama of creation is covered in **verses 24** through **29**, following the order of God's work listed in Genesis. Wisdom was with God before there was anything created. Wisdom was with God before there were oceans and rivers, before there were mountains and

hills. Wisdom was there when God created the heavens and when He “set a compass” (**verse 27**) or “marked out the horizon” (NIV). What an indescribably beautiful picture!

The Beauty of Wisdom (verses 22-31)

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. 23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, Or ever the earth was. 24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: 26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. 27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: 28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: 29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: 30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; 31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

The everlasting wisdom of God, an intrinsic fiber of His nature and character that was with Him as He created the world is available to us! When God set the world into motion, wisdom was there. Wisdom was there when God set the boundaries for the oceans, when He set the stars in

motion, wisdom was there when He placed the clouds in the sky (**verse 28**). Wisdom is like a skilled artisan, rejoicing in the Master’s presence and His creation (**verses 30–31**). Wisdom flowed from God’s character, and His wonderful, creation was the result. God desires to give wisdom to those who seek Him. What an incredible thought!

The Hebrew word in **Proverbs 8:30** translated as “brought up” means “architect,” “master workman,” or “skilled workman.” The picture is that of wisdom, the faithful master artisan, standing at God’s side as He created the universe. “How many are your works, LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures” (**Psalms 104:24, NIV**).

Wisdom was ecstatic, as she was able to enjoy the “handiwork” of God (**Psalms 19:1, NKJV**). This implies a wonderful gathering of wisdom and humankind—do we dare envision a party? We celebrate God’s creation in many ways. Each time we enjoy a ride through the countryside and see the bursting forth of the springtime flowers, view snowcapped mountains, or enjoy a picnic on a bright sunny day, we share wisdom’s pleasure and joy in Creation. As we look at God’s creation, we should praise our Creator: “Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” (**Psalms 107:8**).

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

Wisdom was present when God placed the _____ in the sky.

II. WISDOM’S INVITATION (Proverbs 8:32–35)

So the plea goes out to all people: “Listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways” (**verse 32, NIV**). Receive instruction—don’t refuse it. **Proverbs 19:20 (NIV)** says, “Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise.” Only fools reject instruction that will improve their lives. Respond to God’s wisdom! He has made it available to us for our good, and we will be blessed when we choose to live by God’s wisdom.

The Blessings of Wisdom (verses 32–35)

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. 33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. 34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. 35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

What kind of blessings can we expect from living a wise life? Peace with God is certainly high on the list, a good reputation is also a benefit. Wisdom affects every area of our lives. If we conduct our interpersonal relationships with wisdom, we will have meaningful friendships and strong family ties. If we practice our business policies with wisdom we will enjoy the blessing of a reputable business. If we live our Christian lives with wisdom we will draw others to Christ. The blessings of wisdom may not always be tangible, but they far outweigh the material blessings that we often desire. Wisdom is worth it.

Wisdom does have another aspect however, it is not only something that

God possesses it is something that God gives. We also see that Jesus demonstrates wisdom in the New Testament. Jesus is viewed as the ultimate fulfillment of the Old Testament. **Proverbs 8:22** tells us that wisdom was with God in the beginning before any of His “works of old.” Does this have a familiar ring to it? **John 1:1** says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Proverbs speaks of wisdom’s eternal existence in a way that parallels John’s words about Christ. In the Incarnation, Jesus is the complete demonstration of all that is divine including wisdom.

Proverbs 8:23 says that wisdom was “appointed” (NIV) or “set up” (KJV) from eternity before the beginning! Jesus is the Anointed One, the Everlasting God, He was with God in the beginning, before time began. He has always been and always will be. In fact, without Him, “nothing was made that has been made” (**John 1:3, NIV**). He is and was first. He is and was supreme. He was “rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part” (**Proverbs 8:30–31**). Jesus, Wisdom Himself, rejoices over those who choose Him.

When we choose Jesus, we avail ourselves of a tremendous infinite amount of wisdom. Christ is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (**1 Corinthians 1:24**). “Blessed are they that keep my [wisdom’s or Jesus’] ways” (**Proverbs 8:32**). Hallelujah! What a treasure! When we seek Jesus, we gain wisdom. He is our all in all.

QUESTION 2

According to Proverbs 8:35, “whoso findeth me [wisdom] findeth _____.”

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will learn to seek God’s wisdom.

How would your life be different if you sought God’s wisdom on a regular basis? This week, try an experiment. Make a conscious effort to gain Godly wisdom before you make a decision or tackle a problem.

STUDENTS’ RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will know that God’s wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

Christ, family, and friendship were the most important things in life for Diane a successful high school principal. She and her best friend, Asia, had gone to high school and college together. Asia had dropped out of college and ran off with her “dream man” without marrying him. It had been a shock because Asia had been president of the College Christian Fellowship. Shortly after that, they had lost touch. One Thursday night, Diane received a call from Asia.

“Asia, is it really you?” Diana cried. “It’s been 20 years.”

“Girl, it’s me!” said Asia. “I’m in town. I’d like to swing by your house later.”

When Diane opened the door, Asia’s face stole her breath away. Asia was scrawny thin, and her eyes reflected a life of drug abuse and pain.

Suddenly, Diane realized that at some point in her life, Asia had chosen a life quite different from the one they had shared as young girls in Bible study. The

folly of a life consumed by narcotics had blinded Asia and robbed her of the ability to make wise decisions.

Again, God’s wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

PRAYER

God wisdom is precious and wonderful to have and to keep. Show us how to use wisdom in our personal and collective lives. Help us to see Jesus as true wisdom for us to have each and every day. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

The Authorship of Proverbs

The Bible records that when given the rare opportunity to request to receive anything from God that Solomon asked for “an understanding mind to govern [God’s] people” (1 Kings 3:3-9). Evidence of the fulfillment is given in the account of how he handles a dispute between two prostitutes (1 Kings 3:16-28). As a result, Solomon is considered the wisest man to have ever lived (1 Kings 4:29-31). The Bible states that Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. The best of Solomon’s songs is the Song of Solomon, identified as “the Song of Songs which is Solomon’s” (1:1), in other words, his greatest one.

There is no doubt that the book of Proverbs reflects many of Solomon’s 3,000 proverbs. From the first verse of Proverbs, we would assume that Solomon was the sole author of Proverbs. However, other authors are also identified throughout the book. For example, the words of Agur, the son of Jakeh (or the man of Massa), are recorded in chapter 30. And the words of

King Lemuel are recorded in chapter 31.

Also included in Proverbs are the collected sayings simply identified as the “words of the wise” (22:17-24:22), and the “sayings of the wise” (24:23-34)

Besides being wise, the Preacher [i.e., Solomon] also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care (Eccl 12:9).

Therefore, we can conclude that Proverbs is an edited work that includes the sayings of Agur, King Lemuel, and other wise people, among whom Solomon was the wisest.

HOW TO SAY IT

Hypostatize. Hy-POST-a-tize.

Metaphor. MET-a-for.

FROM THE BEGINNING

BIBLE TRUTH:

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

BIBLE BASIS:

John 1:1-14

MEMORY VERSE:

John 1:14

LESSON SCRIPTURE:

The Scripture text is in the student lesson under “Bible Study.”

LESSON AIM

During this lesson, students will know the importance of the deity and humanity of Jesus, trust in a Savior who is eternal and shares deity with God, and imagine and share how Jesus is the light in their lives and in the world.

TEACHER PREPARATION

1. **Materials Needed**—Bibles, student manuals, paper, pencils, and a chalkboard or dry erase board.

2. **Lesson Background**—For background information, read John 1:1-14. Be sure to read the student lesson. Also, see Bible Study Manual 2 in the white pages of this book.

3. **Light on the Word**—To Jews, “Word” was a synonym for God. To Greeks, “Word” meant that which governs the entire universe. So “Word” is a good name for Jesus. These verses show us that Jesus is fully God, that He has existed forever, and that He was an integral part of creation. Even more important, verses 12 through 14 show us the purpose of His coming to Earth: so He could make us part of His family.

While some students may not fully understand the concept, it is still important that they are introduced to the concept of the Holy Trinity. They should

leave class knowing that Jesus is God and has always been God. He came to earth as a human, but He was still fully God. He came so we can be adopted into God’s family.

OPEN THE LESSON
Introduction

Review last week’s “Doing My Part” activity. Then, write at the top of the chalkboard or dry erase board “Jesus. . .” Have volunteers state verbs that will finish the sentence. See how many sentences the students can create. Then, add the word “adopts” to the phrase “Jesus. . .” and tell the students that today they will learn about Jesus’ role in creation and how they can be adopted into God’s family.

Bible Learning

Teaching time about 4–8 minutes

Student Story:

Jenny and her family were having a celebration. They were celebrating the day Jenny was adopted into the family. She had heard the story of her adoption for as long as she could remember, but Jenny enjoyed hearing it repeated over and over. Her parents would dust off old photo albums and look at pictures of her from throughout the years. They began taking pictures of Jenny the very first day she came to their home — over

11 years ago — and now have thousands of pictures of her. They have a story to go with almost every picture.

After the long day of celebration, Jenny headed off to bed. Before going to sleep, she got on her knees and prayed. She thanked God for her family and for the day of celebrating how her family began.

People are often curious and enjoy hearing stories of how things began. Do you ever wonder how the world began? Do you ever think about Jesus' role in creation? Do you think Jesus played a part in creation? If so, what role do you think Jesus played?

PRESENT THE SCRIPTURE

Bible Study

Teaching time about 10–15 minutes

Begin by assigning readers. Then, draw a triangle on the chalkboard or dry erase board. On one side of the triangle, write “Father,” on another side, write “Jesus,” and on the last side, write “Holy Spirit.” Explain the relationship of the three to the class and reiterate that all three were present at creation. Focusing on verses 1 through 5, ask students to name some characteristics of God they see in these verses. Ask students if those characteristics apply to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and have volunteers defend their answer. After rereading verses 10 through 14, talk about receiving Jesus as Savior. Have students discuss what they have to believe to be born again.

Bible Application

Teaching time about 5–8 minutes

Circle True or False after each statement.

1. Jesus and God are not the same.
True False

2. Jesus made everything.

True False

3. Jesus is the light of the world.

True False

4. John the Baptist came to say that Jesus is the light.

True False

5. People realized that Jesus made them.

True False

6. Ask Jesus to forgive you to join His family.

True False

7. God is full of grace and truth.

True False

Let's Memorize God's Word

Teaching time about 2–3 minutes

Recite the verse several times aloud as a class then allow volunteers to recite the verse individually.

EXPLORE THE MEANING

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

Choosing What's Best

Teaching time about 4–8 minutes

Students are asked to discuss what they believe about Jesus and why He is trustworthy. Allow volunteers to answer. Make sure Jesus' deity and the fact that He is eternal are discussed, as well as the significance of that fact in terms of salvation.

NEXT STEPS FOR APPLICATION

Doing My Part

Teaching time about 2–3 minutes

Students are challenged to imagine ways they can share the news of Jesus with others. If time permits, allow volunteers to stand and tell the class about Jesus. Also, offer to pray with students who may want to accept Jesus as their Savior.

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

BIBLE BASIS: John 1:1–14

BIBLE TRUTH: Jesus has always been in existence.

MEMORY VERSE: And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth (John 1:14, KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson,

we will: **KNOW** the importance of the divinity and humanity of Jesus; **TRUST** in a Savior who is eternal and shares the divine nature with God; and **IMAGINE** and **SHARE** how Jesus is the Light in our lives and in the world.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: John 1:1–14—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

JOHN 1:1-14, KJV

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. Word (John 1:1, 14) *logos* (Gk.)—The Word; denotes the expression of thought, not the mere name of an object. In John 1:1 and 1:14, Jesus is called “the Word.”

B. Witness (v. 7) *martus or marturia* (Gk.)—Someone who has seen or heard or knows.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY’S LESSON

AIM: That your students will trust that our Savior is divine and is God.

INTRODUCTION

Gnosticism

Many of the early Gentile believers had been exposed to varying strains of Gnosticism (an early heresy) and did not believe in the humanity of Jesus. As people from diverse backgrounds became part of the church, it became necessary for the apostles to correct errors in doctrine as well as encourage the existing believers. In the Gospel of John, the writer seems to be addressing a mixed audience of believers, unbelievers, Jews, and Greeks.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will learn that Jesus is eternal and human.

I. JESUS IS THE WORD (John 1:1–3)

The first 14 verses of the book of John summarize the whole Gospel. In these verses, we are introduced to Jesus who He is, what He does, and the role He plays in the eternal plan of God for the world.

Jesus Is the Word (verses 1-3)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John began his book with the words “In the beginning,” he then introduced Jesus as the Word.” The word used here is *logos*. The Greeks understood *logos* to mean not only the written or spoken word, but also the thought or reasoning in the mind. John’s Greek readers would have understood the nuances of *logos*, realizing that John was presenting Jesus as the power that controlled all things.

The Jewish believers used the word *logos* to refer to God and would have connected this concept to the wisdom personified in the Old Testament (**see Proverbs 8**). In tandem with wisdom was ability; in this case, God’s wisdom was used to create the universe. Jesus is that wisdom personified, all of these concepts are bound up in the word *logos*.

John begins the second verse by reiterating the divine pre-existent nature of the Word. He proceeds to explain the role of the Word in the beginning. The word “made” means “came into being, happened, or became.” John is communicating the idea that this creative work happened out of nothing, that the Word did not rely on pre-existing material to create the universe (**Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2**).

John also begins to give us a hint as to the name of the Word by referring to the Word as “him.” The Word is more than just an expression of the personality of

God; it is the person of Jesus Christ. So John is saying that the Word, which was pre-existent with God, was in complete fellowship with God, possessed all the divine nature and characteristics of deity and created everything.

As believers today, when we read **John 1:1–3**, we may not realize all the nuances that the author intended. But what we must learn from **verse 1** is clear: Jesus was, is, and always will be. He is God, and He is the Creator and the Source of all life. The entirety of our Christian faith rests upon accepting these truths.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

In John 1:1, John calls Jesus

“_____.”

II. JESUS IS THE LIGHT (John 1:4-9)

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

“Life” in Greek is used throughout the Bible to refer to both physical and spiritual life. It is frequently qualified with the word “eternal.” Jesus was the embodiment of the fullness and quality of life that God offers to those who believe (**John 14:6; cp. 10:10**). The life that Jesus was to offer would be the light of all humanity.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

John uses the metaphors of “light” and “darkness” to illustrate the differences between a life of grace, mercy, and forgiveness and a life of sin and death. The

word “comprehended” has two possible meanings. One meaning is “understood, perceived, or learned” it communicates the fact that those who live in the darkness do not receive the light because of a lack of understanding they don’t get it. Another meaning is the idea “lay hold of or seized” and communicates the fact that the darkness (perhaps Satan or more generally sinful humanity) will never have the ultimate victory over the light of Jesus.

John is saying that some who see the light will be unable to understand and receive it because Satan has blinded them (**2 Corinthians 4:4**). However, John says that no matter how dark the darkness of evil seems in the world, no matter how the global circumstances seem to indicate that the darkness of evil is winning, the darkness cannot overcome the light that comes from the life of Christ.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

The apostle John goes on to talk about John the Baptist, the ministry of John the Baptist is prominent in the Gospel of John. Here, the apostle John is affirming the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist. Jesus echoed this assertion when He said that John the Baptist was the last of the great Old Testament prophets, who came in the spirit of Elijah (**Matthew 11:9–10; Mark 9:13**). John the Baptist had a unique call and ministry to be a witness of Jesus, the Light (**cp. Matthew 4:4; John 1:4**).

In **verse 7**, the word “witness” means to affirm by testimony what one has seen, heard, experienced, or known. Therefore,

John the Baptist had the prophetic duty of preparing the way for Jesus by preaching the testimonies of God.

The goal of John the Baptist was the same as the goal of John the apostle, to bring humanity to a place of faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. The author is careful to specify that John the Baptist was not the genuine light, but that he came to “bear witness,” to testify of, or report of the One to come. John the Baptist testified to the world of the nature and character of Jesus so that “all men through him might believe.”

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

The apostle John makes it clear that John the Baptist was not the Light, he was only to bear witness of the Light. Like the moon that does not shine its own light but only reflects the light of the sun, so John the Baptist reflects the Light of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus would be the true Light that would light every person. The word “true” refers to that which is sincere or genuine. The apostle John is saying that John the Baptist pointed others to the light to come, and that Jesus Christ was the authentic Light.

QUESTION 2

What role did John the Baptist fulfill before Jesus came?

III. JESUS REVEALS GOD’S CHARACTER (John 1:10–14)

Although He had always been omnipresent, Jesus had now come to be

one of us. He came to live with us, to feel our pain, to experience our joy, and to know our sorrow. He experienced human life fully. John and the other disciples knew Him intimately as Teacher and Friend. They ate with Him, talked with Him, laughed with Him, and cried with Him.

Rejection and Glory (verses 10-14)
10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

His gift of salvation is offered freely to all, but unless one accepts that salvation, the darkness will continue to obscure the light. When we do receive Jesus, God gives us the right to become His children (**verse 12**). What an amazing statement! We have the right to become God’s children. It’s not because of anything we have done to deserve it, but because God’s grace makes it possible for us to choose to believe and receive Jesus. We are not children in the physical sense; we are spiritual children of our Father. When we receive Christ, we are adopted into the family of God (**see I John 3:1**). We are considered heirs of God (**Galatians 3:29**), eligible to receive all of His promised blessings.

We cannot become God’s children by any

other means than through salvation in Jesus Christ.

John 1:13 makes it clear that God's children are not born in the natural way of conception and birth. We are born of God spiritually, and He chose us. God chose to send His Son, Jesus, to the earth to take on the form of human flesh. John first introduced us to Jesus as the eternally existing Word of God. Now he reveals another facet of logos Jesus. The One who has always existed, the One who is God, has become a human being (**verse 14**).

Verse 14 says, "The Word dwelt among us." John's Jewish readers would have understood the word "dwelling" to be connected to the word for "tabernacle." In Old Testament times, the tabernacle was where God's glory dwelled. The disciples watched Him perform miracles, and they knew Him as the Messiah.

QUESTION 3

In John 1:14, John records that Jesus is full of ____ and ____.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will understand that Jesus came to give a meaningful, real life to all who will receive Him.

Jesus came into this world in the form of human flesh, yet those around Him did not acknowledge Him for who He is. They chose to continue living in darkness rather than receiving the Light. Things aren't so different in our world today. In modern society, especially in America and other modern societies, many people have become accustomed to a fast-paced hectic lifestyle. They are easily distracted, often bored, or generally dissatisfied with life.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will learn that the right theology keeps us in right relationship with God.

For the past 16 years, Greg had been a member of a group that did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God; they did not believe that Jesus was truly God and truly man. Greg tried and tried to be good enough to be in the number that would go to heaven, however he often slipped. It may have been in small ways, but he knew he was slipping and was not good enough to be in that number.

Then Greg began looking into the Bible for himself, because he desperately wanted to have a right relationship with God. He looked at **John 1:1** where he saw that the Word was God and then at **verse 14** where it said that the Word was made flesh. He wondered to himself: Who else could that be but Jesus? Then it hit him that the Bible was saying Jesus is God! This is not what those in the group had told him about Jesus.

The clincher was when he read in verse 12 that all he had to do to have that elusive relationship with God was to believe and receive Jesus! Right then and there, that's what Greg did.

PRAYER

Lord, keep us in Your care, and remind us of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. We bless You, and we praise You. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

Heresies regarding the nature of Jesus

Gnosticism (from the Greek *gnosis*, meaning knowledge) reflects the teachings of a diverse group of people who claimed that they had inside knowledge into various truth regarding the nature of Jesus. Specifically, they taught that the material world was evil and that by knowledge, one could ascend to the pure spirituality of the heavenly realm. We see Paul's initial attempts to address this heresy in Colossians.

Docetism reflects the teachings of a subset of Gnosticism. Docetism comes from the Greek word *dokeo*, which means to seem or to appear. Docetists taught that Jesus was not a human being with flesh and blood. Rather he was actually a ghost or an apparition who appeared to be human. John addresses this heresy in his epistles, where he endeavors to reaffirm the full humanity and deity of Jesus. Those who deny this teaching are deemed antichrists.

Finally, Arianism was a heresy that developed in the 4th century. As opposed to Docetism that denied the full humanity of Jesus, Arianism denied the full deity of Jesus. In essence, they taught that Jesus was a demigod, i.e., less than God but more than human. This teaching is memorialized in the words of Arius, speaking of Jesus: "There was a time when he (i.e., Jesus) was not." In other words, Arius taught that Jesus was some kind of created being. This heresy is reflected in the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses, who believe that Jesus was the first of God's created beings.

HOW TO SAY IT

Dualistic.	Du-al-IST-ic.
Emanation.	Em-a-NA-shun.
Preexistence.	Pre-ex-IST-ens.
Incarnation.	In-car-NA-shun.

DAILY HOME BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY

The Beginning of the Year
(Exodus 12:1–8)

TUESDAY

The Beginning of Wisdom
(Psalm 111)

WEDNESDAY

In the Beginning, God
(Genesis 1:1–5)

THURSDAY

From the Foundations of the Earth
(Isaiah 40:21–26)

FRIDAY

The Beginning of the Gospel
(Mark 1:1-8)

SATURDAY

Beginning from Jerusalem
(Luke 24:44-49)

SUNDAY

In the Beginning, the Word
(John 1:1-14)

MARCH • APRIL • MAY 2022

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GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Junior Quarterly® | **STUDENT MANUAL**

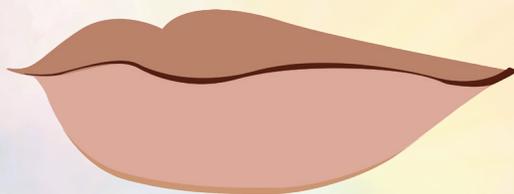
Ages 9-11

Worship

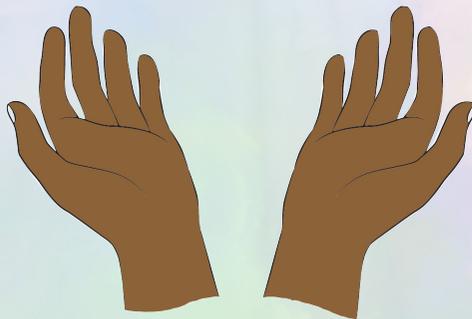
The Words And Works You Know

The theme of this quarter is "The Works and Words of Jesus." While you will learn some of the words and works of our Lord over the next several weeks, you may already know some of them. List any words (Scripture verses) or works of Jesus you already know.

Words:



Works:



HIGH FIVE

On the HIGH FIVE page, we normally spotlight African Americans who have made notable contributions to our society. This quarter, however, Junior Quarterly® is turning the spotlight on you! For the next 31 days, you are challenged to use words and do works that benefit others. Keep track of your progress on the calendar below. If you complete the challenge, share your completion with your Sunday school teacher or youth leader.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. **34** Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. **35** For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

You can find words of wisdom in the Bible. The Bible shows you the way to eternal life. Do you know the way to salvation?

Bible Application

The wisdom of God came first. Then God created everything. Unscramble the letters to see some things God made, according to Proverbs 8.

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æwrt

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vanhees

souldc

Let's Memorize God's Word

"Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not" (Proverbs 8:33, KJV).

Choosing What's Best

Think about some of the choices you've recently made. How do they show God's wisdom in your life? If you don't think they do, what can you do to change that?

Doing My Part

Your challenge this week is to pray for godly wisdom to help you in life. Also, if you have yet to ask Jesus to be your Lord and Savior—which is the wisest thing you can do—consider doing so.

people did not recognize Him.

Verses 10–14—He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. **11** He came unto his own, and his own received him not. **12** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: **13** Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. **14** And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Jesus came so all people could be born again into His family. All you have to do to become a part of the Lord's family is to believe in Jesus, tell Him you are sorry for your sins, and ask Him to be your Lord and Savior.

Bible Application

Circle True or False after each statement.

1. Jesus and God are not the same.

True False

2. Jesus made everything.

True False

3. Jesus is the light of the world.

True False

4. John the Baptist came to say that Jesus is the light.

True False

5. People realized that Jesus made them.

True False

6. Ask Jesus to forgive you to join His family.

True False

7. God is full of grace and truth.

True False

Let's Memorize God's Word

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth"

(John 1:14, KJV).

Choosing What's Best

What things do you believe about Jesus? Is He trustworthy? Why or why not? Write your answer below.

Doing My Part

Do you know someone who has not yet asked Jesus to be his or her Savior? Your challenge this week is to explain to him or her how Jesus is the light of the world, and how they can be saved. If you have not yet asked Jesus to be your Savior, consider doing so today.

MARCH ▪ APRIL ▪ MAY 2022

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Church Of God In Christ



GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Primary Quarterly® | **TEACHER MANUAL**

Ages 6-8

PRIMARY QUARTERLY

SPRING QUARTER 2022

MARCH APRIL MAY

GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Unit 1 • The Word Was in the Beginning

March 6	Student Lesson: God's Wisdom	16
	Bible Study: Wisdom's Part In Creation	18
March 13	Student Lesson: Let's Begin	24
	Bible Study: The Word Became Flesh	26
March 20	Student Lesson: Jesus' First Miracel	33
	Bible Study: The Wedding At Cana	35
March 27	Student Lesson: God's Saving Love	42
	Bible Study: God's Word Saves	44
April		
April 3	Student Lesson: Jesus Tells The Truth	50
	Bible Study: Jesus Testifies To The Truth	52
April 10	Student Lesson: New Life	58
	Bible Study: The Living Word	60

Unit 2 • The Word Is Here and Now

April 17	Student Lesson: Jesus Brings Order	65
	Bible Study: Cleansing The Temple	67
April 24	Student Lesson: Turn It Around	74
	Bible Study: Woman of Samaria	76
May 1	Student Lesson: First Things First	85
	Bible Study: Healing The Blind Man	87

Unit 3 • The Word Will Be

May 8	Student Lesson: Never Hungry Or Thirsty	95
	Bible Study: The Bread Of Life	97
May 15	Student Lesson: The Good Guide	106
	Bible Study: The Good Shepherd	108
May 22	Student Lesson: Never Ending Life	116
	Bible Study: The Resurrection And The Life	118
May 29	Student Lesson: Jesus Leads The Way	125
	Bible Study: The Way, The Truth, And The Life	127

GOD'S WISDOM

BIBLE BASIS:

Proverbs 8:22-35

BIBLE TRUTH:

WISDOM'S PART IN CREATION

MEMORY VERSE:

Proverbs 8:33, KJV

LESSON AIM:

Knowledge: Students will know that wisdom was the first of God's great works.

Attitude: Students will trust that they can pray and receive Godly wisdom.

Action: Students will play a game to memorize the Memory Verse.

TEACHER PREPARATION DEAR TEACHER

Students will learn in today's lesson that the book of Proverbs teaches us ways to live godly lives. When we live godly lives, we please God.

SUPPLY LIST

SECTION	MATERIALS
Focus Activity	Paper, pencils
Worship Time	Gospel music CD

INTRODUCTION

Focus Activity

Ask the students these questions to help them begin focusing on today's lesson (These questions will be discussed again later. See the review section of this lesson for possible answers, but allow the students to give their own responses.):

1. What is wisdom?
2. Where does wisdom come from?
3. Why do we need wisdom?

BIBLE LEARNING

A. Life Application Story

(Distribute the student folders.)

Before reading, write the word "WISDOM" on an index card. Provide two other index cards and turn all cards face down, mix them up, then have different students guess which one is the "WISDOM" card. Say, "Let's read about a little girl who found wisdom from God to do the right thing."

Read the story aloud, or ask volunteers to help read. Be sure to use expressive vocal tones and inject enthusiasm into your reading.

Afterward, ask these questions:

- (1) What was Michelle's hard choice? (She had to choose whether she should say something about her friend taking the candy bar out of another student's desk.)
- (2) Why was it a hard choice? (She didn't want her friend to get in trouble.)
- (3) What is wisdom? (Wisdom means knowing and doing what is right.)
- (4) What would you have done? (Allow a variety of responses. Be sure to praise the students for their wise solutions.)

B. Reading the Bible Story

God's Wisdom

The Bible Story in the student folders is designed for primary students to read. Be sure to study the information on this Bible passage in the white pages of the Teacher Guide.

WISDOM'S PART IN CREATION

BIBLE BASIS: Proverbs 8:22–35

BIBLE TRUTH: Proverbs speaks of wisdom having a divine origin.

MEMORY VERSE: Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not (Proverbs 8:33,KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson, we will: **EXPLAIN** what God's wisdom is; **REFLECT** on God's wisdom in our lives; and **PRAY** for wisdom in our everyday life experiences.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Proverbs 8—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

PROVERBS 8:22-35, KJV

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. **Hypostatize** (Hy-POST-a-tize)—To think of a concept, abstraction, etc., as having a real, objective existence.

B. **Metaphor**—A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is likened to something, but is not to be taken literally.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

AIM: That your students will appreciate the role that wisdom played in creation.

INTRODUCTION

In this passage wisdom is personified. Some have called this a “hypostatization”—thinking of a concept, abstraction, as having real objective existence. It seems more appropriate to think of this passage merely as a metaphor, that is a personification of an attribute of God but not an actual being in any way.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will desire to acquire wisdom in their lives.

I. WISDOM'S STORY (Proverbs 8:22–31)

In **Proverbs 8**, we see wisdom existing eternally. A sweeping panorama of creation is covered in **verses 24** through **29**, following the order of God's work listed in Genesis. Wisdom was with God before there was anything created. Wisdom was with God before there were oceans and rivers, before there were mountains and

hills. Wisdom was there when God created the heavens and when He “set a compass” (**verse 27**) or “marked out the horizon” (NIV). What an indescribably beautiful picture!

The Beauty of Wisdom (verses 22-31)

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. 23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, Or ever the earth was. 24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: 26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. 27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: 28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: 29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: 30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; 31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

The everlasting wisdom of God, an intrinsic fiber of His nature and character that was with Him as He created the world is available to us! When God set the world into motion, wisdom was there. Wisdom was there when God set the boundaries for the oceans, when He set the stars in

motion, wisdom was there when He placed the clouds in the sky (**verse 28**). Wisdom is like a skilled artisan, rejoicing in the Master's presence and His creation (**verses 30–31**). Wisdom flowed from God's character, and His wonderful creation was the result. God desires to give wisdom to those who seek Him. What an incredible thought!

The Hebrew word in **Proverbs 8:30** translated as “brought up” means “architect,” “master workman,” or “skilled workman.” The picture is that of wisdom, the faithful master artisan, standing at God's side as He created the universe. “How many are your works, LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures” (**Psalms 104:24, NIV**).

Wisdom was ecstatic, as she was able to enjoy the “handiwork” of God (**Psalms 19:1, NKJV**). This implies a wonderful gathering of wisdom and humankind—do we dare envision a party? We celebrate God's creation in many ways. Each time we enjoy a ride through the countryside and see the bursting forth of the springtime flowers, view snowcapped mountains, or enjoy a picnic on a bright sunny day, we share wisdom's pleasure and joy in Creation. As we look at God's creation, we should praise our Creator: “Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” (**Psalms 107:8**).

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

Wisdom was present when God placed the _____ in the sky.

II. WISDOM'S INVITATION (Proverbs 8:32–35)

So the plea goes out to all people: “Listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways” (**verse 32, NIV**). Receive instruction—don't refuse it. **Proverbs 19:20 (NIV)** says, “Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise.” Only fools reject instruction that will improve their lives. Respond to God's wisdom! He has made it available to us for our good, and we will be blessed when we choose to live by God's wisdom.

The Blessings of Wisdom (verses 32–35)

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. 33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. 34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. 35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

What kind of blessings can we expect from living a wise life? Peace with God is certainly high on the list, a good reputation is also a benefit. Wisdom affects every area of our lives. If we conduct our interpersonal relationships with wisdom, we will have meaningful friendships and strong family ties. If we practice our business policies with wisdom we will enjoy the blessing of a reputable business. If we live our Christian lives with wisdom we will draw others to Christ. The blessings of wisdom may not always be tangible, but they far outweigh the material blessings that we often desire. Wisdom is worth it.

Wisdom does have another aspect however, it is not only something that

God possesses it is something that God gives. We also see that Jesus demonstrates wisdom in the New Testament. Jesus is viewed as the ultimate fulfillment of the Old Testament. **Proverbs 8:22** tells us that wisdom was with God in the beginning before any of His “works of old.” Does this have a familiar ring to it? **John 1:1** says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Proverbs speaks of wisdom’s eternal existence in a way that parallels John’s words about Christ. In the Incarnation, Jesus is the complete demonstration of all that is divine including wisdom.

Proverbs 8:23 says that wisdom was “appointed” (NIV) or “set up” (KJV) from eternity before the beginning! Jesus is the Anointed One, the Everlasting God, He was with God in the beginning, before time began. He has always been and always will be. In fact, without Him, “nothing was made that has been made” (**John 1:3, NIV**). He is and was first. He is and was supreme. He was “rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part” (**Proverbs 8:30–31**). Jesus, Wisdom Himself, rejoices over those who choose Him.

When we choose Jesus, we avail ourselves of a tremendous infinite amount of wisdom. Christ is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (**1 Corinthians 1:24**). “Blessed are they that keep my [wisdom’s or Jesus’] ways” (**Proverbs 8:32**). Hallelujah! What a treasure! When we seek Jesus, we gain wisdom. He is our all in all.

QUESTION 2

According to Proverbs 8:35, “whoso findeth me [wisdom] findeth _____.”

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will learn to seek God’s wisdom.

How would your life be different if you sought God’s wisdom on a regular basis? This week, try an experiment. Make a conscious effort to gain Godly wisdom before you make a decision or tackle a problem.

STUDENTS’ RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will know that God’s wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

Christ, family, and friendship were the most important things in life for Diane a successful high school principal. She and her best friend, Asia, had gone to high school and college together. Asia had dropped out of college and ran off with her “dream man” without marrying him. It had been a shock because Asia had been president of the College Christian Fellowship. Shortly after that, they had lost touch. One Thursday night, Diane received a call from Asia.

“Asia, is it really you?” Diana cried. “It’s been 20 years.”

“Girl, it’s me!” said Asia. “I’m in town. I’d like to swing by your house later.”

When Diane opened the door, Asia’s face stole her breath away. Asia was scarecrow thin, and her eyes reflected a life of drug abuse and pain.

Suddenly, Diane realized that at some point in her life, Asia had chosen a life quite different from the one they had shared as young girls in Bible study. The

folly of a life consumed by narcotics had blinded Asia and robbed her of the ability to make wise decisions.

Again, God’s wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

PRAYER

God wisdom is precious and wonderful to have and to keep. Show us how to use wisdom in our personal and collective lives. Help us to see Jesus as true wisdom for us to have each and every day. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

The Authorship of Proverbs

The Bible records that when given the rare opportunity to request to receive anything from God that Solomon asked for “an understanding mind to govern [God’s] people” (1 Kings 3:3-9). Evidence of the fulfillment is given in the account of how he handles a dispute between two prostitutes (1 Kings 3:16-28). As a result, Solomon is considered the wisest man to have ever lived (1 Kings 4:29-31). The Bible states that Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. The best of Solomon’s songs is the Song of Solomon, identified as “the Song of Songs which is Solomon’s” (1:1), in other words, his greatest one.

There is no doubt that the book of Proverbs reflects many of Solomon’s 3,000 proverbs. From the first verse of Proverbs, we would assume that Solomon was the sole author of Proverbs. However, other authors are also identified throughout the book. For example, the words of Agur, the son of Jakeh (or the man of Massa), are recorded in chapter 30. And the words of

King Lemuel are recorded in chapter 31.

Also included in Proverbs are the collected sayings simply identified as the “words of the wise” (22:17-24:22), and the “sayings of the wise” (24:23-34)

Besides being wise, the Preacher [i.e., Solomon] also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care (Eccl 12:9).

Therefore, we can conclude that Proverbs is an edited work that includes the sayings of Agur, King Lemuel, and other wise people, among whom Solomon was the wisest.

HOW TO SAY IT

Hypostatize. Hy-POST-a-tize.

Metaphor. MET-a-for.

LET'S BEGIN

BIBLE BASIS:

John 1:1-14

BIBLE TRUTH:

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

MEMORY VERSE:

John 1:14, KJV

LESSON AIM:

Knowledge: Students will know that God's Word brought life and light into the world.

Attitude: Students will want to respect other people as children of God.

Action: Students will participate in a call and response session.

TEACHER PREPARATION

DEAR TEACHER

Students will learn in today's lesson God and His Word are one and the same. His Word is truth and life for all who choose to accept it.

SUPPLY LIST LIST

SECTION	MATERIALS
Focus Activity	Paper, pencils

INTRODUCTION

Focus Activity

Before class, write a list of questions that will help the students see similarities and differences among their classmates. Possible questions include: Who has an older brother or sister? Who has a pet? Who likes to draw? Whose favorite color is _____? Add other questions as time allows. Ask the students to raise their hands if they can answer "yes" to the questions. Point out how many students have things in common and how many students don't. Tell them it's all right if they don't all have the same things in common. It's okay to be different!

(Allow a few students to respond.) There are lots of differences, but there is one thing that is the same about all of us. Let's listen to our story to find out what that is."

Read the story aloud, or ask volunteers to help read. Be sure to use expressive vocal tones and inject enthusiasm into your reading.

After reading, ask these questions:

(1) Did anyone hear the one thing that is the same about all of us here? What is it? (Allow the students to respond. Possible responses: We are all children of God, and He loves us all.)

(2) Does anyone know how we became children of God? (Allow a few responses.)

BIBLE LEARNING

A. Life Application Story

(Distribute the student folders.)

Before reading, ask the students, "What were some of the differences you saw in your classmates during our opening activity?"

Say, “let’s get ready to hear our Bible Story to find out the answer to that question. When you hear the answer, you can shout out ‘Hallelujah!’”

B. Reading the Bible Story

Let’s Begin

The Bible Story in the student folders is designed for primary students to read. Be sure to study the information on this Bible passage in the white pages of the Teacher Guide.

The Word existed from the very beginning of time. God existed from the very beginning of time. Guess what? God and the Word are the same! The Bible says that God and the Word were together in the beginning of time and that the Word was God.

Then there was a man named John who did a very important thing. John told people about the light so they would believe in God. He told them that the true light would be coming soon. The Light was in the world but nobody recognized Him. Even His own people didn’t believe Him. But everyone else who believed in Him became children of God.

The Word became alive in flesh and lived with us. What does the Word do for us? It gives us life and light. It gives us hope. It makes us sons and daughters of God. Many people don’t want to accept God and His Word, but if you accept and receive Him, you become a child of God, too. Hallelujah!

C. Bible Review

Reinforce the Bible lesson with the following call-and-response session:

With each question, have the students shout out “the Word!”

What existed with God in the very beginning? (The Word!)

What is the same as God? (The Word!)

What gives us life and light? (The Word!)

What gives us hope? (The Word!)

What makes us sons and daughters of God? (The Word!)

D. Let’s Memorize God’s Word

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us” (from John 1:14, KJV).

Write each word of the Memory Verse on individual flash cards or index cards. (Feel free to include the Scripture reference if more cards are needed, or you can create teams of two.) Ask a volunteer to be the leader. Have the children hold the cards at chest level. When you say go, have the students attempt to put themselves in the correct order of the Memory Verse. Now, have the leader read the verse out loud from the cards.

BIBLE APPLICATION

A. Be Smart

God Is the Word!

The students will circle the words from the word box in the puzzle.

B. Good Attitude

God’s Word on Earth!

Believing in God’s Word makes us children of God. Have the students look at the person sitting to their right. They will circle three words in the exercise that describe that person. Then they will fill in the blanks using those words and share their sentences with that person.

C. Worship Time

Lead the students in a praise song to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb.”

“God is the Word and the Word is life.

The Word is hope!

The Word is light!

God is the Word and the Word is life.

Thank You for the Word!”

Now close the session with this prayer:

“Heavenly Father, we thank You for loving us enough to give us the awesome gift of Your Word. We know that if we accept Your Word as the truth, we are Your children. Help us to love all of Your children. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.”

NOTES

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

BIBLE BASIS: John 1:1–14

BIBLE TRUTH: Jesus has always been in existence.

MEMORY VERSE: And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth (John 1:14, KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson,

we will: **KNOW** the importance of the divinity and humanity of Jesus; **TRUST** in a Savior who is eternal and shares the divine nature with God; and **IMAGINE** and **SHARE** how Jesus is the Light in our lives and in the world.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: John 1:1–14—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

JOHN 1:1-14, KJV

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. Word (John 1:1, 14) *logos* (Gk.)—The Word; denotes the expression of thought, not the mere name of an object. In John 1:1 and 1:14, Jesus is called “the Word.”

B. Witness (v. 7) *martus or marturia* (Gk.)—Someone who has seen or heard or knows.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY’S LESSON

AIM: That your students will trust that our Savior is divine and is God.

INTRODUCTION

Gnosticism

Many of the early Gentile believers had been exposed to varying strains of Gnosticism (an early heresy) and did not believe in the humanity of Jesus. As people from diverse backgrounds became part of the church, it became necessary for the apostles to correct errors in doctrine as well as encourage the existing believers. In the Gospel of John, the writer seems to be addressing a mixed audience of believers, unbelievers, Jews, and Greeks.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will learn that Jesus is eternal and human.

I. JESUS IS THE WORD (John 1:1–3)

The first 14 verses of the book of John summarize the whole Gospel. In these verses, we are introduced to Jesus who He is, what He does, and the role He plays in the eternal plan of God for the world.

Jesus Is the Word (verses 1-3)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John began his book with the words “In the beginning,” he then introduced Jesus as the Word.” The word used here is *logos*. The Greeks understood *logos* to mean not only the written or spoken word, but also the thought or reasoning in the mind. John’s Greek readers would have understood the nuances of *logos*, realizing that John was presenting Jesus as the power that controlled all things.

The Jewish believers used the word *logos* to refer to God and would have connected this concept to the wisdom personified in the Old Testament (**see Proverbs 8**). In tandem with wisdom was ability; in this case, God’s wisdom was used to create the universe. Jesus is that wisdom personified, all of these concepts are bound up in the word *logos*.

John begins the second verse by reiterating the divine pre-existent nature of the Word. He proceeds to explain the role of the Word in the beginning. The word “made” means “came into being, happened, or became.” John is communicating the idea that this creative work happened out of nothing, that the Word did not rely on pre-existing material to create the universe (**Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2**).

John also begins to give us a hint as to the name of the Word by referring to the Word as “him.” The Word is more than just an expression of the personality of

God; it is the person of Jesus Christ. So John is saying that the Word, which was pre-existent with God, was in complete fellowship with God, possessed all the divine nature and characteristics of deity and created everything.

As believers today, when we read **John 1:1–3**, we may not realize all the nuances that the author intended. But what we must learn from **verse 1** is clear: Jesus was, is, and always will be. He is God, and He is the Creator and the Source of all life. The entirety of our Christian faith rests upon accepting these truths.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

In John 1:1, John calls Jesus

“_____.”

II. JESUS IS THE LIGHT (John 1:4-9)

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

“Life” in Greek is used throughout the Bible to refer to both physical and spiritual life. It is frequently qualified with the word “eternal.” Jesus was the embodiment of the fullness and quality of life that God offers to those who believe (**John 14:6; cp. 10:10**). The life that Jesus was to offer would be the light of all humanity.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

John uses the metaphors of “light” and “darkness” to illustrate the differences between a life of grace, mercy, and forgiveness and a life of sin and death. The

word “comprehended” has two possible meanings. One meaning is “understood, perceived, or learned” it communicates the fact that those who live in the darkness do not receive the light because of a lack of understanding they don’t get it. Another meaning is the idea “lay hold of or seized” and communicates the fact that the darkness (perhaps Satan or more generally sinful humanity) will never have the ultimate victory over the light of Jesus.

John is saying that some who see the light will be unable to understand and receive it because Satan has blinded them (**2 Corinthians 4:4**). However, John says that no matter how dark the darkness of evil seems in the world, no matter how the global circumstances seem to indicate that the darkness of evil is winning, the darkness cannot overcome the light that comes from the life of Christ.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

The apostle John goes on to talk about John the Baptist, the ministry of John the Baptist is prominent in the Gospel of John. Here, the apostle John is affirming the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist. Jesus echoed this assertion when He said that John the Baptist was the last of the great Old Testament prophets, who came in the spirit of Elijah (**Matthew 11:9–10; Mark 9:13**). John the Baptist had a unique call and ministry to be a witness of Jesus, the Light (**cp. Matthew 4:4; John 1:4**).

In **verse 7**, the word “witness” means to affirm by testimony what one has seen, heard, experienced, or known. Therefore,

John the Baptist had the prophetic duty of preparing the way for Jesus by preaching the testimonies of God.

The goal of John the Baptist was the same as the goal of John the apostle, to bring humanity to a place of faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. The author is careful to specify that John the Baptist was not the genuine light, but that he came to “bear witness,” to testify of, or report of the One to come. John the Baptist testified to the world of the nature and character of Jesus so that “all men through him might believe.”

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

The apostle John makes it clear that John the Baptist was not the Light, he was only to bear witness of the Light. Like the moon that does not shine its own light but only reflects the light of the sun, so John the Baptist reflects the Light of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus would be the true Light that would light every person. The word “true” refers to that which is sincere or genuine. The apostle John is saying that John the Baptist pointed others to the light to come, and that Jesus Christ was the authentic Light.

QUESTION 2

What role did John the Baptist fulfill before Jesus came?

III. JESUS REVEALS GOD’S CHARACTER (John 1:10–14)

Although He had always been omnipresent, Jesus had now come to be

one of us. He came to live with us, to feel our pain, to experience our joy, and to know our sorrow. He experienced human life fully. John and the other disciples knew Him intimately as Teacher and Friend. They ate with Him, talked with Him, laughed with Him, and cried with Him.

Rejection and Glory (verses 10-14)
10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

His gift of salvation is offered freely to all, but unless one accepts that salvation, the darkness will continue to obscure the light. When we do receive Jesus, God gives us the right to become His children (**verse 12**). What an amazing statement! We have the right to become God’s children. It’s not because of anything we have done to deserve it, but because God’s grace makes it possible for us to choose to believe and receive Jesus. We are not children in the physical sense; we are spiritual children of our Father. When we receive Christ, we are adopted into the family of God (**see I John 3:1**). We are considered heirs of God (**Galatians 3:29**), eligible to receive all of His promised blessings.

We cannot become God’s children by any

other means than through salvation in Jesus Christ.

John 1:13 makes it clear that God's children are not born in the natural way of conception and birth. We are born of God spiritually, and He chose us. God chose to send His Son, Jesus, to the earth to take on the form of human flesh. John first introduced us to Jesus as the eternally existing Word of God. Now he reveals another facet of logos Jesus. The One who has always existed, the One who is God, has become a human being (**verse 14**).

Verse 14 says, "The Word dwelt among us." John's Jewish readers would have understood the word "dwelling" to be connected to the word for "tabernacle." In Old Testament times, the tabernacle was where God's glory dwelled. The disciples watched Him perform miracles, and they knew Him as the Messiah.

QUESTION 3

In John 1:14, John records that Jesus is full of ____ and ____.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will understand that Jesus came to give a meaningful, real life to all who will receive Him.

Jesus came into this world in the form of human flesh, yet those around Him did not acknowledge Him for who He is. They chose to continue living in darkness rather than receiving the Light. Things aren't so different in our world today. In modern society, especially in America and other modern societies, many people have become accustomed to a fast-paced hectic lifestyle. They are easily distracted, often bored, or generally dissatisfied with life.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will learn that the right theology keeps us in right relationship with God.

For the past 16 years, Greg had been a member of a group that did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God; they did not believe that Jesus was truly God and truly man. Greg tried and tried to be good enough to be in the number that would go to heaven, however he often slipped. It may have been in small ways, but he knew he was slipping and was not good enough to be in that number.

Then Greg began looking into the Bible for himself, because he desperately wanted to have a right relationship with God. He looked at **John 1:1** where he saw that the Word was God and then at **verse 14** where it said that the Word was made flesh. He wondered to himself: Who else could that be but Jesus? Then it hit him that the Bible was saying Jesus is God! This is not what those in the group had told him about Jesus.

The clincher was when he read in verse 12 that all he had to do to have that elusive relationship with God was to believe and receive Jesus! Right then and there, that's what Greg did.

PRAYER

Lord, keep us in Your care, and remind us of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. We bless You, and we praise You. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

Heresies regarding the nature of Jesus

Gnosticism (from the Greek *gnosis*, meaning knowledge) reflects the teachings of a diverse group of people who claimed that they had inside knowledge into various truth regarding the nature of Jesus. Specifically, they taught that the material world was evil and that by knowledge, one could ascend to the pure spirituality of the heavenly realm. We see Paul's initial attempts to address this heresy in Colossians.

Docetism reflects the teachings of a subset of Gnosticism. Docetism comes from the Greek word *dokeo*, which means to seem or to appear. Docetists taught that Jesus was not a human being with flesh and blood. Rather he was actually a ghost or an apparition who appeared to be human. John addresses this heresy in his epistles, where he endeavors to reaffirm the full humanity and deity of Jesus. Those who deny this teaching are deemed antichrists.

Finally, Arianism was a heresy that developed in the 4th century. As opposed to Docetism that denied the full humanity of Jesus, Arianism denied the full deity of Jesus. In essence, they taught that Jesus was a demigod, i.e., less than God but more than human. This teaching is memorialized in the words of Arius, speaking of Jesus: "There was a time when he (i.e., Jesus) was not." In other words, Arius taught that Jesus was some kind of created being. This heresy is reflected in the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses, who believe that Jesus was the first of God's created beings.

HOW TO SAY IT

Dualistic.	Du-al-IST-ic.
Emanation.	Em-a-NA-shun.
Preexistence.	Pre-ex-IST-ens.
Incarnation.	In-car-NA-shun.

DAILY HOME BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY

The Beginning of the Year
(Exodus 12:1–8)

TUESDAY

The Beginning of Wisdom
(Psalm 111)

WEDNESDAY

In the Beginning, God
(Genesis 1:1–5)

THURSDAY

From the Foundations of the Earth
(Isaiah 40:21–26)

FRIDAY

The Beginning of the Gospel
(Mark 1:1-8)

SATURDAY

Beginning from Jerusalem
(Luke 24:44-49)

SUNDAY

In the Beginning, the Word
(John 1:1-14)

POWER FOR LIVING



Church Of God In Christ

MARCH 6, 2022 • LESSON 1

PRIMARY QUARTERLY® | STUDENT MANUAL

MARCH • APRIL • MAY 2022



Michelle saw her best friend Joshua take a candy bar out of another student's desk without asking. Michelle cared about Joshua, but Michelle knew the other student was upset because she couldn't find her candy bar.

Should Michelle say something to Joshua, or pretend she didn't see anything? Michelle thought about what the pastor said about wisdom. He said, "Using wisdom means knowing and doing what is right." Michelle knew that the right thing was to tell Joshua to return the candy bar right away.



LESSON 1 • MARCH 6, 2022

BIBLE STORY



"Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not" (Proverbs 8:33, KJV).

God's Wisdom



Wisdom is good judgment in knowing what is right, good, and true. The Bible says God created wisdom before He created anything else and that He used wisdom to create the world we live in.

The Bible tells us that we should want to have God's wisdom for our lives. We are blessed when we use wisdom in doing things. Walking in God's wisdom

makes us have happy lives and gives us favor from God.

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST PUBLISHING HOUSE: Bishop J. Drew Sheard, Presiding Bishop, Eighth in Succession; Bishop Uleses Henderson Jr., Esq., Chairman, COGIC Publishing Board, 806 East Brooks Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38116.

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Be Smart



God's Wise Creation

Each picture shows a part of God's creation that starts with each letter of the word "wisdom." Write the names of each picture on the lines.

W



I



S



D



O



M



Key Verse:

"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old." (from Proverbs 8:22, KJV).

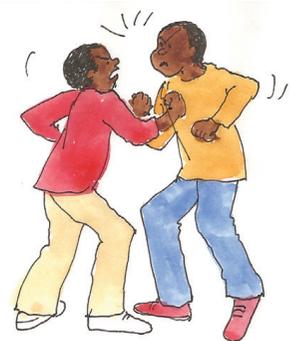
★ Good Attitude ★

Let's Use Wisdom!

Draw lines from the word WISDOM to the pictures showing children making wise choices and good decisions.



WISDOM



Name _____



POWER FOR LIVING



Church Of God In Christ

MARCH 13, 2022 • LESSON 2

PRIMARY QUARTERLY® | STUDENT MANUAL

MARCH • APRIL • MAY 2022



Traci loved going to the children's group at her church. Today Pastor Brown said that when we accept God's Word as truth, we are children of God.

Traci looked around the room. There were so many children who looked different. Some of the children were tall, some were small, and a few children were in wheelchairs. There were children of different races. Traci realized there was one thing they had in common. They were children of God, and He loved every single one of them.



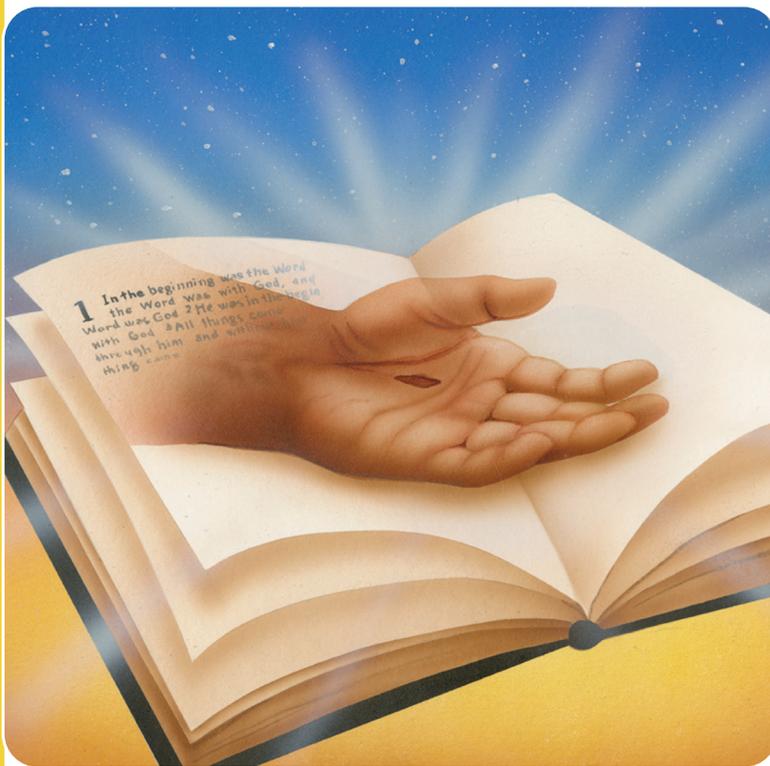
LESSON 2 • MARCH 13, 2022

BIBLE STORY



*“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth”
(John 1:14, KJV).*

Let's Begin



God was already here at the very beginning of time. The Word was here at the beginning of time, too. Through the Word of God, all things were made. Guess what? The Bible says God and the Word are the same! The Word gives us life, light, and hope.

God sent a man named John to help people believe in God. Many people don't want to accept God and His Word, but if you accept and receive Him, you become a child of God. Hallelujah!

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST PUBLISHING HOUSE: Bishop J. Drew Sheard, Presiding Bishop, Eighth in Succession; Bishop Uleses Henderson Jr., Esq., Chairman, COGIC Publishing Board. 806 East Brooks Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38116.

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Be Smart



God Is the Word!

Check the word box to find the words from our Bible lesson. Then circle them in the word search.

A	F	X	G	T	R	X	L	I	G	H	T
W	R	S	H	I	S	H	B	N	O	E	I
O	W	N	W	E	U	T	I	K	D	J	M
Q	P	O	J	C	L	N	B	S	I	R	E
N	R	S	B	H	N	F	L	I	F	E	L
D	C	K	A	I	O	M	E	G	Y	M	F
T	R	Z	G	L	D	P	H	V	S	A	B
V	W	E	P	D	O	N	E	B	C	T	U
A	B	S	C	G	Q	D	V	R	X	R	F

WORD BOX

Beginning

God

Light

Word

Bible

Hope

Sons

Child

Life

Time

Key Verse:

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (from John 1:14, KJV).

★ Good Attitude ★

God's Word on Earth!

Believing in God's Word makes us children of God! Look at the person sitting to your right. Circle three words that describe that person. Then fill in the blanks using those words and share your sentences with that person.

KIND	BEAUTIFUL	HELPFUL	JOYFUL
PRETTY	SMART	FUNNY	LIKEABLE
NICE	LOVING	HANDSOME	FUN
HAPPY	COOL	AWESOME	FRIENDLY

_____ is very _____,
(Child's Name)

and _____.
(Child's Name)

is a child of God!

Name _____

MARCH • APRIL • MAY 2022

POWER FOR LIVING



Church Of God In Christ



GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Nursery-Kindergarten Quarterly® | **TEACHER MANUAL**

Ages 2-5

NURSERY-KINDERGARTEN QUARTERLY

SPRING QUARTER 2022 MARCH APRIL MAY GOD'S CREATIVE WORD

Unit 1 • The Word Was in the Beginning

March 6	Student Lesson: God's Wisdom	16
	Bible Study: Wisdom's Part In Creation	18
March 13	Student Lesson: Let's Begin	24
	Bible Study: The Word Became Flesh	26
March 20	Student Lesson: Jesus' First Miracle	33
	Bible Study: The Wedding At Cana	35
March 27	Student Lesson: God's Saving Love	42
	Bible Study: God's Word Saves	44
April		
April 3	Student Lesson: Jesus Tells The Truth	50
	Bible Study: Jesus Testifies To The Truth	52
April 10	Student Lesson: New Life	58
	Bible Study: The Living Word	60

Unit 2 • The Word Is Here and Now

April 17	Student Lesson: Jesus Brings Order	65
	Bible Study: Cleansing The Temple	67
April 24	Student Lesson: Turn It Around	74
	Bible Study: Woman of Samaria	76
May 1	Student Lesson: First Things First	85
	Bible Study: Healing The Blind Man	87

Unit 3 • The Word Will Be

May 8	Student Lesson: Never Hungry Or Thirsty	95
	Bible Study: The Bread Of Life	97
May 15	Student Lesson: The Good Guide	106
	Bible Study: The Good Shepherd	108
May 22	Student Lesson: Never Ending Life	116
	Bible Study: The Resurrection And The Life	118
May 29	Student Lesson: Jesus Leads The Way	125
	Bible Study: The Way, The Truth, And The Life	127

GOD'S WISDOM

BIBLE BASIS:

Proverbs 8:22-35

BIBLE TRUTH:

WISDOM'S PART IN CREATION

MEMORY VERSE:

Proverbs 8:33, KJV

LESSON AIM:

Knowledge: Students will learn about God's great wisdom.

Attitude: Students will understand that God's wisdom affects their lives.

Action: Students will draw and color a small mural with pictures of God's creation..

TEACHER PREPARATION

DEAR NURSERY-KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

The students will learn that God created our world with His great wisdom. They will learn that He wants us to use wisdom each day as well.

SUPPLY LIST

SECTION	MATERIALS
Focus Activity	Poster boards, crayons, stickers

ARRIVAL TIME

Focus Activity

Creation Mural

On a large poster board or a sheet of paper, have the children gather around and draw a part of God's creation: the sun, moon, stars, sea creatures, flowers, etc. Explain to them that God in His wisdom created our world. Display the pictures in your classroom.

LIFE NEED

Introduction—Life Application Story

(Distribute student folders.)

Before reading the story, ask the children whether they've ever rearranged their rooms or worked on a puzzle. Then ask whether it was hard to do.

Ask the students if anyone would like to help read a sentence or two of the story. Help as needed.

After reading, ask the students what Kelly was doing. Was he doing a good job? Was he using wisdom while putting away all his toys? Yes; he thought about how to arrange them

so it would be easier when he took them out again. He was a wise boy.

BIBLE LEARNING

Reading the Bible Story

God's Wisdom

The Bible Story in the student folders is designed for students to read. Be sure to study the information on this Bible passage in the white pages of the Teacher Guide.

God had great wisdom before He made the world. Wisdom was the first thing because God used it to create the world.

Wisdom was there before there were oceans, springs, mountains, or fields. God's wisdom was there when He made the heavens and the clouds. Wisdom came forth even before the dust of the world! Wisdom said, "When God put the heavens in their place, I was there. I was even there when God put the clouds in the sky."

With His wisdom God marked out the horizons we see when we look out over the ocean.

WISDOM'S PART IN CREATION

BIBLE BASIS: Proverbs 8:22–35

BIBLE TRUTH: Proverbs speaks of wisdom having a divine origin.

MEMORY VERSE: Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not (Proverbs 8:33,KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson, we will: **EXPLAIN** what God's wisdom is; **REFLECT** on God's wisdom in our lives; and **PRAY** for wisdom in our everyday life experiences.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Proverbs 8—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

PROVERBS 8:22-35, KJV

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. **Hypostatize** (Hy-POST-a-tize)—To think of a concept, abstraction, etc., as having a real, objective existence.

B. **Metaphor**—A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is likened to something, but is not to be taken literally.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

AIM: That your students will appreciate the role that wisdom played in creation.

INTRODUCTION

In this passage wisdom is personified. Some have called this a “hypostatization”—thinking of a concept, abstraction, as having real objective existence. It seems more appropriate to think of this passage merely as a metaphor, that is a personification of an attribute of God but not an actual being in any way.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will desire to acquire wisdom in their lives.

I. WISDOM'S STORY (Proverbs 8:22–31)

In **Proverbs 8**, we see wisdom existing eternally. A sweeping panorama of creation is covered in **verses 24** through **29**, following the order of God's work listed in Genesis. Wisdom was with God before there was anything created. Wisdom was with God before there were oceans and rivers, before there were mountains and

hills. Wisdom was there when God created the heavens and when He “set a compass” (**verse 27**) or “marked out the horizon” (NIV). What an indescribably beautiful picture!

The Beauty of Wisdom (verses 22-31)

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. 23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, Or ever the earth was. 24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: 26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. 27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: 28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: 29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: 30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; 31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

The everlasting wisdom of God, an intrinsic fiber of His nature and character that was with Him as He created the world is available to us! When God set the world into motion, wisdom was there. Wisdom was there when God set the boundaries for the oceans, when He set the stars in

motion, wisdom was there when He placed the clouds in the sky (**verse 28**). Wisdom is like a skilled artisan, rejoicing in the Master's presence and His creation (**verses 30–31**). Wisdom flowed from God's character, and His wonderful creation was the result. God desires to give wisdom to those who seek Him. What an incredible thought!

The Hebrew word in **Proverbs 8:30** translated as “brought up” means “architect,” “master workman,” or “skilled workman.” The picture is that of wisdom, the faithful master artisan, standing at God's side as He created the universe. “How many are your works, LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures” (**Psalms 104:24, NIV**).

Wisdom was ecstatic, as she was able to enjoy the “handiwork” of God (**Psalms 19:1, NKJV**). This implies a wonderful gathering of wisdom and humankind—do we dare envision a party? We celebrate God's creation in many ways. Each time we enjoy a ride through the countryside and see the bursting forth of the springtime flowers, view snowcapped mountains, or enjoy a picnic on a bright sunny day, we share wisdom's pleasure and joy in Creation. As we look at God's creation, we should praise our Creator: “Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!” (**Psalms 107:8**).

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

Wisdom was present when God placed the _____ in the sky.

II. WISDOM'S INVITATION (Proverbs 8:32–35)

So the plea goes out to all people: “Listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways” (**verse 32, NIV**). Receive instruction—don't refuse it. **Proverbs 19:20 (NIV)** says, “Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise.” Only fools reject instruction that will improve their lives. Respond to God's wisdom! He has made it available to us for our good, and we will be blessed when we choose to live by God's wisdom.

The Blessings of Wisdom (verses 32–35)

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. 33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. 34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. 35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

What kind of blessings can we expect from living a wise life? Peace with God is certainly high on the list, a good reputation is also a benefit. Wisdom affects every area of our lives. If we conduct our interpersonal relationships with wisdom, we will have meaningful friendships and strong family ties. If we practice our business policies with wisdom we will enjoy the blessing of a reputable business. If we live our Christian lives with wisdom we will draw others to Christ. The blessings of wisdom may not always be tangible, but they far outweigh the material blessings that we often desire. Wisdom is worth it.

Wisdom does have another aspect however, it is not only something that

God possesses it is something that God gives. We also see that Jesus demonstrates wisdom in the New Testament. Jesus is viewed as the ultimate fulfillment of the Old Testament. **Proverbs 8:22** tells us that wisdom was with God in the beginning before any of His “works of old.” Does this have a familiar ring to it? **John 1:1** says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Proverbs speaks of wisdom’s eternal existence in a way that parallels John’s words about Christ. In the Incarnation, Jesus is the complete demonstration of all that is divine including wisdom.

Proverbs 8:23 says that wisdom was “appointed” (NIV) or “set up” (KJV) from eternity before the beginning! Jesus is the Anointed One, the Everlasting God, He was with God in the beginning, before time began. He has always been and always will be. In fact, without Him, “nothing was made that has been made” (**John 1:3, NIV**). He is and was first. He is and was supreme. He was “rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part” (**Proverbs 8:30–31**). Jesus, Wisdom Himself, rejoices over those who choose Him.

When we choose Jesus, we avail ourselves of a tremendous infinite amount of wisdom. Christ is “the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (**1 Corinthians 1:24**). “Blessed are they that keep my [wisdom’s or Jesus’] ways” (**Proverbs 8:32**). Hallelujah! What a treasure! When we seek Jesus, we gain wisdom. He is our all in all.

QUESTION 2

According to Proverbs 8:35, “whoso findeth me [wisdom] findeth _____.”

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will learn to seek God’s wisdom.

How would your life be different if you sought God’s wisdom on a regular basis? This week, try an experiment. Make a conscious effort to gain Godly wisdom before you make a decision or tackle a problem.

STUDENTS’ RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will know that God’s wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

Christ, family, and friendship were the most important things in life for Diane a successful high school principal. She and her best friend, Asia, had gone to high school and college together. Asia had dropped out of college and ran off with her “dream man” without marrying him. It had been a shock because Asia had been president of the College Christian Fellowship. Shortly after that, they had lost touch. One Thursday night, Diane received a call from Asia.

“Asia, is it really you?” Diana cried. “It’s been 20 years.”

“Girl, it’s me!” said Asia. “I’m in town. I’d like to swing by your house later.”

When Diane opened the door, Asia’s face stole her breath away. Asia was scarecrow thin, and her eyes reflected a life of drug abuse and pain.

Suddenly, Diane realized that at some point in her life, Asia had chosen a life quite different from the one they had shared as young girls in Bible study. The

folly of a life consumed by narcotics had blinded Asia and robbed her of the ability to make wise decisions.

Again, God’s wisdom is available to everyone who desires a deeper relationship with Christ.

PRAYER

God wisdom is precious and wonderful to have and to keep. Show us how to use wisdom in our personal and collective lives. Help us to see Jesus as true wisdom for us to have each and every day. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

The Authorship of Proverbs

The Bible records that when given the rare opportunity to request to receive anything from God that Solomon asked for “an understanding mind to govern [God’s] people” (1 Kings 3:3-9). Evidence of the fulfillment is given in the account of how he handles a dispute between two prostitutes (1 Kings 3:16-28). As a result, Solomon is considered the wisest man to have ever lived (1 Kings 4:29-31). The Bible states that Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. The best of Solomon’s songs is the Song of Solomon, identified as “the Song of Songs which is Solomon’s” (1:1), in other words, his greatest one.

There is no doubt that the book of Proverbs reflects many of Solomon’s 3,000 proverbs. From the first verse of Proverbs, we would assume that Solomon was the sole author of Proverbs. However, other authors are also identified throughout the book. For example, the words of Agur, the son of Jakeh (or the man of Massa), are recorded in chapter 30. And the words of

King Lemuel are recorded in chapter 31.

Also included in Proverbs are the collected sayings simply identified as the “words of the wise” (22:17-24:22), and the “sayings of the wise” (24:23-34)

Besides being wise, the Preacher [i.e., Solomon] also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs with great care (Eccl 12:9).

Therefore, we can conclude that Proverbs is an edited work that includes the sayings of Agur, King Lemuel, and other wise people, among whom Solomon was the wisest.

HOW TO SAY IT

Hypostatize. Hy-POST-a-tize.

Metaphor. MET-a-for.

LET'S BEGIN

BIBLE BASIS:

John 1:1-14

BIBLE TRUTH:

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

MEMORY VERSE:

John 1:14, KJV

LESSON AIM:

Knowledge: Students will learn John's concept of Jesus as the Word.

Attitude: Students will understand that Jesus is called "the Word" and "the Light."

Action: Students will complete a "dot-to-dot" picture that shows different things that God created..

TEACHER PREPARATION

DEAR NURSERY-KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

This lesson teaches students that God wants us to follow His Word. When we show love and do good things for others, He promises to do good things for us.

SUPPLY LIST

SECTION	MATERIALS
Focus Activity	Magazines, scissors, glue sticks, papers

ARRIVAL TIME

Focus Activity

What's In a Name?

Before class, use magazines and newspapers to find pictures of various things that can be called by more than one name, for example: purse/pocketbook/handbag, boy/lad/fellow, girl/gal/lass, gift/present, hat bonnet/cap, and house/cottage/cabin. Cut those items from the pictures and set them on a table in random order. Ask the students to work together to group the items that are the same name.

Then, ask the children what different names the pictures might have. Explain to them that Jesus was also called "the Word" and "the Light."

LIFE NEED

Introduction—Life Application Story

(Distribute student folders.)

Before reading the story, ask the children if they say their prayers every day. Ask whether anyone would like to help with

reading. Help as needed.

After reading, ask the students what special name Kayley called upon at the end of her prayer (Jesus). Explain to them that the name of Jesus is special and that He is also called "the Word." He is the One who leads us to God, our Father in heaven.

BIBLE LEARNING

Reading the Bible Story

Let's Begin

The Bible Story in the student folders is designed for students to read. Be sure to study the information on this Bible passage in the white pages of the Teacher Guide.

The Word was with God in the beginning of time. God and the Word are the same. God, the Father, created everything in the world with the Word. He was the light and life of men.

There was a man sent from God named John. He was a witness of Jesus, who was there, in the world, but a lot of people did not recognize him. Jesus came to His own people

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

BIBLE BASIS: John 1:1–14

BIBLE TRUTH: Jesus has always been in existence.

MEMORY VERSE: And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth (John 1:14, KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson,

we will: **KNOW** the importance of the divinity and humanity of Jesus; **TRUST** in a Savior who is eternal and shares the divine nature with God; and **IMAGINE** and **SHARE** how Jesus is the Light in our lives and in the world.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: John 1:1–14—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

JOHN 1:1-14, KJV

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. Word (John 1:1, 14) *logos* (Gk.)—The Word; denotes the expression of thought, not the mere name of an object. In John 1:1 and 1:14, Jesus is called “the Word.”

B. Witness (v. 7) *martus or marturia* (Gk.)—Someone who has seen or heard or knows.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY’S LESSON

AIM: That your students will trust that our Savior is divine and is God.

INTRODUCTION

Gnosticism

Many of the early Gentile believers had been exposed to varying strains of Gnosticism (an early heresy) and did not believe in the humanity of Jesus. As people from diverse backgrounds became part of the church, it became necessary for the apostles to correct errors in doctrine as well as encourage the existing believers. In the Gospel of John, the writer seems to be addressing a mixed audience of believers, unbelievers, Jews, and Greeks.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will learn that Jesus is eternal and human.

I. JESUS IS THE WORD (John 1:1–3)

The first 14 verses of the book of John summarize the whole Gospel. In these verses, we are introduced to Jesus who He is, what He does, and the role He plays in the eternal plan of God for the world.

Jesus Is the Word (verses 1-3)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John began his book with the words “In the beginning,” he then introduced Jesus as the Word.” The word used here is *logos*. The Greeks understood *logos* to mean not only the written or spoken word, but also the thought or reasoning in the mind. John’s Greek readers would have understood the nuances of *logos*, realizing that John was presenting Jesus as the power that controlled all things.

The Jewish believers used the word *logos* to refer to God and would have connected this concept to the wisdom personified in the Old Testament (**see Proverbs 8**). In tandem with wisdom was ability; in this case, God’s wisdom was used to create the universe. Jesus is that wisdom personified, all of these concepts are bound up in the word *logos*.

John begins the second verse by reiterating the divine pre-existent nature of the Word. He proceeds to explain the role of the Word in the beginning. The word “made” means “came into being, happened, or became.” John is communicating the idea that this creative work happened out of nothing, that the Word did not rely on pre-existing material to create the universe (**Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2**).

John also begins to give us a hint as to the name of the Word by referring to the Word as “him.” The Word is more than just an expression of the personality of

God; it is the person of Jesus Christ. So John is saying that the Word, which was pre-existent with God, was in complete fellowship with God, possessed all the divine nature and characteristics of deity and created everything.

As believers today, when we read **John 1:1–3**, we may not realize all the nuances that the author intended. But what we must learn from **verse 1** is clear: Jesus was, is, and always will be. He is God, and He is the Creator and the Source of all life. The entirety of our Christian faith rests upon accepting these truths.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

In John 1:1, John calls Jesus

“_____.”

II. JESUS IS THE LIGHT (John 1:4-9)

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

“Life” in Greek is used throughout the Bible to refer to both physical and spiritual life. It is frequently qualified with the word “eternal.” Jesus was the embodiment of the fullness and quality of life that God offers to those who believe (**John 14:6; cp. 10:10**). The life that Jesus was to offer would be the light of all humanity.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

John uses the metaphors of “light” and “darkness” to illustrate the differences between a life of grace, mercy, and forgiveness and a life of sin and death. The

word “comprehended” has two possible meanings. One meaning is “understood, perceived, or learned” it communicates the fact that those who live in the darkness do not receive the light because of a lack of understanding they don’t get it. Another meaning is the idea “lay hold of or seized” and communicates the fact that the darkness (perhaps Satan or more generally sinful humanity) will never have the ultimate victory over the light of Jesus.

John is saying that some who see the light will be unable to understand and receive it because Satan has blinded them (**2 Corinthians 4:4**). However, John says that no matter how dark the darkness of evil seems in the world, no matter how the global circumstances seem to indicate that the darkness of evil is winning, the darkness cannot overcome the light that comes from the life of Christ.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

The apostle John goes on to talk about John the Baptist, the ministry of John the Baptist is prominent in the Gospel of John. Here, the apostle John is affirming the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist. Jesus echoed this assertion when He said that John the Baptist was the last of the great Old Testament prophets, who came in the spirit of Elijah (**Matthew 11:9–10; Mark 9:13**). John the Baptist had a unique call and ministry to be a witness of Jesus, the Light (**cp. Matthew 4:4; John 1:4**).

In **verse 7**, the word “witness” means to affirm by testimony what one has seen, heard, experienced, or known. Therefore,

John the Baptist had the prophetic duty of preparing the way for Jesus by preaching the testimonies of God.

The goal of John the Baptist was the same as the goal of John the apostle, to bring humanity to a place of faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. The author is careful to specify that John the Baptist was not the genuine light, but that he came to “bear witness,” to testify of, or report of the One to come. John the Baptist testified to the world of the nature and character of Jesus so that “all men through him might believe.”

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

The apostle John makes it clear that John the Baptist was not the Light, he was only to bear witness of the Light. Like the moon that does not shine its own light but only reflects the light of the sun, so John the Baptist reflects the Light of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus would be the true Light that would light every person. The word “true” refers to that which is sincere or genuine. The apostle John is saying that John the Baptist pointed others to the light to come, and that Jesus Christ was the authentic Light.

QUESTION 2

What role did John the Baptist fulfill before Jesus came?

III. JESUS REVEALS GOD’S CHARACTER (John 1:10–14)

Although He had always been omnipresent, Jesus had now come to be

one of us. He came to live with us, to feel our pain, to experience our joy, and to know our sorrow. He experienced human life fully. John and the other disciples knew Him intimately as Teacher and Friend. They ate with Him, talked with Him, laughed with Him, and cried with Him.

Rejection and Glory (verses 10-14)
10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

His gift of salvation is offered freely to all, but unless one accepts that salvation, the darkness will continue to obscure the light. When we do receive Jesus, God gives us the right to become His children (**verse 12**). What an amazing statement! We have the right to become God’s children. It’s not because of anything we have done to deserve it, but because God’s grace makes it possible for us to choose to believe and receive Jesus. We are not children in the physical sense; we are spiritual children of our Father. When we receive Christ, we are adopted into the family of God (**see I John 3:1**). We are considered heirs of God (**Galatians 3:29**), eligible to receive all of His promised blessings.

We cannot become God’s children by any

other means than through salvation in Jesus Christ.

John 1:13 makes it clear that God's children are not born in the natural way of conception and birth. We are born of God spiritually, and He chose us. God chose to send His Son, Jesus, to the earth to take on the form of human flesh. John first introduced us to Jesus as the eternally existing Word of God. Now he reveals another facet of logos Jesus. The One who has always existed, the One who is God, has become a human being (**verse 14**).

Verse 14 says, "The Word dwelt among us." John's Jewish readers would have understood the word "dwelling" to be connected to the word for "tabernacle." In Old Testament times, the tabernacle was where God's glory dwelled. The disciples watched Him perform miracles, and they knew Him as the Messiah.

QUESTION 3

In John 1:14, John records that Jesus is full of ____ and ____.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will understand that Jesus came to give a meaningful, real life to all who will receive Him.

Jesus came into this world in the form of human flesh, yet those around Him did not acknowledge Him for who He is. They chose to continue living in darkness rather than receiving the Light. Things aren't so different in our world today. In modern society, especially in America and other modern societies, many people have become accustomed to a fast-paced hectic lifestyle. They are easily distracted, often bored, or generally dissatisfied with life.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will learn that the right theology keeps us in right relationship with God.

For the past 16 years, Greg had been a member of a group that did not believe that Jesus was the Son of God; they did not believe that Jesus was truly God and truly man. Greg tried and tried to be good enough to be in the number that would go to heaven, however he often slipped. It may have been in small ways, but he knew he was slipping and was not good enough to be in that number.

Then Greg began looking into the Bible for himself, because he desperately wanted to have a right relationship with God. He looked at **John 1:1** where he saw that the Word was God and then at **verse 14** where it said that the Word was made flesh. He wondered to himself: Who else could that be but Jesus? Then it hit him that the Bible was saying Jesus is God! This is not what those in the group had told him about Jesus.

The clincher was when he read in verse 12 that all he had to do to have that elusive relationship with God was to believe and receive Jesus! Right then and there, that's what Greg did.

PRAYER

Lord, keep us in Your care, and remind us of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. We bless You, and we praise You. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

Heresies regarding the nature of Jesus

Gnosticism (from the Greek *gnosis*, meaning knowledge) reflects the teachings of a diverse group of people who claimed that they had inside knowledge into various truth regarding the nature of Jesus. Specifically, they taught that the material world was evil and that by knowledge, one could ascend to the pure spirituality of the heavenly realm. We see Paul's initial attempts to address this heresy in Colossians.

Docetism reflects the teachings of a subset of Gnosticism. Docetism comes from the Greek word *dokeo*, which means to seem or to appear. Docetists taught that Jesus was not a human being with flesh and blood. Rather he was actually a ghost or an apparition who appeared to be human. John addresses this heresy in his epistles, where he endeavors to reaffirm the full humanity and deity of Jesus. Those who deny this teaching are deemed antichrists.

Finally, Arianism was a heresy that developed in the 4th century. As opposed to Docetism that denied the full humanity of Jesus, Arianism denied the full deity of Jesus. In essence, they taught that Jesus was a demigod, i.e., less than God but more than human. This teaching is memorialized in the words of Arius, speaking of Jesus: "There was a time when he (i.e., Jesus) was not." In other words, Arius taught that Jesus was some kind of created being. This heresy is reflected in the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses, who believe that Jesus was the first of God's created beings.

HOW TO SAY IT

Dualistic.	Du-al-IST-ic.
Emanation.	Em-a-NA-shun.
Preexistence.	Pre-ex-IST-ens.
Incarnation.	In-car-NA-shun.

DAILY HOME BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY

The Beginning of the Year
(Exodus 12:1–8)

TUESDAY

The Beginning of Wisdom
(Psalm 111)

WEDNESDAY

In the Beginning, God
(Genesis 1:1–5)

THURSDAY

From the Foundations of the Earth
(Isaiah 40:21–26)

FRIDAY

The Beginning of the Gospel
(Mark 1:1-8)

SATURDAY

Beginning from Jerusalem
(Luke 24:44-49)

SUNDAY

In the Beginning, the Word
(John 1:1-14)

POWER FOR LIVING



Church Of God In Christ

MARCH 6, 2022 • LESSON 1

NURSERY-KINDERGARTEN QUARTERLY®
STUDENT MANUAL

MARCH • APRIL • MAY 2022

Kelly was putting away his toys.

“You’re doing a good job, Kelly,” said Dad. “Everything is neat.”

“I’m putting the big toys in the toy box first,” said Kelly. “Then I’m putting in the small ones.”

“That’s wise,” said Dad.

“I’m wise?” asked Kelly.

“Yes,” said Dad. “You learned the best way to put your toys in order. Good job, Kelly.”

Kelly smiled and put away the last toy. Then he closed the lid on his toy box.



BIBLE STORY

*“Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not”
(Proverbs 8:33, KJV).*

God’s Wisdom

God had great wisdom before He made the world. Wisdom was the first thing He used to create the world.

Wisdom was there before there were oceans, springs, mountains, or fields.

God’s wisdom was there when He made the heavens and the clouds.

God used wisdom to make boundaries for the seas and to craft everything in the earth.

God’s wisdom is wonderful and something to rejoice in.

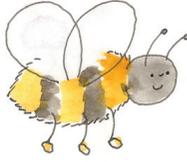
We should use wisdom, too. We are wise and blessed if we follow God’s ways.



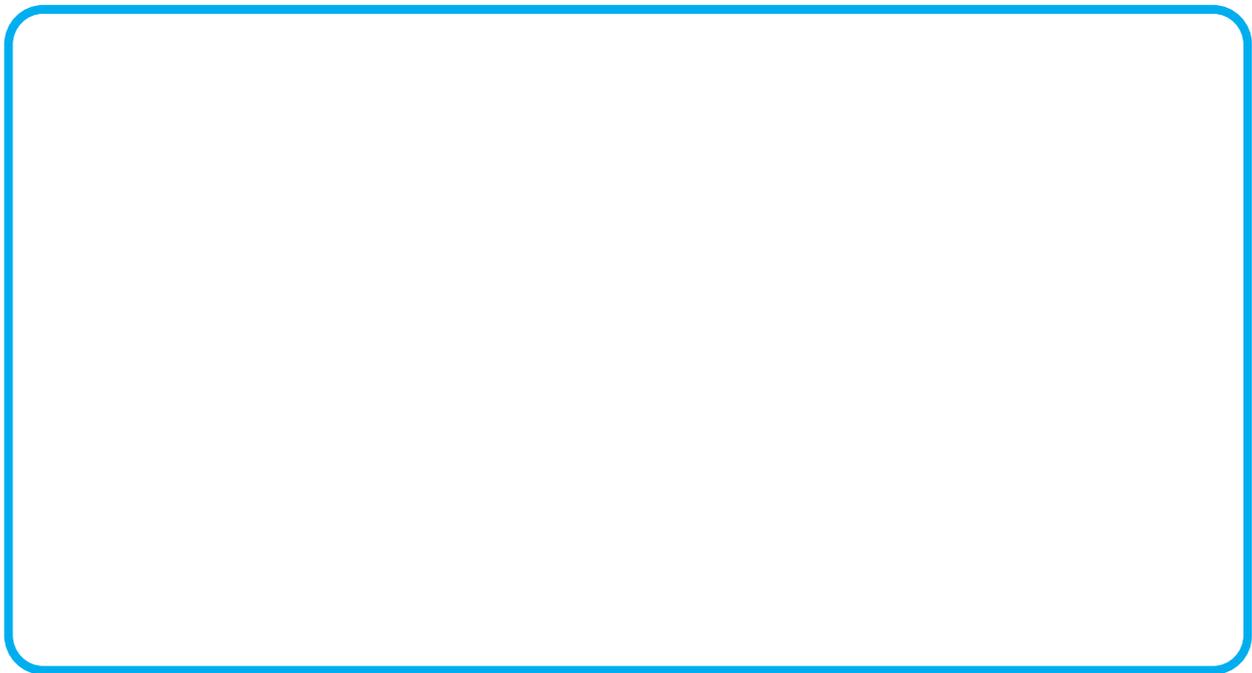
KNOWING

A Wisdom Story

See if you can figure out this story using the pictures and words together.

“God in His wisdom created  and  and the  and  . He created the  . God is wise.”

Now draw your own picture of something God created.



Key Verse

*“The LORD possessed me in the beginning [wisdom] before his works of old”
(from Proverbs 8:22, KJV).*

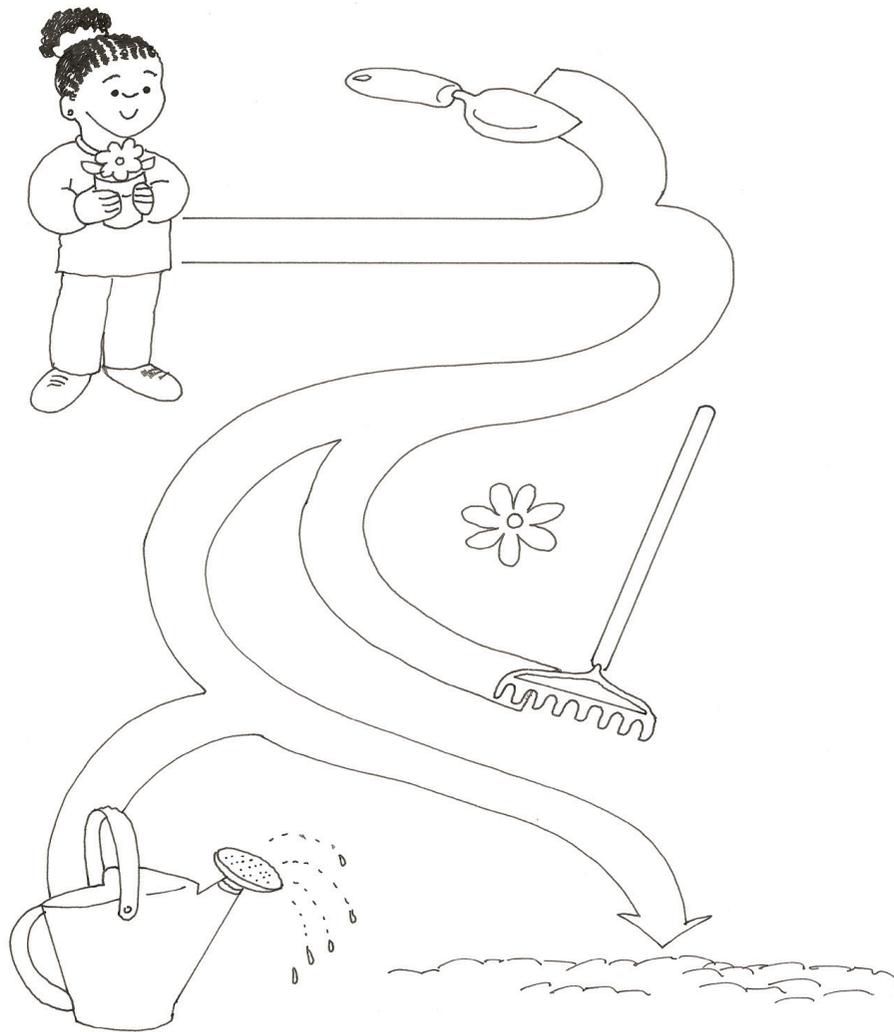
DEAR PARENTS

Your child will learn about God's wisdom in creating our world: its beauty, its order, and all the things on earth that we enjoy.

GROWING

Garden Maze

See if you can help the girl find her way to the garden to plant one of God's beautiful flowers. Then color in the picture.



Name _____



POWER FOR LIVING



MARCH 13, 2022 • LESSON 2

NURSERY-KINDERGARTEN QUARTERLY®
STUDENT MANUAL

MARCH • APRIL • MAY 2022

Church Of God In Christ

Kayley was kneeling by her bed. Her hands were folded. Her eyes were closed.

“Thank You, God,” she said, “for Mom and Dad, and for our food, and for my nice bed. And thank You for Boxer. He’s a good dog.”

“Remember what we say at the end, Kayley,” said Mom. Kayley smiled.

“In Jesus’ Name, amen.”

“Jesus is the light that leads us to God, our Father. God always hears us when we pray in Jesus’ Name,” said Mom, tucking Kayley under the covers.



BIBLE STORY

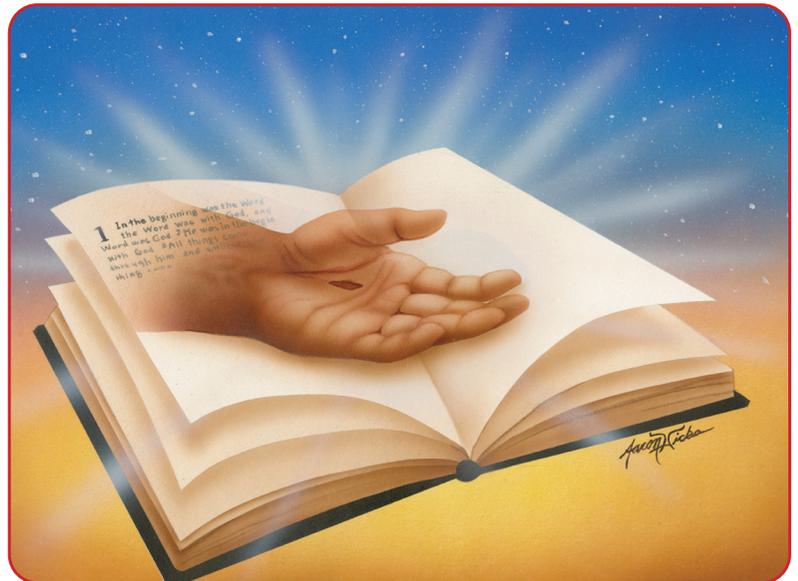
*“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth”
(John 1:14, KJV).*

Let's Begin

The Word was with God in the beginning of time. God and the Word are the same. God, the Father, created everything in the world with the Word. He was the light and life of men.

There was a man sent from God named John. He was a witness of Jesus.

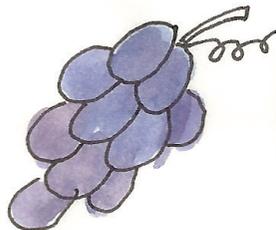
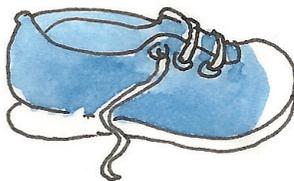
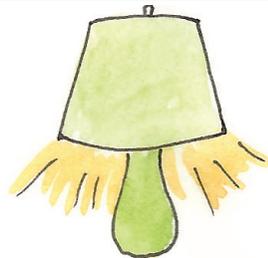
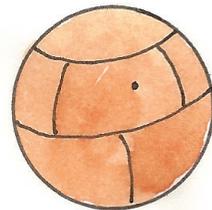
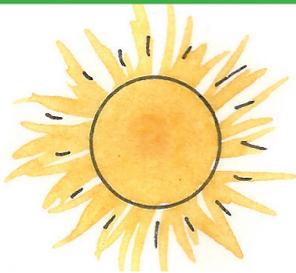
Jesus came to His own people (the Jews), but most of them didn't believe in Him. But to everyone who did believe, He gave them the right to become sons of God.



KNOWING

Only Light

Look at the pictures in each row. Circle the things that do not make light.



Key Verse

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us"
(from John 1:14, KJV).

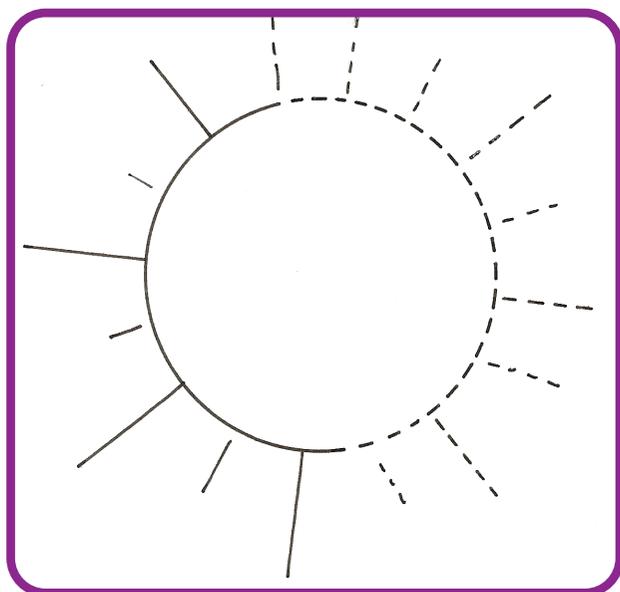
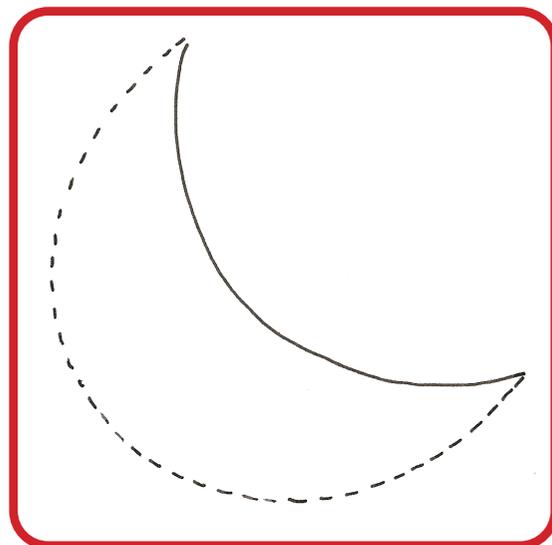
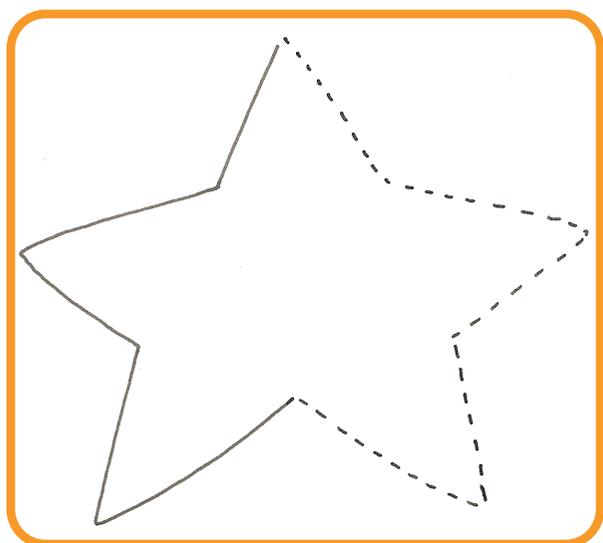
DEAR PARENTS

Your child will learn that Jesus is called “the Word” and “the Light,” and that He created the world along with God, the Father.

GROWING

Connecting the Dots

Connect the dots to see some things that God created. Then color the pictures.



Name _____