CHRISTOLOGY SIMPLIFIED

The Person, Work, and Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

20 Chapters • 160 Bible Studies



SSENTABA RONALD SALONGO

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Christology Simplified

The Person Work and Kingdom of Jesus Christ

A biblical study of the Savior from Genesis to the new creation

SSENTABA RONALD SALONGO

Theos Transforming Ministries Library

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Scripture references for reading in the NKJV

Dedication

To my beloved wife Josephine, our children, my mother Georgina Mwebe, the family of faith, and the coming generation of readers who desire to know Jesus Christ and make Him known.

May this study lead us to trust the Savior, receive His grace, and express His love through a faithful life. May children find a clear beginning, and adults find depth for continued learning.

To those who will teach after us: read the Scriptures with humility, ask careful questions, and pass on both the message and the practice of faithful discipleship.

Acknowledgments

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I thank my wife Josephine, our children, and my mother Georgina Mwebe for their place in the dedication of this work. I am grateful for those who encourage careful teaching and honest discussion among the next generation of ministers.

Theos Transforming Ministries Library is the publishing home named for this study. Interpretations should be examined through Scripture, and remaining errors should be corrected rather than protected by the author's name.

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How to Use This Book

Begin with the chapter opening. It explains context, purpose, and the passages to read. The doctrinal exposition develops the central teaching; the eight passage studies help you examine the biblical evidence in manageable units.

Each study asks you to distinguish the literal sense, interpretation in Scripture, and application today. The literal sense is what the passage communicates through its words and literary form. A poem should be read as poetry, a parable as a story serving a point, and a vision as a vision.

Read the listed passage in your own NKJV Bible before reading the explanation. This book mainly provides references and paraphrases rather than long extracts. If your Bible includes a textual note, read it. A translation difference is a reason for study, not a reason to hide the question.

You can complete one passage study each day or use several in a group. A younger reader may need an adult to explain unfamiliar terms. An experienced reader can compare the passages and examine the questions more deeply.

The writing lines are practical study space. Record an observation, a question, and a response. They are intended for learning and prayer rather than for enlarging the book without content.

In a group, let one person read, another explain the main point, and others test the application. Ask whether the proposed response honors the text and cares for the people affected by it. Learning should strengthen trust in Christ and responsible service.

Introduction

Who is Jesus Christ

Many people know the name Jesus, but a familiar name is not the same as knowing a person. Some describe Him as a good teacher. Others remember a baby in a manger, a healer among the crowds, or a man dying on a cross. Each picture touches part of His story. None is large enough by itself. The Bible presents Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God who became truly human, lived among us, gave His life for sinners, rose from the dead, and reigns as Lord. To understand Christianity, we must begin with Him.

“Jesus” is His personal name. “Christ” is a title, not His family name. It means the Anointed One, corresponding to the Hebrew title Messiah. In Israel, anointing marked people appointed to particular service, especially kings and priests. Calling Jesus the Christ means that He is God's promised Messiah, the One appointed to accomplish God's saving purpose. He does more than point toward salvation. He brings it.

Christology means the study of who Jesus Christ is and what He does. A child can begin with two questions: “Who is Jesus?” and “Why do I need Him?” An adult may add questions about His divine nature, His humanity, His relationship with the Father and the Spirit, and the meaning of His cross. These are deeper questions about the same Savior. Good Christology makes Jesus clearer; it should never hide Him behind difficult language.

Before the manger

The Son's story did not begin at Bethlehem. John opens his Gospel by taking us back to the beginning and teaching that the Word already existed, was with God, and was God (John 1:1–3). Later John identifies this Word as the One who became flesh and lived among us (John 1:14). His human life began in history, but His divine existence did not begin there. Before there were stars, oceans, families, or nations, the Son was with the Father.

This brings us to the Trinity. Christians confess one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father is not the Son; the Son is not the Spirit; and the Spirit is not the Father. Yet Christians do not worship three gods. Each is fully divine, sharing the one divine being. “Person” here does not mean three separate human individuals. It helps us speak of the real distinctions Scripture reveals within the one God.

At Jesus' baptism, the Son is baptized, the Spirit descends, and the Father's voice is heard (Matthew 3:16–17). Jesus later commands baptism in the one name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). The Trinity helps us understand salvation: the Father sends the Son, the Son accomplishes His saving mission, and the Spirit brings people into the life of Christ. This is the united work of the one God, not competition between divine persons.

Christ and the beginning of the Bible

Genesis introduces the good world God made and the human rebellion that damaged our relationship with Him. The story of sin is also the beginning of the story of promised rescue. Genesis 3:15 speaks of conflict involving

the serpent and the woman's offspring. Read in the light of the rest of Scripture, this becomes an early horizon of hope fulfilled in Christ's victory. The promise is not a complete explanation of the incarnation or the cross. God's purpose unfolds across the whole Bible.

God promises Abraham that the families of the earth will receive blessing through him (Genesis 12:1–3). Paul connects that promise with Christ and the good news reaching the nations (Galatians 3:8, 16). God's promise to David points toward a lasting royal line (2 Samuel 7:12–16). The prophets speak of righteous rule, a suffering servant, a faithful shepherd, and a new covenant. Jesus fulfills these expectations in ways that unite glory with humility and victory with self-giving love.

Objects and institutions also prepare us to understand Him. The Passover lamb belongs first to Israel's deliverance from Egypt; Paul later calls Christ our Passover (Exodus 12; 1 Corinthians 5:7). Manna feeds Israel in the wilderness; Jesus explains that He gives the life ordinary bread cannot provide (John 6). The bronze serpent is lifted up for people facing death; Jesus uses that event to explain His own lifting up (Numbers 21:4–9; John 3:14–15). The tabernacle, sacrifices, and priesthood provide the setting for Hebrews' explanation of His perfect offering and our access to God.

These connections teach us to read attentively. A biblical type is an earlier person, event, or institution that anticipates a greater fulfillment. It is not permission to invent a hidden meaning for every color, number, or object. We first ask what a passage meant in its own setting, then

follow the connections Scripture makes. Jesus is the center of God's saving story without every sentence of the Old Testament being a direct prediction of Him.

God came near

The incarnation means that the eternal Son became human. He did not merely wear a body as a disguise. He was born, grew, learned, worked, became tired, felt hunger, wept, and suffered. He shared our humanity without sharing our sin (Luke 2:52; John 4:6; Hebrews 4:15). He remained truly God while becoming truly human. We meet one Savior, not two separate persons living beside each other.

His humanity tells us that our pain is not distant from Him. His deity tells us that His power to save is not limited to the strength of an ordinary human helper. He knows the Father and makes Him known. He knows human life from within and represents us faithfully. We can approach Him with reverence and confidence.

His ministry reveals His heart

Jesus proclaimed God's kingdom, taught through stories and direct instruction, welcomed children, called disciples, confronted hypocrisy, forgave sinners, and cared for people others avoided. He healed the sick, restored sight, delivered the oppressed, fed hungry crowds, calmed a storm, and raised the dead. His works reveal authority joined to compassion. People are never merely props in a display of power.

His teaching transformed the meaning of greatness. The great person serves. The disciple loves enemies, tells the

truth, cares for the vulnerable, and depends on the Father. His welcome of sinners does not make sin harmless; it opens a way of repentance and restoration. His holiness and mercy belong together.

The Savior who gives Himself

Humanity's deepest problem is not lack of information alone. We need reconciliation with God. Jesus gives His life willingly, bears sin, establishes the new covenant, and defeats the powers that enslave us. Scripture explains His death through several pictures: sacrifice, ransom, reconciliation, justification, and victory. These pictures help us see the richness of one saving work.

The resurrection declares that death did not defeat Him. The risen Jesus meets His followers, restores their hope, and sends them to make disciples. He ascends and continues His priestly care. Christian hope rests in a living Lord who will return, judge evil, raise the dead, and bring God's purpose to completion.

The One who meets our deepest needs

In John's Gospel, Jesus describes Himself through seven memorable images. He is the bread of life, the light of the world, the door, the good shepherd, the resurrection and the life, the way and the truth and the life, and the true vine. These are invitations to trust the same Lord from different angles.

As the way, He brings us to the Father. As the truth, He makes God known faithfully. As the life, He gives communion with God that death cannot finally destroy. As

the door of the sheep, He provides saving access and the care of His flock (John 10:7–9). As the vine, He teaches that fruitful life grows through abiding in Him. We do not replace Him with religious achievement or spiritual techniques.

What this book will help you do

This book follows Christ from His eternal identity through the promises of the Old Testament, His incarnation, ministry, cross, resurrection, present reign, and promised return. It examines His names, teachings, miracles, relationships, offices, and the witness of the Gospels and letters. It also listens carefully to Christian teachers across the centuries, testing their explanations by Scripture.

The goal is more than knowing answers. It is knowing the Savior, receiving His grace, and learning His way of life. A young reader should find a clear beginning. A mature reader should find depth for reflection. Both should be able to say, “I understand more clearly who Jesus is, and I want to follow Him more faithfully.”

Reading Scripture and Learning from Earlier Teachers

Christology begins with who Jesus is and what He does. The Bible supplies its principal witness. Later teachers help us ask questions, distinguish ideas, and notice connections, but their explanations must remain open to examination through Scripture.

Context before application

Ask who speaks, to whom, about what, and why. Read the surrounding paragraph and the whole book where possible. A saying from the farewell discourse should be heard amid the disciples' fear before the cross. A royal psalm should first be recognized as a song within Israel's worship before following its New Testament use.

A cross-reference is evidence to examine. Sometimes the New Testament explicitly identifies a type or fulfillment; sometimes a later teacher draws an analogy. These are different strengths of claim. The book labels narrative comparisons so that an illustration does not silently become a prediction.

Theological understanding and honest questions

A theological conclusion gathers biblical evidence. The Trinity is one example: the Father, Son, and Spirit are distinguished while Scripture affirms one God. The later term summarizes the witness; it does not replace the baptism scene, Gospel teaching, and apostolic passages through which we learn it.

Some questions remain debated, including the relation between divine and human knowledge, particular atonement formulations, the eating and drinking language of John 6, and the sequence of end-time events. The study states the central evidence and marks differences without pretending every tradition agrees.

Earlier teachers in conversation

Athanasius's On the Incarnation emphasizes the divine Word's saving entry into human life and victory over death. That emphasis helps connect John 1, Hebrews 2, and resurrection hope. Augustine's On the Trinity, Book I, helps distinguish the persons while maintaining divine unity.

The Definition of Chalcedon protects the confession of one Savior with genuine deity and humanity. Calvin's Institutes II.15 organizes Christ's saving offices as prophet, priest, and king. Irenaeus's Against Heresies III.11.8 provides an early example of connecting living-creature imagery with the fourfold Gospel.

These sources address different questions. They do not form a single interchangeable voice, and their historical arguments are not all adopted here. The summaries point to specific works listed in the references. Biblical exposition remains the main task.

The coming generation

A child needs a clear account of Jesus, room to ask, and an example to follow. An adult needs the same, with fuller attention to evidence and responsibility. A useful teacher

can explain a technical word in ordinary speech without removing the truth it expresses.

Let every application be tested by love and truth. Forgiveness does not authorize abuse. Hope does not deny grief. Faith does not excuse deception. The aim is a community that knows Christ more clearly and reflects His character more faithfully.

CHAPTER 1

The Eternal Christ and the Trinity

Context John begins with the Word before creation. Paul and Hebrews describe the Son as creator, revealer, and sustainer. These passages arise in different books, but together they help us distinguish Jesus' eternal identity from the beginning of His human life.

Purpose and audience Understand why Jesus can be worshiped, why His coming reveals the Father, and why the Christian confession remains belief in one God. Read each passage before combining their teaching. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

John 1:1–5 The Word before creation

John 1:9–18 The Word became human

John 8:48–59 Before Abraham

Colossians 1:15–20 Creator and firstborn

Hebrews 1:1–14 Greater than angels

Philippians 2:1–11 The humility of the Lord

Matthew 3:13–17; Matthew 28:16–20 Father Son and Spirit

John 17:1–5 Eternal glory and shared life

Doctrinal Exposition

Read: John 1:1–18; Colossians 1:15–20; Hebrews 1:1–4; Philippians 2:5–11; John 17:5.

Before Bethlehem

The earthly life of Jesus began in Bethlehem, but the Son did not begin to exist there. John's Gospel deliberately opens with the language of Genesis: in the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God and was God (John 1:1). John distinguishes the Word from the Father while affirming his divine identity. The Word became flesh (John 1:14); therefore, the one who entered history was not a newly created spiritual being but the eternal Son who took a genuine human nature.

Pre-existence matters because it explains why Jesus can reveal God decisively. A merely human teacher might speak about God; the incarnate Son makes the Father known (John 1:18; 14:9). It also explains why the Christian confession of Jesus is worship rather than admiration alone. The one who was humbled in obedience is the one whom the Father has exalted, and before whom every knee will bow (Philippians 2:5–11).

Creator and Sustainer

Colossians 1:15–17 calls Jesus the image of the invisible God and teaches that all things were created through him and for him. The expression 'firstborn over all creation' speaks in this context of his supremacy and inheritance, not of the Son being the first creature. The passage immediately grounds his status in his relation to all created things:

everything owes its existence to him. Hebrews 1:3 adds that he sustains all things by his powerful word.

The implications are practical. Creation is not abandoned to meaninglessness; it is upheld by Christ. No human authority can claim ultimate allegiance, because all authority stands beneath him. The Christian therefore meets anxiety with prayer, ambition with humility, and daily labor with the knowledge that life belongs to the Lord.

Wisdom and the Trinity

Proverbs 8 poetically portrays wisdom as present in God's creative work. Christian interpreters have often seen an analogy between divine wisdom and Christ, whom Paul calls God's wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:24, 30). Yet Proverbs 8 is wisdom poetry; it should not be used by itself to prove that Jesus was created or to settle every question about the Trinity. The clearer New Testament teaching about the Son's eternal identity must guide the comparison.

The Father the Son and the Holy Spirit

Christians confess one God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Trinity is not three competing gods, nor is Jesus merely one temporary appearance of the Father. The biblical witness presents real personal distinctions and one divine life. We should approach this mystery with reverence, study, and worship rather than pretend that finite language exhausts God's being.

The eternal Son and the one God

Pre-existence means that the Son existed before His birth. Deity means that He is truly divine. An angel could exist before a human child without being God; therefore, the two

ideas must be examined separately. John 1 joins them by placing the Word with God, identifying Him as divine, and distinguishing Him from everything that came into existence through Him. Bethlehem marks His birth as a human being, not the creation of the Son.

The Trinity names the biblical conviction that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct, while God is one. At Jesus' baptism the Son, Father's voice, and descending Spirit appear together. The baptismal command in Matthew 28:19 uses one name while naming all three. God is not divided into thirds. The Son is not another god alongside the Father. The Spirit is not an impersonal substance that believers can possess and control.

Ordinary illustrations require care. Water changing between ice, liquid, and vapor suggests one person changing roles, while the baptism scene presents real distinction. Three pieces of one object suggest each person is only part of God. It is better to explain what Scripture says and admit where an illustration fails. We can know God truly without comprehending Him completely.

Divine glory expressed through humility

Philippians 2 teaches Christ's identity within an appeal for humility. The Son does not use His dignity to serve selfish ambition. His self-emptying is described through taking the servant's form and becoming human. The passage does not say that He stops being divine. His obedient death and exaltation reveal a lordship whose authority is joined to self-giving love.

Colossians calls Him firstborn and immediately explains that all things were made through Him and for Him. In this

setting the title expresses supremacy rather than membership among creatures. Hebrews speaks of the Son making purification for sins before describing His exalted position. Divine majesty and saving mercy therefore belong together.

Augustine's On the Trinity, Book I, distinguishes the persons while maintaining divine unity. That distinction helps us read these texts without making the Father and Son interchangeable. It remains a theological explanation to test against Scripture, rather than a replacement for the passages. A child can begin by saying that the Father loves and sends, the Son comes and saves, and the Spirit brings us into God's life. An adult should add that their action is the united work of the one God.

Divine attributes and the incarnate mission

The Son is eternal, holy, powerful, and worthy of worship. Scripture presents Him as creator and sustainer rather than as one creature among others. These affirmations belong beside the Gospels' testimony to genuine human limitation. A human body is present in a particular place; the incarnation does not make the divine nature cease to be divine. Avoid resolving the matter by saying His humanity is unreal or His deity was discarded.

John 14:28 describes the Father's greatness within Jesus' mission and return. John 17:5 speaks of shared glory before creation. Mark 13:32 states a limit concerning the day and hour. These passages must be read together without deleting a difficult sentence. Christians explain incarnate knowledge differently, and the biblical testimony is deeper than an easy mechanical model. The reader should know

which statement is explicit and which explanation is a theological inference.

His unchanging faithfulness, confessed in Hebrews 13:8, does not imply that He never grew as a child or passed through events in His human life. Divine constancy and human history are different dimensions of the same Savior. His holiness does not mean emotional coldness; compassion, grief, gentleness, and truthful judgment are part of the Gospel portrait. Worship should therefore lead to moral imitation where Scripture calls for it, while recognizing that we do not become creators or independent divine persons.

The Son and earlier manifestations of God

Some Christians identify particular Old Testament appearances of God or the angel of the Lord with the pre-incarnate Son. Genesis 18, Exodus 3, and Judges 13 are among passages discussed. The texts require careful attention to the narrator, the speaker, and the distinction between divine presence and a messenger. They do not explicitly identify every angelic appearance as Jesus.

John 1:18's statement concerning the Father's revelation through the Son provides a theological reason for discussing these appearances. It does not by itself give a list of verified identifications. A teacher may present a proposed Christological reading, explain its reasons, and acknowledge its limits. The clearer evidence for pre-existence remains in the New Testament's direct claims about the Son.

This approach does not weaken the conviction that Christ is the center of God's saving purpose. It strengthens teaching by distinguishing the promise, the pattern, the possible

appearance, and the explicit fulfillment. A younger reader learns that a question can remain open while the central confession is secure. An adult learns that reverence for Scripture includes refusing to make it say more than it does.

Study 1 The Word before creation

READ • JOHN 1:1–5 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with the word before creation. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense John introduces the Word as already existing at the beginning, with God and divine. Creation receives existence through Him.

Interpretation in Scripture Genesis begins with God's creative act; John returns to that beginning to explain the One who gives life and light. Read verse 3 with verses 1–2 before deciding whether the Word belongs among created things.

Apply it today Thank Christ for life before asking Him for success. Help a younger reader distinguish making something from being the source through whom everything is made.

Reflect and Respond

How does John's opening change the way you understand the child born in Bethlehem?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 The Word became human

READ • JOHN 1:9–18 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the word became human. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The Word enters the world, is rejected by some, and gives those who receive Him the right to become God's children.

Interpretation in Scripture Becoming flesh means entering genuine human life. John does not describe a divine visitor merely pretending to be human. His revelation of the Father grows from His unique relation to the Father, not from private speculation.

Apply it today Welcome people with ordinary human needs. The incarnation teaches us to take bodies, hunger, relationships, and dignity seriously.

Reflect and Respond

What does God's coming near in Christ teach you about approaching Him?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 Before Abraham

READ • JOHN 8:48–59 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops before abraham. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense In an intense dispute, Jesus speaks of Abraham and makes a striking claim concerning His existence before Abraham.

Interpretation in Scripture The crowd's response shows that they hear more than a claim of seniority. Read this saying alongside John's prologue and John 17:5. The expression belongs within John's portrait of divine identity; not every ordinary use of "I am" has the same force.

Apply it today Speak about Jesus with confidence and patience. Understanding His identity should deepen worship rather than encourage contempt toward those who disagree.

Reflect and Respond

What in the surrounding discussion makes Jesus' claim significant?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 Creator and firstborn

READ • COLOSSIANS 1:15–20 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops creator and firstborn. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The Son reveals the invisible God, stands before all things, holds creation together, and reconciles through the blood of His cross.

Interpretation in Scripture The explanation of creation through and for Him controls the meaning of firstborn. Compare Psalm 89:27, where royal precedence is expressed through the same family image. Creator, church head, and crucified reconciler describe one Lord.

Apply it today Ask which ambition has become larger than your allegiance to Christ. Teach children that dignity comes from belonging to Him rather than winning every comparison.

Reflect and Respond

How do creation and reconciliation belong together in this passage?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 Greater than angels

READ • HEBREWS 1:1–14 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops greater than angels. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense God's climactic revelation comes through the Son, who creates, sustains, purifies, and reigns. The writer develops His superiority through Scripture.

Interpretation in Scripture The Old Testament quotations form an argument rather than a collection of decorative titles. Read the whole sequence. Angelic service is real, but angels do not occupy the Son's unique place in creation and salvation.

Apply it today Seek help from the Lord without pursuing secret spiritual intermediaries. Reverence for Christ should produce confidence joined to obedience.

Reflect and Respond

Which action of the Son gives you the clearest reason to trust Him?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 The humility of the Lord

READ • PHILIPPIANS 2:1–11 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the humility of the lord. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Paul asks believers to care for one another and presents Christ's voluntary humility, obedient death, and exaltation.

Interpretation in Scripture The passage explains self-emptying by taking a servant's condition. It does not describe the Son exchanging deity for humanity. Its theological depth serves a practical appeal against selfish rivalry and the pursuit of prestige.

Apply it today Serve someone whose gratitude cannot improve your reputation. Let younger believers see a leader accept ordinary work without demanding special treatment.

Reflect and Respond

Where does Christ's humility challenge your use of authority?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 Father Son and Spirit

READ • MATTHEW 3:13–17; MATTHEW 28:16–20 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops father son and spirit. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense Jesus is baptized, the Spirit descends, and the Father speaks. The risen Jesus commissions baptism in the name of Father, Son, and Spirit.

Interpretation in Scripture The passages preserve distinction while placing all three within the confession and worship of God's people. The later word Trinity summarizes

this witness; the word itself need not appear for the teaching to arise from Scripture.

Apply it today Pray with gratitude to the Father through the Son, depending on the Spirit. Explain the confession simply without treating God as three competing beings.

Reflect and Respond

What can these passages establish, and what do they leave beyond a simple illustration?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Eternal glory and shared life

READ • JOHN 17:1–5 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops eternal glory and shared life. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus prays to the Father about His mission, eternal life, and the glory He had before the world's existence.

Interpretation in Scripture The Son's prayer expresses relationship, not proof that He is merely a creature. Eternal life involves knowing the Father and the sent Son. Compare the prayer with John 1 rather than isolating one phrase.

Apply it today Make time to know God through Scripture and prayer. Teach children that eternal life concerns belonging to God as well as a future beyond death.

Reflect and Respond

How does Jesus connect His completed mission with the life He gives?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Understand why Jesus can be worshiped, why His coming reveals the Father, and why the Christian confession remains belief in one God. Read each passage before combining their teaching.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Father, deepen our knowledge of Your Son. By Your Spirit teach us to worship with understanding and serve with the humility of Jesus.

CHAPTER 2

Christ in Genesis and the Patterns of Promise

Context Genesis tells of creation, rebellion, judgment, promise, and God's dealings with Abraham's family. Its people must first be understood within their own stories before later Christological connections are drawn.

Purpose and audience Learn how the Bible's beginning establishes the need for rescue and the promise of blessing. Distinguish explicit New Testament comparisons from helpful narrative similarities. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

Genesis 1:1–5; John 1:1–5 Creation and the Word

Genesis 3:1–21 Rebellion and promised conflict

Genesis 12:1–9; Galatians 3:6–9 Blessing for the nations

Genesis 22:1–19; Hebrews 11:17–19 Isaac and divine provision

Genesis 37:12–36; Genesis 50:15–21 Joseph and the rejected deliverer

Romans 5:12–21; 1 Corinthians 15:45–49 Adam and the last Adam

Ruth 4:1–17; Matthew 1:1–6 A redeemer in the family story

Luke 24:25–32; Luke 24:44–49 Reading toward Christ

Doctrinal Exposition

The Promise in the Beginning

Genesis begins with God's good creation and humanity's disobedience. After the fall, Genesis 3:15 speaks of conflict between the serpent and the woman's offspring. Christians have long read this promise in the light of Jesus' victory over evil. The passage does not give the whole gospel in explicit detail; rather, it begins a promise whose fuller shape becomes visible as Scripture unfolds. God's answer to human sin is not simply an improved rulebook but a saving purpose fulfilled through a person.

God's covenant with Abraham promises blessing to the families of the earth (Genesis 12:3). The New Testament connects that promise with Christ and the inclusion of the nations (Galatians 3:8, 16). Isaac, the promised son, points readers toward God's faithfulness. In Genesis 22 Isaac is spared and a ram is provided. The comparison with Jesus is a type, not an assertion that Isaac actually died and rose. The crucial difference is that God provides the sacrifice and the beloved Son gives himself for the world.

Read: Genesis 22; 37–50; Exodus 2–14; 2 Samuel 7; Psalm 110; Hebrews 7; Luke 24:25–27.

Understanding Biblical Typology

A type is a person, event, institution, or pattern in earlier Scripture that points forward to a fuller reality in God's saving work. Typology is not a license to make every small detail represent Jesus. The strongest connections are those made or encouraged by Scripture itself. The comparison between Adam and Christ is explicit in Romans 5:12–21 and

1 Corinthians 15:45–49. The comparison between Melchizedek's priesthood and Christ's priesthood is developed in Hebrews 7.

These patterns help to teach believers to recognize God's faithfulness through the whole biblical story. This edition keeps that aim while distinguishing clear scriptural connections from illustrative parallels. We honor the Bible when we refuse to force a meaning that the text does not bear.

Isaac The Beloved Son and the Provided Sacrifice

Isaac is the child of promise. His birth shows that God's covenant does not depend on human ability. When Abraham is tested in Genesis 22, Isaac carries the wood, and God ultimately provides a ram. Christians may see an anticipation of the Father giving his beloved Son and of Christ's willing obedience. Yet Isaac is not killed; the ram takes his place. The contrast is central: in the gospel Jesus truly dies and rises again.

The lesson is trust in God's provision. Abraham's story does not command believers to repeat his ordeal. It invites us to trust the God who keeps his promises and who, in Christ, has acted decisively for our salvation (Romans 8:32).

Joseph Rejection Suffering and Deliverance

Joseph is rejected by his brothers, sold into slavery, falsely accused, and eventually raised to a position through which many lives are preserved (Genesis 37–50). The resemblance to Jesus is instructive: humiliation precedes exaltation, human evil does not defeat God's purpose, and forgiveness overcomes the desire for revenge. Joseph tells his brothers

that what they intended for evil God intended for good (Genesis 50:20).

This is an analogy, not an assertion that every detail of Joseph's biography predicts a matching incident in Jesus' life. Joseph himself is a sinner saved by grace, while the New Testament presents Jesus as sinless. The greater message is that God can bring life through suffering and reconciliation through undeserved mercy.

Moses David and Melchizedek

Moses confronts oppression, leads Israel out of bondage, mediates the covenant, and intercedes for the people. Jesus is the greater mediator who brings liberation from sin and death (Hebrews 3:1–6; 1 Timothy 2:5). David is the anointed king whose dynasty points toward the promised Messiah; Jesus reigns without the failures that marked Israel's rulers. Melchizedek, king and priest in Genesis 14, becomes a theological pattern for Christ's enduring priesthood in Psalm 110 and Hebrews 7.

The same discipline applies to other suggested figures such as Boaz, Jonah, Joshua, and Mordecai. Ask first: What does the original passage say? Then ask: Does the New Testament draw this connection? Finally ask: What legitimate lesson can the comparison teach without confusing symbol and history?

Promise within a broken world

Genesis does not open with human achievement. God gives life, a place to live, relationships, and responsibility. The fall is a refusal of trust within that gift. The shame and conflict that follow show that sin damages our relation to God and

each other. Yet judgment does not end God's purpose. Genesis 3:15 introduces conflict and an expectation of the serpent's defeat; later Scripture helps Christians recognize the fuller saving horizon.

The Abrahamic promise widens the reader's view. Blessing is intended for the families of the earth. In Galatians 3 Paul connects this promise with Christ and the gathering of the nations. Faith receives God's promise; it does not make ancestry or achievement the ground of boasting. The saving story is particular enough to name Abraham and broad enough to reach peoples beyond his family.

Typology means recognizing an earlier pattern within God's unfolding purpose. Paul explicitly compares Adam and Christ. Jesus explicitly compares Jonah's ordeal with His death and rising. Joseph's rejection and later deliverance provide a useful resemblance, but no New Testament writer explicitly labels every detail of Joseph's life a prediction. Giving each connection its proper strength protects both the original story and the glory of Christ.

Learning from people without making them perfect

Isaac's story teaches reliance on God's provision. Hebrews 11 describes Abraham's confidence that God could raise the dead; Genesis itself says Isaac was spared. Joseph's story shows God working through human wrongdoing to preserve life; it does not make the brothers' betrayal good. David points toward royal promise but also exposes a sinful king's need for mercy.

These distinctions matter when preaching. A teacher should not turn an Old Testament hero into a flawless substitute for Jesus, nor condemn a person simply because the story

supplies a contrast. The same God patiently unfolds His purpose through people who need His grace. Christ fulfills the pattern with an obedience and saving sufficiency that exceed theirs.

A child can recognize a shadow and the object that makes it. That illustration helps explain anticipation, but biblical types are not accidental resemblances selected at will. They belong within Scripture's actual story and its later interpretation. Ask what the earlier passage says, what the New Testament connects, and what difference exists between the earlier person and Christ. Difference often reveals the greater fulfillment.

Study 1 Creation and the Word

READ • GENESIS 1:1–5; JOHN 1:1–5 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with creation and the word. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense Genesis describes God's creating speech; John says creation comes into existence through the Word.

Interpretation in Scripture The connection is made by John's opening. Genesis does not name Jesus of Nazareth or provide the whole later doctrine of the Trinity. Read the two beginnings together while allowing each passage its own contribution.

Apply it today Treat created life as a gift rather than property to exploit. Help children thank God for the world and take responsibility for its care.

Reflect and Respond

What does John add to your reading of creation?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 Rebellion and promised conflict

READ • GENESIS 3:1–21 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops rebellion and promised conflict. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Human disobedience brings shame, accusation, hardship, and conflict involving the serpent and the woman's offspring.

Interpretation in Scripture Christian reading sees the beginning of a saving promise in verse 15, illuminated by Christ's victory. The passage does not yet describe Bethlehem or Calvary in detail. God's provision and continuing purpose appear within judgment.

Apply it today Admit wrongdoing instead of transferring blame. Teach a child that telling the truth is the beginning of returning to trust.

Reflect and Respond

Where do mercy and judgment appear together in this chapter?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 Blessing for the nations

READ • GENESIS 12:1–9; GALATIANS 3:6–9 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops blessing for the nations. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense God calls Abraham and promises blessing reaching beyond his household. Paul connects this promise with the gospel received through faith.

Interpretation in Scripture The promise does not authorize ethnic superiority. Paul uses Abraham's faith to explain inclusion, not to erase Israel's historical place. Christ's saving work opens the promised blessing to the nations.

Apply it today Pray for a people outside your own background. Refuse language that makes one ethnicity naturally closer to God than another.

Reflect and Respond

How does the promise shape Christian mission?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 Isaac and divine provision

READ • GENESIS 22:1–19; HEBREWS 11:17–19 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops isaac and divine provision. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Abraham faces a severe test, Isaac is spared, and God supplies a ram. Hebrews highlights faith in God's power to raise the dead.

Interpretation in Scripture The text gives a unique episode in covenant history. It is not an instruction to sacrifice children. The later comparison with the Father giving His Son must acknowledge that Isaac did not actually die in Genesis.

Apply it today Trust God's faithfulness without imitating an exceptional command beyond its setting. Teach families that no leader may use this story to demand harm.

Reflect and Respond

What is the central lesson about God's provision?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 Joseph and the rejected deliverer

READ • GENESIS 37:12–36; GENESIS 50:15–21 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops joseph and the rejected deliverer. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Joseph is betrayed by his brothers, later gains authority, and understands God's purpose to preserve life amid their evil.

Interpretation in Scripture The resemblance to rejection and deliverance in Jesus' story is instructive, but it is an analogy. God's good purpose does not excuse the betrayal or require a matching prophecy in every detail.

Apply it today Pursue forgiveness without calling mistreatment harmless. Help a young reader distinguish hope in God's providence from permission for abuse.

Reflect and Respond

How can this story encourage trust while preserving accountability?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 Adam and the last Adam

READ • ROMANS 5:12–21; 1 CORINTHIANS 15:45–49 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops adam and the last adam. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Paul explicitly contrasts the consequences of Adam's disobedience with Christ's obedience and life-giving work.

Interpretation in Scripture This is stronger evidence than an imaginative resemblance. Christ acts as the representative who accomplishes what fallen humanity cannot repair. The comparison includes important differences: grace exceeds the ruin introduced through sin.

Apply it today Rest salvation in Christ's obedience. Let gratitude motivate faithful choices instead of trying to create your own saving record.

Reflect and Respond

What difference between Adam and Christ does Paul emphasize?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 A redeemer in the family story

READ • RUTH 4:1–17; MATTHEW 1:1–6 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops a redeemer in the family story. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Boaz acts within Israel's family and property customs; Ruth becomes part of the ancestry leading to David and Jesus.

Interpretation in Scripture Matthew supplies the explicit genealogical connection. Comparing Boaz's care with Christ's redemption is useful when the different legal setting is explained. Ruth's inclusion shows God's purpose working through an outsider's faithful story.

Apply it today Welcome someone overlooked by your community. Explain redemption as costly, responsible care rather than a slogan about acquiring possessions.

Reflect and Respond

What is explicit in the texts, and what belongs to illustration?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Reading toward Christ

READ • LUKE 24:25–32; LUKE 24:44–49 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops reading toward christ. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense The risen Jesus explains how Israel's Scriptures relate to His suffering, glory, and the mission of repentance and forgiveness.

Interpretation in Scripture Christ-centered reading follows the Bible's unfolding purpose. It does not remove historical context or turn every object into a secret code.

Jesus connects understanding with witness and the Spirit's promised help.

Apply it today Before teaching a type, read its whole story and identify the later biblical connection. Let clearer evidence guide a younger student's imagination.

Reflect and Respond

How would Jesus' method change the way you prepare a Bible lesson?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Learn how the Bible's beginning establishes the need for rescue and the promise of blessing. Distinguish explicit New Testament comparisons from helpful narrative similarities.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Faithful God, teach us to read Your promises carefully, trust Your provision, and share Your blessing with people beyond our familiar circle.

CHAPTER 3

Christ in the Law and the Tabernacle

Context Israel's rescue from Egypt leads to covenant life, wilderness dependence, and ordered worship. Hebrews later explains how priesthood and sacrifice prepare readers to understand Christ.

Purpose and audience Recognize the saving patterns Scripture explicitly connects with Jesus. Learn access to God through His sufficient work without inventing hidden meanings for every object. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

Exodus 12:1–14; 1 Corinthians 5:6–8 The Passover rescue

Exodus 16:1–18; John 6:30–35 Bread for the journey

Exodus 17:1–7; 1 Corinthians 10:1–6 Water and the spiritual rock

Numbers 21:4–9; John 3:14–17 The lifted serpent

Deuteronomy 18:15–19; Acts 3:19–26 The prophet like Moses

Exodus 25:1–9; John 1:14–18 The dwelling place of God

Leviticus 16:15–22; Hebrews 9:11–14 Atonement and the greater priest

Hebrews 10:19–25 Confidence to draw near

Doctrinal Exposition

Read: Genesis 3:15; 12:1–3; 22:1–19; Exodus 12; 16–17; Numbers 21:4–9; Deuteronomy 18:15–19.

The Passover Lamb and the Bread from Heaven

In Exodus 12, Israel is delivered from judgment and slavery through God's appointed Passover. John the Baptist identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1:29), and Paul calls Christ our Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7). The lamb is a powerful picture of rescue by divine provision. Its meaning reaches beyond a symbol to the historical death of Jesus, who gives his life to bring people into a new covenant.

In the wilderness, God provides manna and water for his people. Jesus calls himself the bread of life (John 6:35), offering more than temporary satisfaction. Paul draws a theological connection between Christ and the rock that supplied Israel in the wilderness (1 Corinthians 10:4). These texts teach dependence: the people of God do not sustain themselves by pride, skill, or possessions alone. Their true life comes from the Lord.

The Tabernacle and God s Presence

The tabernacle made God's presence among Israel visible through a structured pattern of worship, sacrifice, priesthood, and holiness (Exodus 25–40). Hebrews explains that these institutions anticipated the fuller access to God established by Christ (Hebrews 8–10). Jesus is not simply another priest entering another earthly tent; he is the mediator of a better covenant and the one whose sacrifice is sufficient.

The pillar of cloud and fire guided Israel and signified the Lord's presence (Exodus 13:21–22; Numbers 14:14). A Christian teacher may use it as an analogy for God's guidance through Christ and the Spirit, but the Exodus text does not explicitly call the pillar the Holy Spirit or the incarnate Jesus. Careful teaching gains strength, not weakness, when it distinguishes the passage's direct statement from a devotional parallel.

The Prophet Like Moses and the Lifted Serpent

Moses promised that God would raise up a prophet like him (Deuteronomy 18:15–19). Peter applies this promise to Jesus in Acts 3:22–23. Moses led the people out of bondage and mediated the covenant; Jesus brings a greater deliverance and mediates the new covenant. Likewise, Jesus himself uses the lifted bronze serpent in Numbers 21 as an analogy for his being lifted up so that those who believe may receive life (John 3:14–15).

The central pattern is God's initiative. God promises, provides, leads, and saves. Our calling is to respond with faith and obedience rather than turn biblical pictures into imaginative claims unsupported by the text.

Deliverance and dependence

Passover belongs first to God's rescue of Israel from Egypt. The lamb, blood, meal, and departure are parts of that historical event. Paul later calls Christ our Passover in an appeal for a holy communal life. The connection points to rescue through God's provision and calls the rescued community to sincerity and truth.

The wilderness narratives teach dependence. Manna meets daily hunger, and water answers thirst. Jesus' bread discourse and Paul's statement about the spiritual rock connect these provisions with Christ. The point is not that every meal in Scripture is a disguised prediction. God's earlier acts form the setting in which the Son's greater gift can be understood.

Dependence is difficult for proud people. A community may receive help and still complain or turn gifts into objects of worship. Christ gives life that cannot be secured by religious performance. Faith receives Him, and obedience expresses continuing trust. The child learning to pray and the adult struggling with anxiety begin at the same place: life is a gift before it is a project.

Presence sacrifice and access

The tabernacle teaches that God dwells among His people while remaining holy. Its ordered approach, sacrifices, and priestly service make the need for cleansing and mediation visible. Hebrews reads these institutions as anticipations of fuller access through Christ. The earthly arrangement matters precisely because it supplies a concrete vocabulary for the greater fulfillment.

Jesus' offering is not one more repeated sacrifice competing with earlier offerings. Hebrews emphasizes its sufficiency and the priest's enduring life. Believers draw near because His work opens the way. Reverence remains necessary; access does not turn God into a casual possession. Confidence and holiness are held together.

Interpretations of individual tabernacle objects differ. Some connections are explicit in Hebrews, while others are

traditional teaching illustrations. A preacher may use the lampstand to illustrate illumination but should not claim every measurement settles a doctrine about Christ. The safest approach begins with Exodus and Leviticus, follows the New Testament's interpretation, and marks devotional comparisons honestly. A clear explanation of sacrifice and access is more valuable than a clever theory about hidden numbers.

Study 1 The Passover rescue

READ • EXODUS 12:1–14; 1 CORINTHIANS 5:6–8 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with the passover rescue. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense God gives Israel a Passover provision before deliverance. Paul identifies Christ as the church's Passover within an appeal against corrupting sin.

Interpretation in Scripture The earlier event establishes rescue and a new communal beginning. Paul's application joins Christ's sacrifice with sincerity and truth. It does not authorize Christians to despise Jewish remembrance of the Exodus.

Apply it today Receive grace gratefully and address wrongdoing honestly. Teach that being rescued calls us to a changed life rather than superiority.

Reflect and Respond

How does Paul's moral appeal depend on Christ's sacrifice?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 Bread for the journey

READ • EXODUS 16:1–18; JOHN 6:30–35 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops bread for the journey. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense God supplies manna to hungry Israel. Jesus contrasts that provision with the lasting life He gives.

Interpretation in Scripture The wilderness bread is real food and a lesson in dependence. John's discourse interprets the greater gift through coming to Jesus and believing. Physical provision and eternal life are related but should not be confused.

Apply it today Thank God for daily food and share with someone hungry. Let the gift remind you of your deeper dependence on Christ.

Reflect and Respond

What can ordinary bread provide, and what does Jesus promise?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 Water and the spiritual rock

READ • EXODUS 17:1–7; 1 CORINTHIANS 10:1–6 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops water and the spiritual rock. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Water is provided amid complaint. Paul says the Israelites drank from the spiritual rock associated with Christ.

Interpretation in Scripture Paul makes a theological connection within a warning against false security. Shared spiritual privileges did not make disobedience harmless. His purpose should control the application rather than speculation about a traveling stone.

Apply it today Depend on Christ without treating baptism or religious experience as permission to ignore Him.

Reflect and Respond

Why does Paul use a story of provision to warn the church?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 The lifted serpent

READ • NUMBERS 21:4–9; JOHN 3:14–17 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the lifted serpent. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense People facing death receive God's appointed means of rescue; Jesus compares His lifting up with that event.

Interpretation in Scripture The comparison concerns looking in dependence and receiving life through the Son. The bronze object is not inherently divine. Its later misuse in 2 Kings 18:4 reminds readers that an instrument can become an idol.

Apply it today Trust the Savior rather than an object, charm, or religious technique. Explain faith as reliance on Him.

Reflect and Respond

How does Jesus use the earlier event to explain His mission?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 The prophet like Moses

READ • DEUTERONOMY 18:15–19; ACTS 3:19–26 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the prophet like moses. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense Moses promises a prophet whom the people must hear. Peter applies this expectation to Jesus.

Interpretation in Scripture Acts joins the promise with repentance and blessing. Jesus' greatness is not simply resemblance to a successful leader; He brings the covenant

story to its saving fulfillment. Listening involves response to His word.

Apply it today Name a command of Jesus you have admired but delayed obeying. Help a child see listening as attention followed by action.

Reflect and Respond

What does hearing the promised prophet require?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 The dwelling place of God

READ • EXODUS 25:1–9; JOHN 1:14–18 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the dwelling place of god. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense God instructs Israel to prepare a sanctuary for His dwelling among them. John describes the Word's coming among us.

Interpretation in Scripture The language of divine dwelling enriches understanding of the incarnation. The tabernacle and Jesus are not identical buildings; the connection concerns God's presence and self-revelation reaching fulfillment in the Son.

Apply it today Practice hospitality that takes people's needs seriously. God's presence should form reverence and welcome together.

Reflect and Respond

How does the earlier sanctuary prepare you to understand God coming near?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 Atonement and the greater priest

READ • LEVITICUS 16:15–22; HEBREWS 9:11–14 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops atonement and the greater priest. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Israel's annual rite addresses impurity and sin. Hebrews describes Christ's greater priestly service and cleansing.

Interpretation in Scripture Read the earlier ceremony as covenant worship before following Hebrews' comparison. The writer contrasts repeated ritual provision with Christ's effective self-offering. Forgiveness is grounded in His work, not a new series of human sacrifices.

Apply it today Confess sin and seek cleansing without inventing a payment that supplements Christ. Teach restoration with responsibility and hope.

Reflect and Respond

What does Hebrews say Christ accomplishes that the earlier pattern anticipated?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Confidence to draw near

READ • HEBREWS 10:19–25 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops confidence to draw near. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Believers are invited to approach God, hold their confession, and encourage one another through Christ's opened way.

Interpretation in Scripture The argument follows the account of His sufficient sacrifice. Access is personal and communal: assurance leads to faithful gathering, love, and good works. Private confidence must not become indifference to others.

Apply it today Encourage someone whose faith is weary. Approach God honestly and help your community become a place of truthful support.

Reflect and Respond

What actions follow from the access Christ provides?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Recognize the saving patterns Scripture explicitly connects with Jesus. Learn access to God through His sufficient work without inventing hidden meanings for every object.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Lord Jesus, thank You for opening the way to God. Teach us to receive Your sufficient grace and encourage one another in faithful love.

CHAPTER 4

Christ in the Historical Books Psalms and Prophets

Context Israel's historical books expose the strengths and failures of rulers. Psalms give language for kingship and suffering, while the prophets speak within crises of judgment and hope.

Purpose and audience Follow royal promise, suffering, wisdom, and restoration toward Jesus while respecting each passage's original setting and the New Testament's use of it. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

2 Samuel 7:8–16; Luke 1:26–33 The promise to David

Psalm 2; Acts 4:23–31 The anointed king

Psalm 22:1–24; Matthew 27:35–46 A sufferer's cry

Psalm 16:8–11; Acts 2:22–32 Hope beyond decay

Proverbs 8:1–36; 1 Corinthians 1:18–25 Wisdom and the Son

Isaiah 52:13–53:12; Acts 8:26–35 The suffering servant

Ezekiel 34:1–16; John 10:11–18 The faithful shepherd

Daniel 7:9–14; Mark 14:53–65 The Son of Man and lasting rule

Doctrinal Exposition

Read: 2 Samuel 7:12–16; Psalm 2; 22; 110; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6–7; 53; Jeremiah 23:5–6; Daniel 7:13–14; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 9:9.

The Promised King

The story of Israel's kings builds expectation for a ruler who will govern in righteousness. God's promise to David concerns a continuing royal house (2 Samuel 7:12–16). The New Testament identifies Jesus as David's promised descendant (Matthew 1:1; Luke 1:32–33). David's victories, exile, songs, and dependence on God may illuminate the Messiah's mission, but David's moral failures also show that the ultimate king must be greater than David.

Ruth's story reminds us that God's purpose reaches beyond one ethnic group. Ruth, a Moabite woman, becomes part of the line leading to David and, according to Matthew's genealogy, to Jesus (Ruth 4:13–22; Matthew 1:5). Boaz's role as a family redeemer offers an instructive comparison with Christ's saving care, although the laws and circumstances are not identical. Grace welcomes outsiders and forms a people united by God's promise.

The Psalms and the Suffering Messiah

The Psalms supply words for kingship, lament, trust, suffering, and worship. Psalm 2 celebrates the Lord's anointed king; Psalm 22 gives language that the Gospel writers associate with Jesus' crucifixion; Psalm 16 is used in apostolic preaching about his resurrection (Acts 2:25–32); and Psalm 110 informs New Testament teaching about his exaltation and priesthood (Hebrews 5–7).

Not every psalm began as a prediction in the narrow sense. Some describe the experiences of David or Israel and find a fuller pattern in Christ. Reading them faithfully requires attention to their original setting and to the ways the New Testament uses them. Such care does not diminish the glory of Christ. It shows how deeply his story is woven into the Scriptures.

Isaiah and the Servant of the Lord

Isaiah speaks of a child whose reign brings peace, a servant who acts with justice, and one who suffers on behalf of others (Isaiah 9:6–7; 42:1–9; 52:13–53:12). The Gospels portray Jesus as the one who announces good news, heals, suffers, and gives himself for sinners. Isaiah 53 is central to Christian reflection on substitution, sin-bearing, and God's purpose in the cross. The servant's suffering is not the defeat of God's plan but part of its saving accomplishment.

Isaiah 7:14 is cited in Matthew 1:22–23 in connection with Jesus' birth. The original prophetic setting belongs to Isaiah's own time; Matthew sees a deeper fulfillment in Emmanuel, 'God with us.' Readers should not erase the historical setting in order to make a Christian point. The pattern of promise and fulfillment is richer when both horizons are respected.

The Branch Son of Man and Humble King

Jeremiah announces a righteous Branch from David's line (Jeremiah 23:5–6). Daniel sees one like a son of man receiving an everlasting kingdom from the Ancient of Days (Daniel 7:13–14). Jesus regularly calls himself the Son of Man, a title that gathers themes of humanity, suffering, authority, and final vindication. Micah 5:2 associates the

promised ruler with Bethlehem, while Zechariah 9:9 pictures a king entering in humility—a passage the Gospels connect with Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.

These prophetic voices do not all speak in the same literary form. Poetry, vision, historical oracle, and promise must be read according to their nature. Together they direct attention to a king who is both mighty and humble, righteous and merciful, rejected and vindicated.

The king Israel needed

The promise to David establishes a royal horizon that later biblical books develop. Israel needs more than a ruler who wins battles. It needs justice, faithfulness, and a kingdom secure under God. The failures recorded in the historical books expose how far even admired kings fall short. Jesus' identification as David's son carries that history into the Gospel story.

The Psalms are prayers and songs before they are a list of predictions. They speak of anointed kings, righteous sufferers, enemies, trust, and worship. The New Testament applies particular psalms to Jesus through quotation, allusion, and fulfillment. Attention to their original character reveals the depth of these connections. Psalm 22's movement through anguish toward praise helps us hear the cross without making suffering theatrical.

Wisdom literature also needs careful reading. Proverbs personifies wisdom as a woman calling people to learn. Christian theology may compare divine wisdom with Christ, whom Paul names God's wisdom, but the poem cannot by itself settle the Son's eternal origin. The clearer teaching of John, Colossians, and Hebrews guides the comparison.

The servant shepherd and Son of Man

Isaiah's servant passages gather themes of justice, mission, suffering, and the benefit received by others through the servant's faithful work. The New Testament repeatedly connects this portrait with Jesus. The servant's victory does not avoid costly obedience; it comes through the mission that includes rejection and suffering.

Ezekiel challenges shepherds who feed themselves while neglecting the flock. John 10 should be heard against that background. The good shepherd's authority is measured by knowing, gathering, and laying down His life. Daniel's vision gives another perspective: one like a son of man receives lasting dominion from the Ancient of Days. Jesus' use of the title connects ordinary humanity with suffering, authority, and final vindication.

The prophets do not all use the same form. A vision must be read as a vision, a royal oracle as an oracle, and a lament as a lament. Christian fulfillment does not require us to erase the historical questions that first hearers faced. It asks us to see how God's purpose grows through those settings and reaches its center in Christ. That center gives hope without making biblical interpretation careless.

Study 1 The promise to David

READ • 2 SAMUEL 7:8–16; LUKE 1:26–33 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with the promise to david. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense God promises a continuing royal house to David. Gabriel describes Mary's Son in the language of David's throne and an enduring kingdom.

Interpretation in Scripture The promise includes an immediate dynastic setting and a larger royal expectation. Luke explicitly identifies Jesus with its lasting fulfillment. Human kings' failures do not cancel God's purpose.

Apply it today Measure leadership by faithfulness and service rather than ancestry or status. Teach young readers why a promised king must also be righteous.

Reflect and Respond

How does Luke develop the earlier royal promise?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 The anointed king

READ • PSALM 2; ACTS 4:23–31 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the anointed king. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The psalm depicts opposition to the Lord and His anointed. The praying church applies its language to opposition against Jesus.

Interpretation in Scripture Acts connects the royal theme with concrete rulers and the suffering mission. The church responds by asking for faithful witness, not permission to

dominate opponents. Divine sovereignty supports courage and prayer.

Apply it today Pray for truthful courage when belief is unpopular. Refuse to turn the psalm into justification for personal vengeance.

Reflect and Respond

What does the church ask God to do with its fear?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 A sufferer s cry

READ • PSALM 22:1–24; MATTHEW 27:35–46 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops a sufferer's cry. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The psalm voices abandonment and ridicule while continuing to address God. Matthew connects its words and imagery with the crucifixion.

Interpretation in Scripture Jesus' cry must be heard as real suffering. The whole psalm also moves toward vindication and praise. The connection does not require a rupture that divides God's divine being.

Apply it today Make room for lament in prayer. A child or adult who is grieving should not be forced to pretend confidence means feeling no pain.

Reflect and Respond

How does the psalm help you hear Jesus' cry faithfully?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 Hope beyond decay

READ • PSALM 16:8–11; ACTS 2:22–32 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops hope beyond decay. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Peter cites the psalm to explain the resurrection and distinguishes David's burial from Jesus' victory over death.

Interpretation in Scripture Acts supplies an explicit interpretation. The speaker follows both the earlier words and the historical testimony concerning Jesus. Christian hope therefore rests in God's raising Him, not in vague optimism.

Apply it today Comfort a grieving person with patient presence and resurrection hope. Avoid using the passage to silence their sorrow.

Reflect and Respond

Why does Peter bring David's tomb into his explanation?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 Wisdom and the Son

READ • PROVERBS 8:1–36; 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18–25 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops wisdom and the son. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Proverbs depicts wisdom calling people toward understanding. Paul describes Christ crucified as God's power and wisdom.

Interpretation in Scripture Personification is a literary form, not automatically a literal biography. Compare the texts for what they reveal about God's wisdom, while using explicit New Testament teaching to establish the Son's identity.

Apply it today Choose a truthful action that appears less impressive than a popular shortcut. Explain wisdom through obedience rather than clever speech.

Reflect and Respond

How does the cross challenge ordinary ideas of wisdom?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 The suffering servant

READ • ISAIAH 52:13–53:12; ACTS 8:26–35 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the suffering servant. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Isaiah portrays a servant whose suffering benefits others. Philip begins from that passage to announce Jesus.

Interpretation in Scripture Acts provides an explicit Christological reading. Isaiah's language of rejection, sin-bearing, and vindication informs the meaning of the cross. A complete explanation includes His willing work rather than only the cruelty inflicted upon Him.

Apply it today Receive mercy without minimizing sin. Help another person understand why Christians call the cross saving love.

Reflect and Respond

Which features of the servant's story illuminate Christ's death?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 The faithful shepherd

READ • EZEKIEL 34:1–16; JOHN 10:11–18 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the faithful shepherd. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Ezekiel condemns leaders who neglect their people and promises God's searching care. Jesus presents Himself as the shepherd who lays down His life.

Interpretation in Scripture The prophetic setting concerns failed leadership and God's restoration. John's contrast with hired hands reveals faithful authority expressed through sacrificial care. Leadership that harms the vulnerable contradicts the picture.

Apply it today Protect someone whose needs are easy to overlook. Invite children to describe a good leader by actions rather than costume or title.

Reflect and Respond

What does the shepherd do that self-serving leaders refuse?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 The Son of Man and lasting rule

READ • DANIEL 7:9–14; MARK 14:53–65 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the son of man and lasting rule. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Daniel sees an enduring kingdom granted to one like a son of man. Jesus invokes Son of Man imagery before His accusers.

Interpretation in Scripture The vision's heavenly setting and Jesus' promised vindication belong together. The title includes more than a claim to ordinary humanity. Its use at the trial unites apparent weakness with final authority.

Apply it today Remain faithful without assuming humiliation will last forever. Let hope strengthen integrity rather than encourage speculation about dates.

Reflect and Respond

Why is this declaration significant in the setting of Jesus' trial?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Follow royal promise, suffering, wisdom, and restoration toward Jesus while respecting each passage's original setting and the New Testament's use of it.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer God of promise, help us hear the king, servant, and shepherd revealed in Scripture. Keep our hope truthful and our leadership merciful.

CHAPTER 5

The Incarnation and the True Humanity of Jesus

Context Matthew and Luke tell of Jesus' conception and birth. John states the incarnation's identity, while Hebrews explains why sharing our humanity matters for salvation and priestly care.

Purpose and audience Understand one Savior who is fully divine and genuinely human. His bodily life, mind, obedience, emotions, and suffering are essential to the teaching. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

Matthew 1:18–25 The promised birth

Luke 1:26–38 Mary's faithful response

John 1:14–18 The Word's human life

Luke 2:41–52 Growth in wisdom

Matthew 3:13–17 Baptism and the Father's affirmation

Matthew 4:1–11 Tempted and faithful

Hebrews 2:14–18; Hebrews 4:14–16 A sympathetic high priest

Mark 13:28–37; Luke 22:39–46 Knowledge prayer and mystery

Doctrinal Exposition

Read: Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38; John 1:14; Philippians 2:5–11; Hebrews 2:14–18.

The Word Became Flesh

The incarnation means that the eternal Son of God truly became human without ceasing to be divine. John 1:14 does not say that God merely appeared to be human. It says that the Word became flesh and lived among us. The New Testament presents Jesus as one who grew, hungered, became tired, wept, suffered, and died, yet also as the one who forgave sins, received worship, and revealed the Father.

The Christian confession is not that Jesus was half God and half man. He is fully divine and fully human. His two natures are not mixed into a third kind of being, and his humanity is not an illusion. The church's historic language about this mystery developed to safeguard the biblical witness. This book uses that language as a guide while keeping Scripture at the center.

Why the Incarnation Matters

Jesus entered human history to reveal the Father, fulfill God's promises, share our condition, defeat sin and death, and serve as our faithful high priest (John 1:18; Romans 15:8; Hebrews 2:14–18). His humanity means that his obedience and suffering are real. His deity means that the one who saves us is not a powerless intermediary but the Lord who acts in grace and truth.

The incarnation also teaches humility. Philippians 2 calls believers to have the mind of Christ, who did not use his

status for selfish advantage but took the form of a servant. Christian leadership therefore cannot be measured by display, pride, or domination. Its pattern is the self-giving service of Jesus.

The Virgin Conception

Matthew 1 and Luke 1 teach that Jesus was conceived through the work of the Holy Spirit and born of Mary. Christians confess this as the virgin conception and birth of Christ. The narratives connect his birth with God's initiative and with the identity of the promised Savior. They do not invite us to speculate beyond what the evangelists reveal about the biology of the miracle.

The virgin birth is not the only reason Jesus is holy or divine; the Gospels present his identity in a much wider context. Nor should we claim that God had no other conceivable way to accomplish salvation. The proper emphasis is that this is how God chose to act, fulfilling his promise and bringing the Savior into the world.

The Humanity of Jesus

Luke 2:52 describes Jesus growing in wisdom and stature. The Gospels show him praying, obeying the Father, receiving baptism, facing temptation, and sharing meals. Hebrews 4:15 affirms his real temptation while declaring him without sin. His compassion is not distant sympathy; he understands the trials of human life. He is therefore both the one who calls us to holiness and the one to whom we may draw near for mercy.

One Savior in divine and human life

The incarnation means that the eternal Son took human nature. The change is not that a creature became God, or that God ceased to be God. John identifies the Word who became flesh with the Word through whom all things were made. The person is the same; the human life He assumes is real.

Christian teaching therefore rejects both a merely human Jesus and a humanity that is only appearance. His hunger, tiredness, prayer, and growth cannot be dismissed as acting. Hebrews connects His shared humanity with His overcoming death and helping the tempted. His divine identity does not make human experience irrelevant.

The Definition of Chalcedon confesses one Christ with complete divine and human natures. Its purpose is to protect unity without mixing the natures or dividing the Savior into two persons. Christians have used different theological formulations, and historical disputes need fair treatment. For this study the biblical question remains direct: do we honor everything Scripture says about His divine identity and real human life?

Conception growth and faithful obedience

Matthew and Luke attribute Jesus' conception to the Holy Spirit's work. Mary is a real mother, and her consent expresses trust. The narratives do not offer a biological theory that sin is transmitted only through fathers. Jesus' holiness must be explained from the biblical witness to His identity and life rather than an invented account of blood inheritance.

Luke describes growth in wisdom and stature. Growth is part of genuine human life, not evidence that the Son's divine nature was incomplete. At His baptism the Father's affirmation and the Spirit's presence mark His public mission. In the wilderness He obeys while facing real temptation. He uses Scripture within its proper claim upon His trust.

Difficult passages, including Mark 13:32, require honesty. Christians differ in how they describe divine and human knowledge in the incarnation. It is enough to begin by taking both His divine identity and the stated limitation seriously. Avoid inventing a simple mechanism the passage never supplies. The same reverence should shape explanations of His prayer and suffering: His dependence is genuine within the human mission, while His relation to the Father is never merely that of an unrelated creature.

Study 1 The promised birth

READ • MATTHEW 1:18–25 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with the promised birth. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Joseph learns that Mary's conception is the Spirit's work and receives instructions about the child's name and saving purpose.

Interpretation in Scripture Matthew joins the birth with Emmanuel and God's saving presence. His account concerns Jesus' identity and mission rather than a general claim that unusual births make someone divine. Read the genealogy and following narrative as part of the setting.

Apply it today Respond to uncertainty with responsible obedience. Teach children that quiet faithfulness can matter greatly within God's purpose.

Reflect and Respond

What does the naming of Jesus tell Joseph about the child's mission?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 Mary s faithful response

READ • LUKE 1:26–38 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops mary's faithful response. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Mary asks how the announced birth can happen, hears of the Spirit's work, and receives the calling in trust.

Interpretation in Scripture Her question is not dismissed as rebellion. The passage highlights divine initiative and willing reception. Respect Mary's place without attributing eternal divine origin to her or treating her as an obstacle to knowing Jesus.

Apply it today Bring honest questions to God. Encourage younger believers to seek understanding without fearing that every question is unbelief.

Reflect and Respond

How do humility and thoughtful questioning belong together here?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 The Word s human life

READ • JOHN 1:14–18 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the word's human life. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The Word becomes flesh, dwells among people, and makes the Father known through grace and truth.

Interpretation in Scripture The prologue identifies who comes before describing how He comes. Humanity is assumed by the eternal Son. The revelation is personal and embodied rather than a message delivered by an unrelated teacher.

Apply it today Take ordinary needs seriously. Care for a person's health, food, and dignity as part of loving someone Christ came to save.

Reflect and Respond

Why does it matter that God's revelation enters human life?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 Growth in wisdom

READ • LUKE 2:41–52 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops growth in wisdom. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The young Jesus speaks of His Father's concerns, returns with His parents, and grows in wisdom and stature.

Interpretation in Scripture Luke holds distinctive identity and ordinary growth together. The account does not encourage children to despise parental care. It presents a real human development within His unique calling.

Apply it today Honor patient learning. A gifted child still needs teaching, responsibility, and the care of a family.

Reflect and Respond

What does this passage show about both Jesus' identity and His development?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 Baptism and the Father s affirmation

READ • MATTHEW 3:13–17 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops baptism and the father's affirmation. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus receives baptism, the Spirit descends, and the Father's voice identifies the beloved Son.

Interpretation in Scripture John's hesitation shows that the scene is not an ordinary confession of personal wrongdoing. It belongs to the fulfillment of Jesus' appointed mission. The Father, Son, and Spirit are distinguished in one event.

Apply it today Let assurance of God's love produce obedience rather than display. Explain the scene without pretending Jesus was cleansed of a sin He committed.

Reflect and Respond

How does the baptism prepare the reader for the ministry that follows?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 Tempted and faithful

READ • MATTHEW 4:1–11 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops tempted and faithful. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus faces temptation concerning provision, testing God, and receiving kingdoms through false worship. He answers from Scripture.

Interpretation in Scripture His use of Deuteronomy connects the wilderness testing with Israel's story. The devil also quotes Scripture, showing that citation alone does not guarantee faithful interpretation. Context and allegiance matter.

Apply it today Name a shortcut that asks you to sacrifice integrity. Help a child choose faithful obedience even when disobedience offers quick reward.

Reflect and Respond

What makes the devil's proposed use of Scripture unfaithful?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 A sympathetic high priest

READ • HEBREWS 2:14–18; HEBREWS 4:14–16 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops a sympathetic high priest. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The Son shares humanity, faces suffering and temptation, and helps those who approach God's grace.

Interpretation in Scripture His sinlessness does not make His temptation imaginary. The writer connects genuine identification with effective help. Because He is faithful, He can guide others through weakness rather than merely share it.

Apply it today Bring a temptation into honest prayer and seek trustworthy support. Refuse shame that discourages a person from asking for help.

Reflect and Respond

How do holiness and sympathy belong together in Christ?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Knowledge prayer and mystery

READ • MARK 13:28–37; LUKE 22:39–46 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops knowledge prayer and mystery. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus calls for watchfulness while naming a limit concerning the day and hour. In Gethsemane He prays in obedience amid anguish.

Interpretation in Scripture The passages require genuine human dependence to be taken seriously. Different explanations of incarnate knowledge should preserve both

the words and His divine identity elsewhere. Neither mystery nor theology permits deleting difficult evidence.

Apply it today Stay faithful in what is known instead of claiming secret dates. Teach prayer as honest dependence joined to willingness to obey.

Reflect and Respond

What response does Jesus ask for when the timing remains unknown?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Understand one Savior who is fully divine and genuinely human. His bodily life, mind, obedience, emotions, and suffering are essential to the teaching.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Lord Jesus, thank You for entering our human life. Help us bring our weakness honestly to Your grace and learn Your faithful obedience.

CHAPTER 6

The Names Titles and Identity of Jesus

Context Jesus' names arise in announcements, encounters, confessions, teaching, and worship. Each title belongs to a passage and contributes something distinct to understanding the same Lord.

Purpose and audience Learn what the titles reveal about identity and mission. Avoid treating names as magical words or assuming that every biblical title carries exactly the same meaning in every setting. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

Matthew 1:20–23 Jesus and salvation

Matthew 16:13–23 The Messiah confessed

John 5:19–30 The Son who reveals the Father

Mark 10:35–45 The Son of Man serves

John 1:29–34 The Lamb of God

John 20:24–31 My Lord and my God

Colossians 1:15–20; Colossians 2:6–10 Image and fullness

John 14:12–14; John 15:1–8 Praying in His name

Doctrinal Exposition

Read: Matthew 1:21–23; 16:13–17; John 1:1–18; 8:58; Colossians 2:9; Revelation 19:11–16.

Jesus Christ and Emmanuel

The name Jesus is associated with the Lord's saving action (Matthew 1:21). Christ is not a surname; it comes from the Greek Christos, meaning 'Anointed One,' corresponding to the Hebrew Messiah. The title points to the one commissioned by God to fulfill the promises associated with kingship, priesthood, and prophetic ministry. Emmanuel means 'God with us' (Matthew 1:23). Together these names announce both the identity and the mission of the Savior.

Names in Scripture are not magic formulas. They reveal character, relationship, and vocation. To pray in Jesus' name is not merely to add a phrase to the end of a request; it is to come to the Father through Christ and seek what accords with his will (John 14:13–14; 1 John 5:14).

Son of God and Son of Man

'Son of God' identifies Jesus in relation to the Father and, in the Gospels, as the promised king and uniquely beloved Son. 'Son of Man' can speak of genuine humanity, but Jesus also uses it in contexts that recall Daniel 7 and the authority of the heavenly figure who receives the kingdom. These titles should not be set against each other. The one who shares our humanity is the one invested with divine authority.

Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matthew 16:16), is more than correct vocabulary. It is a response of faith. The question 'Who do you say that I am?' still confronts every reader. A person

may know the titles and yet refuse the Lord whom they describe.

Lord Word Lamb and Image

John calls Jesus the Word who was with God and became flesh. Paul calls him the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15). John the Baptist calls him the Lamb of God, directing attention to his saving sacrifice (John 1:29). The apostles proclaim him Lord, a title that expresses rightful authority and demands faithful allegiance. Each designation contributes something different: revelation, divine identity, sacrifice, and rule.

The titles are not interchangeable slogans. We must ask where a name appears, who uses it, and what the surrounding passage says. A careful study of the names of Jesus enlarges worship because it prevents us from reducing him to a single role.

The Divine Attributes and Human Life of Christ

Christian theology confesses the Son as eternal, holy, all-powerful, and worthy of worship. Yet in his earthly ministry Jesus genuinely experienced human limitations such as hunger and fatigue. We should not turn this mystery into contradictory statements such as 'God is everywhere but not everywhere.' Better to say that the eternal Son is divine and, in the incarnation, truly lives a human life. Philippians 2 describes his humble obedience, not the loss of his divine identity.

A name and a saving mission

Jesus is His personal name, associated in Matthew 1:21 with the Lord's saving purpose. Christ is the Greek title

corresponding to Messiah, the Anointed One. Calling Him Christ therefore says something about vocation and fulfillment, not ancestry expressed through a surname. Emmanuel gives another perspective: God's presence with His people.

Son of God must be understood through its biblical settings. It can carry royal expectation, but John's Gospel gives it a depth bound to the Son's unique relation to the Father. Son of Man likewise includes ordinary human language and Daniel's vision of heavenly authority. Jesus uses it for His earthly service, coming suffering, and final vindication. A simple dictionary cannot replace those contexts.

The names invite confession. Peter recognizes the Christ, yet immediately struggles with the announcement of suffering. Correct words are a beginning, but disciples must allow Jesus to define the kind of Messiah He is. A title becomes fruitful when it leads to trust and obedience rather than merely a religious label.

Lord Lamb Word and life

Lord expresses Jesus' authority, especially within the apostolic confession of His resurrection and exaltation. Lamb of God directs attention to saving sacrifice, although the biblical image draws on more than one earlier sacrificial and deliverance theme. Word emphasizes revelation and divine identity; image emphasizes that the invisible God is made known through Him.

Revelation speaks of beginning and end within its visions of God's rule and Christ's victory. Identify the speaker in each passage rather than assume every divine declaration is spoken by Jesus in exactly the same narrative setting. His

identity cannot be reduced to a list of impressive names separated from the story of the cross.

Prayer in Jesus' name involves trust in His person and mission. Adding a phrase to a selfish demand is not a guarantee that God must grant it. John places the promise within the disciples' relationship to Jesus, their abiding, and the Father's glory. Teach a younger reader that the name belongs to someone we trust and follow. Teach an adult that confession reaches into loyalty, truthfulness, and the treatment of a neighbor.

Study 1 Jesus and salvation

READ • MATTHEW 1:20–23 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with jesus and salvation. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense The child receives a name connected with saving His people from sins, while Emmanuel announces God's presence.

Interpretation in Scripture The immediate need is larger than national prestige. Matthew introduces rescue from sin before narrating teaching, conflict, and the cross. Read the name through that whole mission rather than a promise of personal success.

Apply it today Confess a wrong you have excused. Explain to a younger reader why forgiveness and a changed life belong to the Savior's work.

Reflect and Respond

What problem does the announced name identify?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 The Messiah confessed

READ • MATTHEW 16:13–23 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the messiah confessed. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Peter confesses Jesus as the Christ and then resists the predicted suffering.

Interpretation in Scripture The passage exposes the difference between recognizing a title and accepting Jesus' mission. His identity includes the path to the cross. Disciples cannot define Messiah only through expectations of visible triumph.

Apply it today Let Scripture correct your preferred picture of Jesus. Do not reject a hard command simply because it conflicts with personal comfort.

Reflect and Respond

What does Peter understand, and what must he still learn?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 The Son who reveals the Father

READ • JOHN 5:19–30 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the son who reveals the father. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus describes His action, life-giving authority, judgment, and relation to the Father.

Interpretation in Scripture The passage joins unity of action with distinction. Dependence in His mission is not presented as rivalry or independent divine power. Honor for the Son belongs within honor for the Father, as the discourse explains.

Apply it today Practice obedience without imagining that humility reduces dignity. Worship the Son in light of His relation to the Father.

Reflect and Respond

How does the passage hold relationship and authority together?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 The Son of Man serves

READ • MARK 10:35–45 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the son of man serves. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense After the disciples seek places of greatness, Jesus teaches service and describes the Son of Man giving His life as a ransom.

Interpretation in Scripture The title is connected here with costly mission. Daniel's authority and the Gospel's suffering are not competing identities. The One worthy of rule serves people who cannot rescue themselves.

Apply it today Accept an unnoticed responsibility. Ask children to identify greatness by service rather than applause.

Reflect and Respond

How does Jesus redefine the ambition expressed by the disciples?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 The Lamb of God

READ • JOHN 1:29–34 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the lamb of god. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense John identifies Jesus as the Lamb who deals with the world's sin and bears witness to His identity.

Interpretation in Scripture The image directs readers toward sacrifice and divine provision. Its significance should be developed through the Gospel's passion and other biblical texts, rather than assuming that one earlier ritual explains every detail.

Apply it today Thank Christ for mercy that reaches beyond your social group. Refuse to restrict His welcome to people who resemble you.

Reflect and Respond

What does John's description say about the need Jesus addresses?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 My Lord and my God

READ • JOHN 20:24–31 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops my lord and my god. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Thomas meets the risen Jesus and responds with a profound confession. John then states his purpose for recording the signs.

Interpretation in Scripture The confession stands within the Gospel's movement from the Word's deity to resurrection faith. The blessing for those who believe

without seeing extends the call beyond the first witnesses; it does not require pretending questions never exist.

Apply it today Bring doubt into honest examination of the apostolic witness. Treat a questioner with patience rather than humiliation.

Reflect and Respond

How does Thomas's encounter serve John's stated purpose?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 Image and fullness

READ • COLOSSIANS 1:15–20; COLOSSIANS 2:6–10 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops image and fullness. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Paul describes the Son's supremacy and the fullness of deity in Christ while urging believers to continue in Him.

Interpretation in Scripture The teaching addresses allegiance and spiritual sufficiency. Knowing Christ does not need supplementing with a supposedly superior mediator. The word image must be read through the passage's claims about creation and reconciliation.

Apply it today Question a teaching that makes secret access more important than Christ. Help a younger believer remain rooted in His word.

Reflect and Respond

What does fullness in Christ imply for spiritual dependence?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Praying in His name

READ • JOHN 14:12–14; JOHN 15:1–8 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops praying in his name. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus connects prayer with His mission, the Father's glory, and the disciples' abiding in Him.

Interpretation in Scripture The promise is not a verbal technique that obligates God to satisfy every wish. Its context forms the desires and purpose of prayer. Jesus' name identifies the relationship through which the disciple asks.

Apply it today Before praying, ask whether your request serves love, obedience, and God's glory. Pray honestly while entrusting the answer to Him.

Reflect and Respond

How does abiding change what a disciple asks?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Learn what the titles reveal about identity and mission. Avoid treating names as magical words or assuming that every biblical title carries exactly the same meaning in every setting.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Lord Jesus, let Your names deepen our trust. Make our confession visible through truthful prayer, humble service, and renewed allegiance.

CHAPTER 7

Jesus in the Four Gospels and the Setting of His Ministry

Context The four Gospels present the same Jesus through distinct selections and emphases. His ministry belongs within Jewish Scripture, worship, festivals, villages, cities, and life under Roman rule.

Purpose and audience Read each Gospel on its own terms before combining accounts. Learn the usefulness and limits of traditional Gospel symbols without confusing them with explicit biblical assignments. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

Matthew 1:1–17; Matthew 28:16–20 Matthew's promised Messiah

Mark 1:1–15; Mark 10:32–45 Mark's serving Son

Luke 4:16–30; Luke 19:1–10 Luke's welcome and mission

John 2:1–11; John 20:30–31 John's signs and life

Luke 2:21–38; John 7:1–14 The Jewish setting

John 4:1–30; Mark 7:24–30 Regions and real encounters

Ezekiel 1:4–14; Revelation 4:1–11 The living creatures

Luke 1:1–4; John 21:24–25 Reading the witnesses together

Doctrinal Exposition

One Lord through four witnesses

Matthew begins with ancestry tied to Abraham and David, develops Jesus' teaching, and ends with authority and mission to the nations. Mark moves rapidly through ministry toward the suffering of the Son of Man. Luke emphasizes God's saving purpose through the lives of people who are often overlooked and connects his Gospel with Acts. John organizes signs and extended conversations to lead readers toward faith and life.

These emphases are not exclusive properties. Mark does not deny kingship, Matthew does not omit service, Luke does not present a merely human Jesus, and John does not remove His humanity. Each narrates the cross and resurrection. Reading one Gospel deeply is more useful than reducing it to a single animal or title.

The ministry's historical setting matters. Jesus attends festivals, teaches in synagogues and the temple, meets tax collectors and religious leaders, and travels through named regions. Roman authority shapes the final trial and execution. We should explain customs only when they illuminate the text, and distinguish a passage's statements from later historical reconstruction.

Four living creatures and responsible symbolism

Ezekiel 1 portrays living creatures with human, lion, ox, and eagle faces within a vision of divine glory. Revelation 4 presents corresponding living-creature imagery around God's throne. Neither passage gives an explicit list assigning those images to the four Gospel writers.

Irenaeus, in Against Heresies III.11.8, uses living-creature imagery to discuss the fourfold Gospel. Later arrangements vary. A familiar illustration links Matthew with royal lion imagery, Mark with the serving ox, Luke with humanity, and John with the eagle's heavenly perspective. Its value is mnemonic; its authority is not equal to the Gospel text.

Use the illustration after studying the actual books. Ask whether it helps a learner remember a genuine emphasis or causes them to ignore contrary evidence. Christ is greater than the symbol. He is king, servant, truly human, and divine across the shared Gospel witness. A child may enjoy the pictures; an adult teacher must explain their status and avoid declaring a fifth face that Ezekiel's passage does not supply.

Study 1 Matthew s promised Messiah

READ • MATTHEW 1:1–17; MATTHEW 28:16–20 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with matthew's promised messiah. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense Matthew opens with Abraham and David and closes with the risen Lord's authority and worldwide commission.

Interpretation in Scripture The beginning and ending connect Israel's promises with mission to the nations. Kingship is a major emphasis, but the king's authority includes teaching, suffering, and service. Read the whole narrative through that movement.

Apply it today Include people beyond familiar boundaries in your teaching. Help young readers connect God's promise with His call to discipleship.

Reflect and Respond

How do the Gospel's opening and ending illuminate each other?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 Mark s serving Son

READ • MARK 1:1–15; MARK 10:32–45 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops mark's serving son. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense Mark introduces the Son of God and later explains the Son of Man's road toward suffering and ransom.

Interpretation in Scripture The rapid narrative does not make the cross an unexpected interruption. Jesus prepares disciples for it repeatedly. Service expresses His mission, while His authority remains evident in teaching and works.

Apply it today Notice someone needing help before seeking recognition. Let children see that power can be used for another person's good.

Reflect and Respond

Why must Mark's miracles be read beside his passion predictions?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 Luke s welcome and mission

READ • LUKE 4:16–30; LUKE 19:1–10 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops luke's welcome and mission. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus announces good news and liberation, then embodies saving welcome in an encounter with Zacchaeus.

Interpretation in Scripture Luke's concern for outsiders does not make repentance unnecessary. Zacchaeus's response shows that mercy changes conduct, including money and restitution. Welcome and transformation belong together.

Apply it today Address an unfair gain or neglected responsibility. Teach generosity without making it a payment that purchases salvation.

Reflect and Respond

What makes the encounter more than a friendly visit?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 John s signs and life

READ • JOHN 2:1–11; JOHN 20:30–31 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops john's signs and life. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The Cana sign reveals glory, and John's closing statement explains his selected signs as a witness leading to belief and life.

Interpretation in Scripture The narrative explicitly describes water becoming wine. The sign should not be denied to protect a preferred lesson. John records purposeful evidence rather than an exhaustive inventory of everything Jesus did.

Apply it today Read the event carefully before applying it. Let the sign direct you to Jesus' identity rather than a promise of luxury.

Reflect and Respond

What does John's stated purpose ask you to notice in a sign?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 The Jewish setting

READ • LUKE 2:21–38; JOHN 7:1–14 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the jewish setting. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus' story is located within Israel's covenant practices, worship, and festivals.

Interpretation in Scripture The Gospel belongs to a particular historical people before it reaches the nations. Christian reading should honor that setting and refuse caricatures of Jewish life. Differences among groups require careful explanation.

Apply it today Speak respectfully about the people through whom Scripture came. Help young readers understand that Jesus' human story has a real cultural setting.

Reflect and Respond

Which details prevent reading the Gospel as an abstract legend?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 Regions and real encounters

READ • JOHN 4:1–30; MARK 7:24–30 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops regions and real encounters. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus crosses regional and social boundaries and meets people whose background affects the conversation.

Interpretation in Scripture Geography and social tension illuminate the encounters, but the people's actual words remain central. Do not reduce either person to a stereotype. Their stories show truth, need, faith, and unexpected welcome.

Apply it today Listen before assuming you understand someone from another background. Ask what their actual concern is.

Reflect and Respond

How does knowing the setting deepen rather than replace attention to the conversation?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 The living creatures

READ • EZEKIEL 1:4–14; REVELATION 4:1–11 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the living creatures. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The passages describe creatures within visions of God's glory and heavenly worship.

Interpretation in Scripture Their original function concerns God's throne, not an inspired chart of Gospel authors. Traditional connections can illustrate later Christian reading, but must be identified as tradition and checked against the Gospel books.

Apply it today Use imaginative teaching aids honestly. Tell a child which part is in the biblical passage and which part is a memory illustration.

Reflect and Respond

How can a symbol be helpful without becoming a claim the text never makes?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Reading the witnesses together

READ • LUKE 1:1–4; JOHN 21:24–25 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops reading the witnesses together. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Luke describes careful transmission and an orderly account. John identifies testimony while acknowledging many unrecorded works.

Interpretation in Scripture The Gospels select and arrange material purposefully. Comparing accounts

requires patience with differing emphases and sequence. Do not invent a complete chronology where the sources do not supply it.

Apply it today Read one whole Gospel before building a combined timeline. Let young readers notice similarities and questions without fear.

Reflect and Respond

What does a selected account accomplish that an exhaustive inventory would not?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Read each Gospel on its own terms before combining accounts. Learn the usefulness and limits of traditional Gospel symbols without confusing them with explicit biblical assignments.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Father, open the Gospel witness to us. Teach us to honor its historical setting and make Your Son known clearly to the coming generation.

CHAPTER 8

Christ in His Offices and Ministry

Context Scripture presents Christ as prophet, priest, and king, and shows His ministry through sending, good news, shepherding, and teaching. Ephesians describes gifts He gives the church for maturity.

Purpose and audience Understand Christ's unique work and the service it produces in His people. Keep the three messianic offices, five ministry aspects, and four creature images distinct. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

Acts 3:19–26 The prophet to whom we listen

Hebrews 4:14–16; Hebrews 7:23–28 The great high priest

Luke 1:30–33; Revelation 19:11–16 The king who endures

Hebrews 3:1–6; John 20:19–23 The sent One

Luke 4:16–21; Mark 1:14–15 Good news for the needy

John 10:11–18; John 13:12–17 Shepherd and teacher

Ephesians 4:7–16 Gifts for growth

1 Peter 2:4–10 A royal priesthood

Doctrinal Exposition

Read: Deuteronomy 18:15–19; Acts 3:22–26; Hebrews 4:14–16; 7:23–28; Revelation 19:11–16.

Christ the Prophet

A prophet speaks God's word faithfully. Moses promised a prophet like himself, and Peter identifies Jesus as the fulfillment of that promise (Acts 3:22–26). Jesus does more than repeat messages received from God. As the incarnate Word, he reveals the Father and speaks with divine authority. His teaching exposes sin, offers forgiveness, and calls people to repentance and faith.

To receive Christ as prophet is to listen to him. Christians cannot claim devotion to Jesus while deliberately setting aside his commands about truth, mercy, marriage, forgiveness, or the treatment of the vulnerable. His voice judges our assumptions and forms our consciences.

Christ the Great High Priest

The Old Testament priest represented the people before God and offered sacrifices according to the covenant. Hebrews presents Jesus as the great high priest who sympathizes with our weakness and has offered himself once for all (Hebrews 4:14–16; 7:27; 10:10–14). His priesthood is enduring because his life is indestructible. He is both the mediator and the sacrifice through which sinners are brought near.

Christ's priesthood brings confidence, not carelessness. We may approach God's throne of grace for mercy and help, yet the same grace teaches us to reject sin. His intercession is not a sign that the Father is reluctant to love us. The Father

himself sent the Son in love, and the Son's priestly work fulfills the united saving purpose of God.

Christ the King

The promised Son of David receives a kingdom that will not end (Luke 1:32–33). The risen Jesus declares that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him (Matthew 28:18). His kingship is revealed through self-giving service, resurrection victory, and the coming judgment. He is not merely a symbol of personal inspiration; he is Lord over the church and the world.

To confess Jesus as King means that our loyalties are reordered. We cannot worship him on Sunday and excuse corruption, cruelty, or dishonesty on Monday. The King's people should practice justice, defend the vulnerable, and honor his commands. His final reign assures us that evil will not have the last word.

The Priesthood of Believers

First Peter 2:5, 9 calls believers a holy and royal priesthood. This does not mean that each Christian replaces Jesus as mediator or possesses the same unique priesthood as the Son. It means that God's people belong to him and are called to offer spiritual sacrifices of praise, obedience, generosity, and service (Romans 12:1; Hebrews 13:15–16). The church's worship is therefore connected to its daily conduct.

The offices of the Messiah

As prophet Christ reveals God's word and makes the Father known. As priest He offers Himself and intercedes for His people. As king He rules with enduring authority. These are perspectives on one saving mission, not three careers He

performs independently. His royal authority never loses the compassion of the priest or the truthfulness of the prophet.

Calvin's Institutes II.15 gives the threefold office a sustained treatment. The scheme helps organize biblical evidence, but the passages must supply its content. Hebrews develops priesthood in detail; Acts applies the prophet-like-Moses promise; Luke and Revelation speak of His kingship. No scheme should make another biblical title unnecessary.

The believer's response follows the office. We listen to His word, approach God through His mediation, and submit our loyalties to His rule. A church that praises Christ as king but tolerates corruption has separated confession from obedience. A church that teaches His priesthood but frightens people into buying access to God has obscured the very work it claims to honor.

Ministry that equips rather than controls

Hebrews explicitly calls Jesus Apostle, meaning the sent One. The Gospels show His prophetic ministry, proclamation of good news, pastoral care, and authoritative teaching. Describing these five aspects helps us see the range of His service. It does not require claiming that every later church office is an exact duplicate of His unique identity.

Ephesians 4:11–16 explains gifts in terms of equipping, unity, mature knowledge, and growth in love. The sentence includes a close relationship between pastors and teachers. Christians differ about the continuation and ordering of the gifts; all should attend to the purpose. A title that makes people dependent on a leader's private authority rather than mature in Christ contradicts that purpose.

Young believers should learn to recognize service before collecting titles. Mature leaders should ask whether the congregation is growing in discernment and responsibility. Christ's authority produces a body whose members contribute faithfully. It should not be used to shield a leader from correction, isolate vulnerable people, or demand unquestioning loyalty to a human personality.

Study 1 The prophet to whom we listen

READ • ACTS 3:19–26 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with the prophet to whom we listen. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Peter identifies Jesus with Moses' promised prophet and calls hearers to repentance and blessing.

Interpretation in Scripture Prophetic authority is joined to the covenant's saving purpose. Jesus is not simply another voice among equally binding private revelations. Listening to Him means responding to His disclosed will.

Apply it today Compare a claimed message with Christ's teaching. Help a child ask what Jesus actually commands before obeying a dramatic speaker.

Reflect and Respond

What does Peter connect with hearing the prophet?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 The great high priest

READ • HEBREWS 4:14–16; HEBREWS 7:23–28 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the great high priest. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus' enduring priesthood brings help, intercession, and confidence to draw near.

Interpretation in Scripture The contrast with mortal priests concerns permanence and sufficiency. The invitation is not permission for carelessness; mercy supports faithful endurance. No human ministry can replace His unique mediating work.

Apply it today Bring guilt and weakness honestly to God. Encourage someone afraid they must earn a leader's permission to seek Christ.

Reflect and Respond

How does His continuing priesthood strengthen assurance?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 The king who endures

READ • LUKE 1:30–33; REVELATION 19:11–16 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the king who endures. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus is promised David's throne and portrayed as a righteous ruler whose authority exceeds earthly kings.

Interpretation in Scripture His rule includes justice as well as power. Revelation's imagery belongs to a vision of final vindication; it does not commission private violence. Royal confession must be read with His self-giving Gospel mission.

Apply it today Refuse dishonest conduct even when powerful people reward it. Teach allegiance to Christ through ordinary integrity.

Reflect and Respond

What kind of authority does Scripture attribute to the king?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 The sent One

READ • HEBREWS 3:1–6; JOHN 20:19–23 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the sent one. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Hebrews calls Jesus Apostle and high priest. The risen Lord sends disciples in relation to His own sending.

Interpretation in Scripture His mission is foundational; their mission depends on Him. Being sent does not create

independent spiritual authority. The disciples carry witness to the Lord whose work they receive.

Apply it today Accept a responsibility to serve without making it a claim to superiority. Ask young readers where truthful witness is needed.

Reflect and Respond

How does Jesus' sending shape the disciples' commission?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 Good news for the needy

READ • LUKE 4:16–21; MARK 1:14–15 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops good news for the needy. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus announces the kingdom and identifies His ministry with good news, release, and God's favor.

Interpretation in Scripture His evangelistic mission is explicit even where the later title evangelist is not applied to Him. Gospel proclamation includes God's action and a call to repentance, with concrete concern for suffering people.

Apply it today Share Christ's message and offer practical help without treating the person as a project.

Reflect and Respond

What should be present when a church announces good news?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 Shepherd and teacher

READ • JOHN 10:11–18; JOHN 13:12–17 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops shepherd and teacher. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus lays down His life as shepherd and teaches service after washing the disciples' feet.

Interpretation in Scripture Knowledge and authority are embodied in care. A teacher may speak correctly while failing to model the lesson. Jesus joins instruction with an example that challenges status-seeking ministry.

Apply it today Do an ordinary task you normally leave to someone lower in status. Teach through action as well as words.

Reflect and Respond

How does the example qualify the use of a teaching title?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 Gifts for growth

READ • EPHESIANS 4:7–16 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops gifts for growth. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Christ gives ministries so the body grows toward unity, maturity, stability, and love.

Interpretation in Scripture The passage's goal controls the meaning of its ministry list. Pastoral and teaching functions are closely related, and traditions explain their ordering differently. The shared test is whether people grow into Christ.

Apply it today Ask whether your teaching helps listeners understand Scripture for themselves. Give a younger believer a responsible contribution.

Reflect and Respond

What marks maturity in this passage?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 A royal priesthood

READ • 1 PETER 2:4–10 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops a royal priesthood. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Believers come to the living stone and are described as a holy people who offer spiritual sacrifices and declare God's praise.

Interpretation in Scripture Shared priesthood depends on Christ rather than competing with Him. The language forms communal identity and witness; it does not make every believer a replacement mediator. Holiness and service belong together.

Apply it today Offer a practical act of mercy as grateful service. Help children see belonging as a call to care for others.

Reflect and Respond

How does received mercy shape the community's vocation?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Understand Christ's unique work and the service it produces in His people. Keep the three messianic offices, five ministry aspects, and four creature images distinct.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Chief Shepherd, form leaders who protect and equip Your people. Keep our ministry accountable to Your word and shaped by Your service.

CHAPTER 9

The Kingdom and the Teachings of Jesus

Context Jesus announces God's kingdom and teaches its character through direct instruction, parables, questions, and encounters. His hearers include disciples, crowds, opponents, and people seeking help.

Purpose and audience Learn to interpret His teaching within its audience and purpose. The kingdom calls for repentance, trust, service, and hope while awaiting its full manifestation. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

Mark 1:14–20 The kingdom has drawn near

Matthew 5:1–12 Blessed in God's kingdom

Matthew 5:38–48 Love for enemies

Matthew 6:5–15 Prayer before the Father

Matthew 6:19–34 Treasure and anxiety

Luke 10:25–37 A neighbor shown by mercy

Luke 15:1–32 The lost and the welcoming Father

Matthew 25:14–30 Readiness expressed through faithfulness

Doctrinal Exposition

Read: Mark 1:14–15; 2:1–12; 4:35–41; Luke 4:16–21; John 9; 20:30–31.

The Kingdom Is at Hand

Jesus began his public ministry by announcing the good news of God's kingdom and calling people to repent and believe (Mark 1:14–15). The kingdom is God's reign breaking into human life through the Messiah. It cannot be reduced to political control, financial success, or religious buildings. It is displayed in the King's authority, mercy, righteousness, and victory over evil.

The ministry of Jesus fulfills the prophetic expectation of good news for the poor, liberty for the oppressed, and comfort for the brokenhearted (Isaiah 61:1–3; Luke 4:16–21). He welcomes those rejected by society while confronting hypocrisy among religious leaders. His compassion and holiness belong together. The same Lord who eats with sinners calls them to a changed life.

The Words and Example of Jesus

Jesus teaches through parables, questions, prophetic warnings, and personal conversations. He reveals the Father's heart, exposes hypocrisy, calls for forgiveness, and sends disciples to proclaim the gospel. His own life models dependence on the Father, faithfulness in temptation, and obedience even when costly. Discipleship therefore involves more than admiring his miracles. It requires learning his teaching and practicing it in family, work, community, and church.

God s reign and the disciple s life

The kingdom concerns God's rule made present in Jesus' mission. It is more than a territory or a human institution. His works and proclamation reveal its arrival, while His teaching also directs people toward future judgment and fulfillment. The present and future belong together.

The Sermon on the Mount describes a people whose life is shaped by their Father. Mercy, truth, purity of heart, love for enemies, and prayer are concrete features of discipleship. These commands cannot be reduced to private feelings. They reach speech, money, retaliation, marriage, and the use of power.

The disciple does not earn salvation through a flawless record of sermon obedience. Yet receiving grace must not become an excuse to dismiss the commands. Faith learns a new allegiance. A child who tells the truth at cost and an adult who refuses revenge are practicing the same kingdom ethic in different circumstances.

Parables that address the hearer

A parable makes a point through a story or comparison. Its details matter, but not every detail represents a separate hidden doctrine. Begin with the question or situation that prompts it. Luke 10's Samaritan story answers a discussion about neighbor-love; Luke 15's lost stories respond to criticism of Jesus' welcome.

Some stories surprise the hearer by reversing expectations. The person assumed to be an outsider may model mercy, while the person with respected status fails. These reversals expose pride and invite repentance. They should not be turned into stereotypes condemning a whole people.

Jesus' teaching also includes warnings about wealth, anxiety, prayer, and readiness. Each must be heard beside the Father's care and the call to responsibility. Trust does not authorize laziness. Forgiveness does not prohibit protecting a victim. Generosity is not a commercial bargain with God. A teacher serves readers well by making both the promise and the moral demand clear in their proper context.

Study 1 The kingdom has drawn near

READ • MARK 1:14–20 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with the kingdom has drawn near. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus announces good news, calls for repentance and belief, and summons disciples to follow.

Interpretation in Scripture The announcement concerns God's action in His mission. Repentance responds to that gift; it is not merely an attempt to escape punishment. Following changes the hearer's allegiance and direction.

Apply it today Identify one habit inconsistent with trust in Christ. Invite a young reader to describe following Him through a daily choice.

Reflect and Respond

What response does the kingdom announcement require?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 Blessed in God s kingdom

READ • MATTHEW 5:1–12 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops blessed in god's kingdom. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus names the blessedness of people marked by humility, mercy, purity, peacemaking, and endurance.

Interpretation in Scripture Blessing is not equated with constant comfort or public success. The beatitudes place present circumstances within God's promise. They do not glorify harm or require a victim to remain unprotected.

Apply it today Practice mercy toward someone easy to dismiss. Let a child see peacemaking through truthful, patient action.

Reflect and Respond

Which description challenges your usual idea of a successful life?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 Love for enemies

READ • MATTHEW 5:38–48 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops love for enemies. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus challenges retaliation and commands love beyond one's friendly circle.

Interpretation in Scripture His commands reveal the Father's generous care and confront selective love. They do not erase justice or sensible protection. Refusing revenge and seeking accountability can belong to the same faithful response.

Apply it today Pray for a difficult person without denying the truth of their conduct. Choose an action that does not feed hatred.

Reflect and Respond

How can you love an enemy while refusing to enable harm?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 Prayer before the Father

READ • MATTHEW 6:5–15 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops prayer before the father. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus teaches prayer that honors the Father, seeks His kingdom, asks for provision, and receives and extends forgiveness.

Interpretation in Scripture The prayer directs attention from performance toward relationship. Daily needs and moral responsibility are included. It is not a formula whose exact sound forces an answer.

Apply it today Pray slowly through one request and name the practical response it asks of you. Help a child pray in honest language.

Reflect and Respond

What does the prayer teach about our dependence and responsibilities?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 Treasure and anxiety

READ • MATTHEW 6:19–34 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops treasure and anxiety. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus challenges divided allegiance to wealth and calls disciples to trust the Father's care.

Interpretation in Scripture The passage addresses loyalty and worry, not a ban on planning or work. Seeking the kingdom gives possessions their proper place. Anxiety may

require care and support; it should not be used as a reason to shame someone.

Apply it today Review one financial choice and one worry with a trusted person. Share rather than hoard what you can responsibly give.

Reflect and Respond

What would seeking the kingdom first change in your priorities?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 A neighbor shown by mercy

READ • LUKE 10:25–37 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops a neighbor shown by mercy. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense A legal discussion about neighbor-love leads to a story in which an unexpected traveler provides costly care.

Interpretation in Scripture The story shifts the question from defining whom to exclude toward becoming a neighbor. Its social contrast sharpens the challenge; it does not make every member of a religious group cruel.

Apply it today Offer help across a boundary of background or reputation. Let children name concrete needs before labels.

Reflect and Respond

How does the Samaritan answer the question Jesus is asked?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 The lost and the welcoming Father

READ • LUKE 15:1–32 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the lost and the welcoming father. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus responds to criticism of His welcome through stories of loss, seeking, joy, and strained family relationships.

Interpretation in Scripture The younger son's return and elder son's resentment both matter. Grace challenges rebellion and self-righteous refusal of mercy. The ending invites hearers to decide whether they will join the Father's joy.

Apply it today Welcome a repentant person without pretending their choices had no consequences. Examine resentment toward mercy given to another.

Reflect and Respond

Which brother's response most exposes your present attitude?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Readiness expressed through faithfulness

READ • MATTHEW 25:14–30 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops readiness expressed through faithfulness. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Servants respond differently to entrusted responsibility while awaiting their master's return.

Interpretation in Scripture The parable concerns faithful stewardship and accountability. It should not be reduced to a guarantee that every investment succeeds. Read the warning within Jesus' teaching on readiness and judgment.

Apply it today Use a real ability responsibly instead of hiding behind fear. Help a young reader identify one entrusted task.

Reflect and Respond

What does faithful readiness look like before the master returns?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Learn to interpret His teaching within its audience and purpose. The kingdom calls for repentance, trust, service, and hope while awaiting its full manifestation.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Our Father, let Your kingdom shape our choices. Teach us to pray, forgive, speak truth, and love the neighbor before us.

CHAPTER 10

His Compassion Miracles Healings and Deliverance

Context Jesus' miracles occur within encounters involving illness, hunger, fear, exclusion, and oppression. The Gospel writers present them as acts of compassion and signs of His authority.

Purpose and audience See the people as well as the power. Distinguish illness, demonic oppression, and moral guilt rather than treating them as interchangeable. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

Mark 1:40–45 Mercy toward a leper

Mark 2:1–12 Forgiveness and the paralytic

Mark 5:21–34 A woman heard and restored

John 9:1–12; John 9:24–38 Sight without blame

Mark 5:1–20 Deliverance and restored community

Mark 4:35–41 Peace in the storm

Matthew 14:13–21; John 6:1–15 Food and the gathered crowd

John 11:28–44 Life at the tomb

Doctrinal Exposition

What Miracles Reveal

A biblical miracle is an extraordinary act of God that reveals his power and purpose. Jesus heals disease, restores sight, stills storms, feeds crowds, casts out demons, and raises the dead. These signs are not tricks designed to attract applause. They testify to his identity and the arrival of God's saving reign (John 20:30–31). In Mark 2:1–12, the healing of the paralyzed man accompanies Jesus' declaration of forgiveness, linking visible restoration with his authority over sin.

Not every illness is the direct result of a person's particular sin. Jesus rejects that simplistic conclusion in John 9:1–3. The church must therefore approach the sick with compassion rather than accusation. We may pray for healing, provide practical care, and seek medical help without treating suffering as proof of spiritual failure.

Signs Faith and Discernment

Jesus' miracles call forth faith, but the Gospels also warn against seeking wonders while resisting his teaching (John 6:26–29). A sign points beyond itself to the Savior. Christian ministry becomes distorted when the miracle worker receives more attention than Christ, or when people are promised outcomes that Scripture has not guaranteed.

Believers may pray boldly because God is powerful and compassionate. Yet prayer is not a technique for controlling God. We ask according to his will, serve with humility, and refuse to exploit vulnerable people. A church should be recognized not only by claims of supernatural power but

also by truth, love, holiness, justice, and care for those in need.

Power that attends to persons

Jesus' works do not turn needy people into props. He listens, touches, speaks, restores, and sometimes sends the healed person back into ordinary responsibility. A blind man has a name and a voice; a grieving mother has a real loss. Compassion is part of the revelation, not an optional emotion attached to a demonstration.

The miracles contribute to the Gospel's witness, but miraculous activity by itself is not proof that a person is divine. Scripture also describes miracles through prophets and apostles. The whole portrait of Jesus includes His identity, teaching, creation texts, death, resurrection, and worship. A church should therefore test spiritual claims rather than assume every extraordinary event authenticates every message.

John 9 rejects an automatic link between a particular illness and personal wrongdoing. The Gospels distinguish different needs and responses. Modern ministry must not diagnose every sickness as a demon or every continuing disability as failed faith. Prayer should be joined with compassion, appropriate care, and respect for the person.

Signs faith and continuing suffering

A sign directs attention beyond itself. Jesus' feeding of the crowd is followed by teaching that challenges those who pursue only another meal. Lazarus's raising reveals resurrection hope while Jesus still weeps. Faith receives His

identity and word rather than trying to turn Him into a supplier controlled by demand.

The return of Jairus's daughter, the widow's son, and Lazarus to mortal life differs from Jesus' resurrection into death-conquering life. Their stories point toward His authority; they do not imply that they never faced death again. This distinction helps keep Christian hope bodily and truthful.

Believers may pray boldly for healing and deliverance. They must also accompany people who remain ill, grieve, or struggle. The promised future includes resurrection and the removal of death; those blessings are not fully possessed in the present. A faithful church does not abandon someone because the outcome fails to match its expectations. It bears witness to Christ through patient presence, care, and hope.

Study 1 Mercy toward a leper

READ • MARK 1:40–45 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with mercy toward a leper. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense A man asks Jesus for cleansing, and Jesus responds with healing and instructions for restored participation.

Interpretation in Scripture The encounter joins compassion with concern for the person's social and worship life. Jesus' instructions matter even when the crowd prefers publicity. The account does not present the healed man as a marketing tool.

Apply it today Care for someone whose condition has isolated them. Ask how help can restore dignity as well as relieve symptoms.

Reflect and Respond

What would complete care involve for this man?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 Forgiveness and the paralytic

READ • MARK 2:1–12 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops forgiveness and the paralytic. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Friends bring a man to Jesus, who announces forgiveness and heals amid a dispute about authority.

Interpretation in Scripture The visible healing confirms a claim concerning the Son of Man. The passage does not teach that all paralysis results from personal sin. The friends' persistence serves a person's need rather than their own reputation.

Apply it today Help someone overcome a practical barrier to care. Refuse simplistic blame when you do not know the cause of suffering.

Reflect and Respond

What authority is the healing meant to reveal?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 A woman heard and restored

READ • MARK 5:21–34 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops a woman heard and restored. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense A woman with prolonged illness reaches for Jesus and receives healing and personal acknowledgment.

Interpretation in Scripture Her story is placed within another urgent need, showing attention to one person amid pressure. Jesus brings her from hidden fear into recognized dignity. Faith is reliance on Him, not the inherent magic of His clothing.

Apply it today Listen to someone whose need has been dismissed for a long time. Help younger readers see that crowds do not erase individual worth.

Reflect and Respond

Why does Jesus' attention to her matter beyond the physical change?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 Sight without blame

READ • JOHN 9:1–12; JOHN 9:24–38 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops sight without blame. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus refuses a simple blame explanation for a man's blindness, heals him, and later meets him amid rejection.

Interpretation in Scripture The story develops both physical sight and spiritual response. Religious certainty can coexist with refusal to recognize God's work. The man's voice and growth in understanding are essential to the account.

Apply it today Stop a careless accusation about someone's disability. Support both practical access and respectful inclusion.

Reflect and Respond

Who sees more clearly as the narrative develops?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 Deliverance and restored community

READ • MARK 5:1–20 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops deliverance and restored community. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus encounters a severely oppressed man, brings restoration, and commissions him to tell what the Lord has done.

Interpretation in Scripture The story concerns more than spectacular conflict. The restored man is able to belong and bear witness. Its difficult details should not be turned into a universal diagnostic rule for mental illness.

Apply it today Protect vulnerable people from humiliation in ministry. Seek care that restores dignity and responsible participation.

Reflect and Respond

What signs of restored life does Mark emphasize?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 Peace in the storm

READ • MARK 4:35–41 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops peace in the storm. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The disciples fear a storm, and Jesus stills it before challenging their fear and questioning trust.

Interpretation in Scripture The closing question directs attention to His identity. The account does not promise that believers will never face danger. It invites trust in the Lord who is present amid what they cannot control.

Apply it today Bring fear honestly into prayer and take responsible protective action. Teach courage without mocking anxiety.

Reflect and Respond

What does the disciples' final question ask you to consider?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 Food and the gathered crowd

READ • MATTHEW 14:13–21; JOHN 6:1–15 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops food and the gathered crowd. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus feeds a large crowd through a small provision. Matthew specifies five thousand men besides women and children.

Interpretation in Scripture The event displays compassion and provision while pointing toward His identity. John records resistance to making Him a king according to the crowd's agenda. Need is met without surrendering His mission.

Apply it today Share what you can responsibly offer. Help a child see generosity as participation in care rather than an attempt to control God.

Reflect and Respond

What does Jesus give, and what expectation does He refuse?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Life at the tomb

READ • JOHN 11:28–44 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops life at the tomb. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus enters the grief surrounding Lazarus's death, weeps, and calls him from the tomb.

Interpretation in Scripture The miracle reveals His authority over death without denying sorrow. Lazarus returns to mortal life; Jesus' own resurrection will establish the fuller victory. The scene calls people to trust while honoring loss.

Apply it today Sit patiently with someone grieving. Speak hope without demanding that they stop mourning.

Reflect and Respond

How do Jesus' tears and command belong within the same revelation?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching See the people as well as the power. Distinguish illness, demonic oppression, and moral guilt rather than treating them as interchangeable.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Compassionate Lord, help us care for suffering people without blame. Give us boldness to pray and patience to serve while we await full restoration.

CHAPTER 11

The Bread of Life and the Light of the World

Context John's bread discourse follows the feeding sign. His light sayings belong to disputes about identity, testimony, and spiritual sight. The metaphors explain what Jesus gives and who He is.

Purpose and audience Understand lasting nourishment and divine illumination through the whole passages. Let the images lead to faith and following rather than material ambition or contempt for others. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

John 6:22–29 Beyond the next meal

John 6:30–35; Exodus 16:13–18 Manna and the greater gift

John 6:36–40 The Father's care and receiving the Son

John 6:41–51 Giving His flesh for life

John 6:52–59 Eating drinking and dependence

John 6:60–71 The words of eternal life

John 8:12–20 Following the light

John 9:35–41 Sight and acknowledged need

Doctrinal Exposition

1 I Am the Bread of Life John 6 35

Bread sustains physical life, but no meal can satisfy the deepest hunger of the soul. Jesus presents himself as the one who gives lasting life. The wilderness manna prepared Israel to understand dependence on God's provision; Jesus reveals the greater provision. Believers feed upon Christ through faith, receiving his word and relying upon his saving work rather than treating religion as a competition of achievements.

2 I Am the Light of the World John 8 12

Light makes sight and direction possible. Jesus exposes darkness, reveals truth, and calls people to follow him. The saying does not encourage Christians to despise people outside the church. It sends them into the world as humble witnesses of the light. A truthful life, marked by justice and mercy, should make the gospel visible.

The bread that gives life

Bread answers bodily hunger, but another meal is soon needed. Jesus uses that familiar need to explain a gift that reaches deeper. Coming to Him and believing in Him are joined to His promise of life. The crowd's search for repeated provision becomes the setting for a challenge about what they truly seek.

The discourse recalls wilderness manna. Jesus does not dismiss God's earlier care; He identifies the greater gift. His giving of His flesh for the world's life moves attention toward costly saving work. The bread is not merely

information to be mastered but the person and mission to be received.

Christians interpret the later eating and drinking language differently. Some stress sacramental participation, others the vivid description of receiving Christ through faith, and some bring these together. John 6:35, 51–58, and 63 should be studied together. A responsible explanation must preserve the passage's call to dependence on Jesus and its refusal to make material satisfaction the whole purpose.

The light that exposes and guides

Jesus' light saying reveals the source of true direction. Light enables seeing, exposes what darkness hides, and makes following possible. John's Gospel uses light from its opening, and the healing in chapter 9 develops sight and blindness through a concrete human story.

Spiritual blindness is not simply lack of education. People can possess religious knowledge and still refuse the testimony before them. The light may expose treasured prejudice or a comfortable falsehood. Following therefore includes willingness to be corrected, not merely agreeing that Jesus is an inspiring figure.

A young reader may understand light through the difference between a safe path and a hidden obstacle. An adult should go further: Christ reveals the Father, discloses sin, and calls us toward truthfulness. Christians who confess His light must not justify deception to protect their reputation. They should also resist treating outsiders as worthless people. The light summons humble witness, practical love, and honest self-examination.

Study 1 Beyond the next meal

READ • JOHN 6:22–29 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with beyond the next meal. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus challenges a crowd whose search follows the feeding and directs them toward the lasting gift He gives.

Interpretation in Scripture The issue is the purpose of seeking Him. Physical hunger is real, yet the sign calls for faith rather than treating Jesus as a provider to control. God's work is received through trusting the sent One.

Apply it today Ask what you mainly seek from Christ. Share food while also making room for His word and saving mission.

Reflect and Respond

How can a good desire become too small for what Jesus offers?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 Manna and the greater gift

READ • JOHN 6:30–35; EXODUS 16:13–18 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops manna and the greater gift. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The crowd recalls manna, and Jesus directs attention to the Father's true bread that gives life.

Interpretation in Scripture The comparison honors God's earlier provision while identifying a greater fulfillment. Jesus names Himself as the bread, joining coming and believing with satisfaction. The image concerns personal dependence.

Apply it today Thank God for today's provision and read a Gospel passage before making another request. Help a child connect gratitude with trust.

Reflect and Respond

How does Jesus move from a gift to His own identity?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 The Father s care and receiving the Son

READ • JOHN 6:36–40 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the father's care and receiving the son. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus speaks of those who come to Him, His mission to do the Father's will, and His promise of resurrection.

Interpretation in Scripture The passage provides assurance rooted in the Father's purpose and the Son's faithful work. Christians debate how its language relates to human response; no reading should remove the call to believe or the comfort offered to those who come.

Apply it today Bring fear of rejection to Christ. Teach assurance through His faithfulness rather than through perfect emotional certainty.

Reflect and Respond

What promise is offered to a person who comes to Him?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 Giving His flesh for life

READ • JOHN 6:41–51 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops giving his flesh for life. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense Jesus identifies Himself as living bread and connects the gift with His flesh given for the world's life.

Interpretation in Scripture The discourse moves toward His self-giving mission. The metaphor cannot be reduced to receiving better advice. Read it beside the Gospel's passion and its invitation to faith.

Apply it today Receive salvation gratefully and practice costly love. Explain to a younger reader that Christ gives Himself, not merely a lesson.

Reflect and Respond

What does the giving language reveal about the cost of life?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 Eating drinking and dependence

READ • JOHN 6:52–59 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops eating drinking and dependence. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus intensifies the bread image through eating and drinking language associated with life and abiding.

Interpretation in Scripture Christian traditions relate these words to faith and the Lord's Supper in differing ways. Begin with the whole discourse and identify their shared emphasis on receiving the Savior's self-giving work. Avoid attributing a position to all Christians.

Apply it today Discuss the passage respectfully with someone from another tradition. Let its central invitation form dependence before dispute.

Reflect and Respond

What must every faithful interpretation explain about receiving life?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 The words of eternal life

READ • JOHN 6:60–71 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the words of eternal life. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Some followers withdraw, while Peter confesses that Jesus has the words of eternal life.

Interpretation in Scripture The response shows that difficult teaching tests allegiance. Peter's confession does not mean he understands everything; he recognizes where life is found. The warning about betrayal prevents equating physical closeness with faithful discipleship.

Apply it today Stay with careful study when a passage is difficult. Ask for help instead of replacing the text with a convenient slogan.

Reflect and Respond

What grounds Peter's decision to remain?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 Following the light

READ • JOHN 8:12–20 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops following the light. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus promises light to those who follow and responds to questions concerning His testimony and the Father.

Interpretation in Scripture The saying concerns revelation and discipleship, not an independent brightness possessed by a religious elite. Following keeps the disciple related to the One who reveals God. Read the testimony discussion rather than isolating the metaphor.

Apply it today Tell the truth where concealment would protect your image. Help a child identify a choice illuminated by Jesus' teaching.

Reflect and Respond

What relationship does Jesus place between light and following?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Sight and acknowledged need

READ • JOHN 9:35–41 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops sight and acknowledged need. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus meets the healed man, who responds in worship, and addresses the blindness of those claiming certainty.

Interpretation in Scripture The narrative contrasts receptive faith with resistant confidence. Admitting need opens the possibility of learning, while denial can preserve blindness. Physical disability is not the moral failure the passage exposes.

Apply it today Ask where certainty has made you unwilling to listen. Include people whose voices your community usually discounts.

Reflect and Respond

Who acknowledges need, and who refuses it?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Understand lasting nourishment and divine illumination through the whole passages. Let the images lead to faith and following rather than material ambition or contempt for others.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Bread of life and light of the world, nourish our faith and expose what we need to change. Teach us to follow You with honesty.

CHAPTER 12

The Door and the Good Shepherd

Context John 10 follows the healing and exclusion of the man in chapter 9. Jesus' shepherd imagery speaks into questions of belonging, leadership, safety, and saving access.

Purpose and audience Explain the door and shepherd sayings together. Christ's care should form leaders who protect people rather than replace Him with their own control. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

John 9:24–38 A man excluded and found

John 10:1–6 The voice of the shepherd

John 10:7–10 The door of the sheep

John 10:11–15 Life given for the flock

John 10:16–18 One flock gathered

John 10:22–30 Hearing following and security

Ezekiel 34:1–16 Shepherding the weak

1 Peter 5:1–7 The chief shepherd and human leaders

Doctrinal Exposition

3 I Am the Door John 10 7 9

A door provides entry and safety. In the shepherd discourse, Jesus identifies himself as the way into the security of his flock. The image is personal: salvation is not an impersonal technique or a secret code. We enter through Christ. Those who care for God's people must never replace the Shepherd with their own control.

4 I Am the Good Shepherd John 10 11 18

A good shepherd knows and protects the sheep and is willing to give his life for them. Jesus contrasts faithful care with hired leadership that abandons the vulnerable. His example corrects harsh, exploitative, and self-serving ministry. Pastors, parents, and leaders should ask whether their authority is used to protect and nourish people or to secure status for themselves.

The saving door

Jesus names Himself the door of the sheep. The immediate picture is a flock's access to care and pasture. Verse 9 connects entry through Him with salvation. Calling Him a gate to heavenly fellowship may express a broader theological application, but “gate of heaven” is not His exact wording in this passage.

The image is personal. A door supplies entry; Jesus provides access through His own person and saving mission. Religious systems, human leaders, or secret techniques cannot become substitutes. The metaphor should be read beside His declaration that He brings people to the Father.

The preceding chapter makes the image sharper. A healed man faces exclusion by authorities, and Jesus receives him. True belonging is therefore not exhausted by a human verdict. This does not make communal life unnecessary; it locates its center in Christ. A church should help people enter His care rather than use fear to make them dependent on its leaders.

The shepherd s knowledge and sacrifice

The good shepherd knows His sheep and lays down His life for them. Knowing is relational care, not merely possessing their names. His death is willing and purposeful. The comparison with a hired worker exposes leadership that disappears when protection becomes costly.

Ezekiel 34 condemns shepherds who feed themselves and neglect the weak. Jesus' discourse fulfills that horizon of faithful care. His authority has moral shape: He gathers, protects, and gives Himself. A leader who demands obedience while exploiting the flock contradicts that pattern.

The promise of secure care must be read with the call to hear and follow. Christian traditions debate how to describe perseverance and assurance, but neither comfort nor responsibility may be deleted. Young readers need confidence that Jesus knows them. Older readers need the same assurance joined to discernment about whom they permit to lead them. Healthy ministry points steadily beyond the leader to the Shepherd.

Study 1 A man excluded and found

READ • JOHN 9:24–38 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with a man excluded and found. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Religious authorities reject the healed man's testimony, while Jesus seeks him and leads him toward faith.

Interpretation in Scripture The encounter prepares the shepherd discourse. Human exclusion does not settle a person's relation to Christ. The passage exposes leadership that values control above truth without condemning all religious leadership.

Apply it today Listen to a person dismissed because their testimony is inconvenient. Seek truth before defending institutional reputation.

Reflect and Respond

How does Jesus' response prepare you to read John 10?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 The voice of the shepherd

READ • JOHN 10:1–6 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the voice of the shepherd. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus describes a shepherd whose sheep recognize his voice and contrasts him with strangers.

Interpretation in Scripture The image introduces legitimate care and receptive relationship. It is not an instruction to treat every private impression as an unquestionable divine voice. The Gospel's witness gives substance to knowing Jesus.

Apply it today Learn His teaching through regular reading. Encourage a child to compare claimed guidance with His words and character.

Reflect and Respond

What makes recognition different from unquestioning obedience to a human speaker?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 The door of the sheep

READ • JOHN 10:7–10 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the door of the sheep. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus identifies Himself as the door and associates entry through Him with salvation, freedom of movement, and pasture.

Interpretation in Scripture The flock imagery explains access and care. Its promise is not a guarantee of wealth or ease. Life in its fullness should be read through the Gospel's account of knowing the Father and Son.

Apply it today Seek Christ directly in prayer. Refuse an offer of paid or secret access that claims to surpass Him.

Reflect and Respond

What does the door provide within the actual image?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 Life given for the flock

READ • JOHN 10:11–15 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops life given for the flock. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The good shepherd lays down His life, while the hired worker abandons the flock under threat.

Interpretation in Scripture The contrast defines care through costly faithfulness. Jesus' sacrifice is unique, but His example shapes leadership. Protection of the vulnerable is a clearer sign of pastoral faithfulness than prestige.

Apply it today Accept a responsibility that protects someone else at cost to your comfort. Ask children what a faithful caregiver does when trouble comes.

Reflect and Respond

How is the shepherd's goodness made visible?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 One flock gathered

READ • JOHN 10:16–18 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops one flock gathered. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus speaks of other sheep, one flock, His willing self-offering, and authority to take up His life.

Interpretation in Scripture The passage opens a horizon beyond the immediate group while maintaining one shepherd. It should not be used to declare every religious claim equally true. Gathering centers on hearing and belonging to Jesus.

Apply it today Welcome a believer from a background unlike your own. Let unity grow around Christ rather than a demand for social sameness.

Reflect and Respond

What makes the gathered people one?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 Hearing following and security

READ • JOHN 10:22–30 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops hearing following and security. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus describes His sheep as hearing and following, and speaks of their security in His and the Father's care.

Interpretation in Scripture The promise supplies assurance within relationship. Debate about perseverance should not obscure either His strong protection or the description of discipleship. Read the whole exchange concerning His identity.

Apply it today Bring insecurity to His faithful care and continue in ordinary obedience. Teach comfort without careless presumption.

Reflect and Respond

What does the passage say about the sheep and the Shepherd?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 Shepherding the weak

READ • EZEKIEL 34:1–16 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops shepherding the weak. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense God condemns shepherds who fail the weak and promises searching, gathering, and healing care.

Interpretation in Scripture The prophetic indictment clarifies the moral stakes of John 10. Leadership is entrusted for another's welfare. It cannot be justified merely by a title or a claim to spiritual privilege.

Apply it today Ask whose need is missing from your community's decisions. Protect a child or vulnerable adult from coercive demands.

Reflect and Respond

Which failures of care does the prophecy name?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 The chief shepherd and human leaders

READ • 1 PETER 5:1–7 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the chief shepherd and human leaders. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Elders are told to shepherd willingly, avoid domination, and look toward the chief Shepherd's appearing.

Interpretation in Scripture The passage applies Christ's pattern to communal leadership. It joins humility, accountability, and care rather than unquestionable control. Younger believers and elders share dependence on God's grace.

Apply it today Invite correction about your use of authority. Teach a younger believer that faithful leadership can be tested by Scripture.

Reflect and Respond

What behavior distinguishes shepherding from domination?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Explain the door and shepherd sayings together. Christ's care should form leaders who protect people rather than replace Him with their own control.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Good Shepherd, teach us to hear and follow You. Protect the vulnerable and make our communities places of truthful care.

CHAPTER 13

The Resurrection the Way the Truth and the Life

Context John 11 meets Jesus amid grief over Lazarus. John 14 meets Him in farewell teaching before the cross. Both settings turn ordinary need toward His identity as the source of life and access.

Purpose and audience Explain resurrection and life, then give way, truth, and life their own attention. Preserve hope without denying grief or reducing Jesus to an abstract route. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

John 11:1–16 Faith in the midst of delay

John 11:17–27 Martha's confession

John 11:28–37 The Lord who weeps

John 11:38–44 The voice that calls to life

John 14:1–5 The troubled disciples

John 14:6–7; Hebrews 10:19–22 Jesus as the way

John 14:8–11; John 18:33–38 Jesus as the truth

John 5:24–29; John 17:1–3 Jesus as the life

Doctrinal Exposition

5 I Am the Resurrection and the Life John 11 25 26

Jesus speaks these words to Martha before raising Lazarus. He does not merely announce that resurrection is possible; he identifies himself as its source. The miracle points toward his own resurrection and the future hope of those who belong to him. Christian hope is not denial of grief. Jesus weeps at the tomb, and he also calls the dead to life.

6 I Am the Way the Truth and the Life John 14 6

Jesus is the way to the Father because he reveals the Father and accomplishes reconciliation. He is the truth because he faithfully discloses God; he is the life because life comes through him. This saying invites confident witness, not arrogant behavior. Christians must speak of Christ's uniqueness with humility, patience, and love.

Resurrection hope in a person

Martha believes in a future resurrection, but Jesus brings the promise into relation with Himself. He is the resurrection and the life. The saying does not mean His followers never experience bodily death. It declares that death cannot finally defeat the life received in Him.

The scene includes delay, questions, tears, and hope. Jesus does not rebuke every expression of sorrow as unbelief. He enters it. Lazarus's restoration becomes a sign pointing beyond itself toward Jesus' own victory and the future of His people.

Christian comfort must preserve both dimensions. We mourn an actual loss, and we confess an actual hope. Empty

optimism denies grief; hopeless grief gives death the final word. The Gospel permits tears while directing them toward the Lord who calls the dead to life. A child can learn that sadness does not mean Jesus has stopped loving. An adult can learn to sit with sorrow rather than rush to explain it away.

The way the truth and the life

Thomas asks how the disciples can know the way. Jesus answers through His own identity. As the way, He brings people to the Father through revelation and reconciliation. He is more than a map handed to travelers who must save themselves.

As the truth, He faithfully makes God known. Truth includes accurate teaching but is embodied in His person, word, and mission. The disciple cannot honor Him while deliberately practicing deception. Conviction concerning His uniqueness must be spoken with humility because it is received as grace, not earned superiority.

As the life, He gives communion with God now and resurrection hope for the future. Life is not merely longer existence or uninterrupted material success. John 17:3 helps explain its relational heart. John 14's promise therefore comforts disciples who are about to face fear and loss. It does not give them a method to control the future. Knowing the Son gives access to the Father, and love takes shape through obedience and service.

Study 1 Faith in the midst of delay

READ • JOHN 11:1–16 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with faith in the midst of delay. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus hears of Lazarus's illness but arrives after death. The disciples struggle with both timing and danger.

Interpretation in Scripture The narrative presents a purposeful delay without giving a rule that explains every delayed answer. Trust grows through the later revelation, but the family's pain remains real. Avoid making this event a formula for all suffering.

Apply it today Bring an unanswered prayer honestly to God. Continue practical care rather than abandoning responsibility while waiting.

Reflect and Respond

What does the story reveal without telling us about every delay?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 Martha s confession

READ • JOHN 11:17–27 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops martha's confession. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Martha speaks of loss and future resurrection; Jesus identifies Himself as resurrection and life, and she confesses His identity.

Interpretation in Scripture The exchange moves from belief in an event toward trust in the person who gives life. Its promise includes bodily death and a life death cannot finally overcome. Read both parts of the declaration.

Apply it today Let grief lead to honest conversation with Christ. Explain hope without promising a loved one will never die.

Reflect and Respond

How does Jesus deepen Martha's understanding of resurrection?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 The Lord who weeps

READ • JOHN 11:28–37 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the lord who weeps. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus encounters Mary and the mourners and shares the grief at the tomb.

Interpretation in Scripture His compassion belongs with His authority. The tears are not a failure of divine power.

They show that saving hope does not require emotional distance from those who suffer.

Apply it today Listen without rushing to correct a grieving person's feelings. Help a child name sorrow in prayer.

Reflect and Respond

What does Jesus' response teach about faithful comfort?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 The voice that calls to life

READ • JOHN 11:38–44 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the voice that calls to life. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus prays and calls Lazarus from the tomb, directing others to release him from the burial cloths.

Interpretation in Scripture The sign reveals divine authority and invites belief. Lazarus returns to mortal life, unlike the fullness of Jesus' resurrection. The community also receives a practical task around the restored person.

Apply it today Join prayer with concrete assistance. Consider how someone recovering from crisis needs help returning to daily life.

Reflect and Respond

What role do the people around Lazarus receive?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 The troubled disciples

READ • JOHN 14:1–5 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the troubled disciples. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus comforts disciples about His departure and the Father's house. Thomas asks about the way.

Interpretation in Scripture The question belongs to farewell teaching, not a detached philosophical debate. The answer that follows gives a personal ground for trust amid separation and uncertainty. Do not build an architectural theory from the image.

Apply it today Bring a fear of the future into prayer. Teach younger readers that asking for clarity is compatible with trusting Jesus.

Reflect and Respond

What concern is Jesus addressing before He names Himself the way?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 Jesus as the way

READ • JOHN 14:6–7; HEBREWS 10:19–22 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops jesus as the way. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus identifies Himself as access to the Father; Hebrews describes confidence to draw near through His saving work.

Interpretation in Scripture The way is personal mediation and reconciliation, not merely a set of instructions. The texts connect access with who He is and what He does. No human guide replaces that ground.

Apply it today Approach God through Christ without waiting to build a perfect record. Let gratitude turn into faithful action.

Reflect and Respond

Why is knowing the way different from earning access?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 Jesus as the truth

READ • JOHN 14:8–11; JOHN 18:33–38 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops jesus as the truth. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus reveals the Father and later speaks of bearing witness to truth before Pilate.

Interpretation in Scripture Truth is connected with His identity and mission. Philip's question receives an answer about the Father's work in the Son. Pilate's political setting exposes how truth may challenge the powerful rather than flatter them.

Apply it today Refuse a lie that appears useful. Teach a child that truthful speech belongs to following the Lord who reveals God.

Reflect and Respond

How does Jesus' witness challenge your use of words?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Jesus as the life

READ • JOHN 5:24–29; JOHN 17:1–3 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops jesus as the life. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus describes life received through hearing and believing, alongside future resurrection, and names eternal life as knowing God through Him.

Interpretation in Scripture Present communion and future bodily hope belong together. The passage does not reduce salvation to private feelings or postpone every

blessing until death. Life begins in relationship and reaches its promised fullness.

Apply it today Make room for Scripture, prayer, and loving service as expressions of life in Christ.

Reflect and Respond

What is already given, and what is still awaited?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Explain resurrection and life, then give way, truth, and life their own attention. Preserve hope without denying grief or reducing Jesus to an abstract route.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Lord of life, meet us in grief and uncertainty. Bring us to the Father and teach us to live in Your truth.

CHAPTER 14

The True Vine and the Divine I Am

Context The vine teaching belongs to Jesus' farewell instruction. His absolute I am statements arise in other encounters and reveal identity within their distinct settings.

Purpose and audience Learn abiding, fruit, love, and obedience. Distinguish the seven metaphorical sayings from other uses of I am without treating all expressions as identical. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

John 15:1–3 The true vine

John 15:4–6 Abiding and dependence

John 15:7–8 Prayer and the Father's glory

John 15:9–11 Abiding in love

John 15:12–17 Friends who love

John 8:48–59 Before Abraham I am

John 13:18–20 Foretelling and recognition

John 18:1–11 The Lord at His arrest

Doctrinal Exposition

Read: Exodus 3:13–15; John 6:35; 8:12; 10:7–18; 11:25–26; 14:6; 15:1–8.

The Meaning of I Am

In Exodus 3 God reveals his covenant name to Moses. John's Gospel uses striking 'I am' language in Jesus' self-revelation, including the absolute statement in John 8:58 and seven well-known metaphorical sayings. The seven sayings are not a list of seven different persons. They are seven windows into the identity and work of one Savior. Each metaphor speaks from an ordinary human need—food, light, safety, guidance, life, access, and fruitfulness.

7 I Am the True Vine John 15 1 8

Branches cannot produce fruit apart from the vine. Jesus calls his disciples to remain in him, receive his words, and bear fruit that glorifies the Father. Fruitfulness is not simply public achievement. It includes love, obedience, perseverance, and service. The church's strength is not independent power but continued dependence on Christ.

Life received from the vine

Branches bear fruit through their relation to the vine. Jesus uses that dependence to describe discipleship. Abiding includes His words remaining in the disciples, their prayer, love, and obedience. It is an ongoing relationship rather than a single intense spiritual experience.

The Father is the gardener. Pruning is a familiar agricultural image for the care that makes growth possible. The passage does not authorize a teacher to label every

hardship as a specific divine punishment or pruning event. Its purpose is to encourage dependence and fruitful faithfulness.

Fruit includes the love and obedience developed in the surrounding discourse. It cannot be measured only by money, public influence, or numerical success. A quiet act of integrity may express more faithful fruit than a highly visible achievement. The image is therefore particularly useful for younger readers under pressure to compare themselves with others. Their life depends on Christ, not an audience's approval.

Identity that calls for trust

The seven metaphorical sayings give memorable windows into Jesus' mission. John also records absolute expressions, notably John 8:58. Their force comes from the surrounding conversation, narrative response, and the Gospel's wider portrait. An ordinary self-identification in another context should not automatically be assigned the same meaning.

John 13:19 connects Jesus' foretelling with the disciples' recognition of His identity. John 18 places His self-identification within the arrest, where apparent vulnerability does not cancel His authority. These passages should be explained individually before a theological synthesis is made.

Abiding and confession belong together. We receive the Lord's identity and continue in His word. A person may repeat correct names while refusing the love He commands. Conversely, the call to love must not detach His teaching from who He is. The vine is this Jesus: the eternal Word,

incarnate Savior, crucified and risen Lord. The fruit grows from belonging to Him.

Study 1 The true vine

READ • JOHN 15:1–3 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with the true vine. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus identifies Himself as the true vine and the Father as gardener, explaining care for branches and cleansing through His word.

Interpretation in Scripture The image concerns dependence and fruitfulness. Old Testament vineyard passages supply background but should not be compressed into a simplistic judgment against a whole people. The focus is the disciples' relation to Him.

Apply it today Read His word with willingness to be corrected. Help a child describe growth in character rather than only visible achievement.

Reflect and Respond

What roles do Jesus, the Father, and the disciples have in the image?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 Abiding and dependence

READ • JOHN 15:4–6 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops abiding and dependence. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus calls disciples to remain in Him and describes the branch's inability to bear fruit independently.

Interpretation in Scripture The strong warning should not be softened into optional advice. Christians differ over its relation to perseverance, but the demand for continuing dependence is plain. Read it with the whole farewell teaching.

Apply it today Identify a practice of self-reliance that has displaced prayer or obedience. Seek help before isolation becomes habitual.

Reflect and Respond

What does a branch's dependence teach about discipleship?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 Prayer and the Father s glory

READ • JOHN 15:7–8 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops prayer and the father's glory. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus connects His words abiding in disciples, their asking, fruitfulness, and the Father's glory.

Interpretation in Scripture Prayer is formed by relationship and the word. The promise is not a guarantee for every unexamined demand. Its setting directs desire toward the life and purpose Christ teaches.

Apply it today Rewrite one prayer in light of His command to love. Let a younger reader name a need and an act of faithful response.

Reflect and Respond

How do the words of Jesus shape what we ask?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 Abiding in love

READ • JOHN 15:9–11 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops abiding in love. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus invites disciples to remain in His love through obedience, with His own relation to the Father as the pattern.

Interpretation in Scripture Obedience expresses life within love rather than purchasing love from an unwilling God. Joy is joined to faithful relationship, not denial of difficulty. Read the invitation beside the coming passion.

Apply it today Practice a command you have postponed. Teach assurance together with responsibility rather than setting them against each other.

Reflect and Respond

What does remaining in love look like in action?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 Friends who love

READ • JOHN 15:12–17 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops friends who love. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus commands mutual love, names self-giving friendship, and speaks of chosen fruitfulness.

Interpretation in Scripture Friendship does not erase His lordship. It describes gracious relationship and shared knowledge of the Father's purpose. The chosen disciples are sent toward love and fruit rather than superiority.

Apply it today Offer reliable care to a friend without using the relationship for status. Let children name a faithful action between friends.

Reflect and Respond

How does Jesus define friendship more deeply than shared preference?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 Before Abraham I am

READ • JOHN 8:48–59 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops before abraham i am. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus answers a dispute about Abraham with a declaration concerning His prior existence and identity.

Interpretation in Scripture Read the confrontation and response before drawing the theological conclusion. John's prologue and later confession in chapter 20 strengthen the reading. The saying is not merely a lesson about human self-confidence.

Apply it today Worship the Lord whose life exceeds your own story. Speak the teaching clearly without turning conviction into insult.

Reflect and Respond

Why does the crowd respond so strongly?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 Foretelling and recognition

READ • JOHN 13:18–20 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops foretelling and recognition. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus speaks of betrayal and says His advance disclosure will serve the disciples' recognition of Him.

Interpretation in Scripture The setting joins identity with the painful mission ahead. Knowledge of betrayal does not make it morally good. The words prepare faith when appearances might suggest that the mission has failed.

Apply it today Hold to His teaching during disappointment. Do not excuse wrongdoing simply because God can work through it.

Reflect and Respond

How does advance disclosure help the disciples interpret what happens?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 The Lord at His arrest

READ • JOHN 18:1–11 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the lord at his arrest. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus identifies Himself to the arresting group, protects the disciples, and directs Peter away from violent resistance.

Interpretation in Scripture Authority and willing surrender appear together. The narrative's striking response to His words belongs to John's portrayal, but its application is not a technique for overcoming enemies through a repeated phrase.

Apply it today Seek protection and faithful courage without making violence the measure of strength. Teach that self-control can express authority.

Reflect and Respond

What does Jesus protect, and what does He willingly accept?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Learn abiding, fruit, love, and obedience. Distinguish the seven metaphorical sayings from other uses of I am without treating all expressions as identical.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer True Vine, keep us near to Your word and love. Grow the fruit of obedience and service in our daily relationships.

CHAPTER 15

Humanity and Salvation through Christ

Context Genesis portrays rebellion; Romans explains the shared need of humanity and Christ's gracious remedy. The Gospel and letters connect salvation with faith, repentance, new birth, and renewed life.

Purpose and audience Explain the human need without leaving people in shame. Salvation is received through Christ and bears fruit in a changed allegiance and community. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

Genesis 3:1–13 Sin and broken trust

Romans 2:1–11 The judging person

Romans 3:9–26 All need grace

Romans 5:12–21 Adam and Christ

Ephesians 2:1–10 Saved for good works

John 3:1–17 Birth from above

Luke 19:1–10 Repentance and restored responsibility

1 John 1:5–2:2 Assurance and confession

Doctrinal Exposition

Read: Genesis 3; Psalm 51; Romans 3:9–26; 5:12–21; Ephesians 2:1–10.

The Reality of Sin

The Bible portrays sin as more than isolated mistakes. It is rebellion against God, distortion of desire, and the breaking of relationships. Genesis 3 describes humanity's distrust of God's word and the painful consequences that follow. Romans 3 declares the universal reach of sin and the need for God's righteousness. No social position, religious heritage, or moral achievement can remove our need for grace.

A devotional comparison contrasts the tree of life with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. As a devotional picture, this warns us against self-righteousness and encourages us to fix our eyes on Christ (Hebrews 12:2). We should not teach that all human knowledge of good and evil is itself evil. The problem in Genesis is disobedience and the attempt to live independently of God.

Adam and Christ

Paul contrasts Adam and Christ in Romans 5:12–21 and 1 Corinthians 15:45–49. Through Adam, sin and death enter the human story; through Christ come righteousness and life. Adam is the first man; Jesus is the last Adam in Paul's theological comparison. We should not call Adam 'the first Christ,' because that confuses the roles of the representative sinner and the saving Messiah.

Christ does not merely improve Adam's example. He accomplishes what fallen humanity could not accomplish

for itself. His obedience, death, and resurrection inaugurate a new humanity. Those who belong to him are called to put off the old way of life and walk in the new.

Grace Faith and Repentance

Ephesians 2:8–10 teaches that salvation is God's gift, received by grace through faith, not a reward for works. Yet the same passage says that believers are created in Christ for good works. Faith does not purchase salvation; it receives God's mercy. Good works do not create our acceptance; they become the fruit of a changed life.

Repentance is a turning toward God, not simply fear of punishment. It includes admitting sin, trusting Christ, and beginning to walk in his ways. The gospel invites the guilty to receive forgiveness and the self-righteous to abandon pride. Both need the same Savior.

The Purpose of Salvation

Salvation restores relationship with God and begins the renewal of human life. It includes forgiveness, reconciliation, justification, adoption, sanctification, and the hope of resurrection. These words describe related aspects of God's saving work; they should not be confused or collapsed into one event. The goal is not simply escape from judgment but communion with God and a people transformed to reflect his character.

A problem deeper than poor behavior

Sin includes acts of wrongdoing, but Scripture also describes an inward refusal of God and a power that distorts relationships. People may know a good command and still resist it. Religious knowledge alone does not rescue

them. Romans' indictment reaches the openly rebellious and the self-confident judge.

The Adam–Christ comparison explains humanity's need through representative action and its consequences. Different traditions describe inherited sin in different ways. The shared biblical emphasis is that the ruin cannot be repaired by human boasting and that Christ's obedience and grace bring the saving answer.

A child should hear that wrongdoing matters and mercy is available. An adult should hear the same without reducing sin to a list of other people's failures. A truthful gospel invites confession, repentance, and hope. It does not use humiliation as a substitute for transformation.

Grace that creates a new life

Grace is God's undeserved gift; faith receives Christ rather than placing God in debt. Repentance means turning toward God in a changed allegiance. It includes admitting sin and beginning to walk differently. Faith and repentance belong together without being converted into a wage that buys salvation.

New birth, justification, reconciliation, adoption, and sanctification describe related dimensions of God's work. They should not be treated as interchangeable dictionary entries. John 3 concerns birth from above and the Spirit's work. Romans 5 speaks of peace and reconciliation. Galatians 4 speaks of family standing. Ephesians 2 connects saved-by-grace language with good works prepared for a new life.

Assurance rests in the faithful Savior, while discipleship learns obedience. A church must avoid both fear that never

permits peace and reassurance that excuses ongoing harm. Where someone has injured another, repentance should include appropriate responsibility and restitution. Forgiveness from God does not make consequences imaginary. The gospel forms people who can face the truth because grace gives them hope.

Study 1 Sin and broken trust

READ • GENESIS 3:1–13 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with sin and broken trust. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Disobedience is followed by hiding and blame. The human pair fails to speak truthfully about their response to God's command.

Interpretation in Scripture The story portrays more than an isolated mistake. Trust and relationships are damaged. Later biblical teaching unfolds the consequences, while the chapter itself shows how shame can lead to further evasion.

Apply it today Admit one wrong without blaming another person. Help a child distinguish explanation from excuse.

Reflect and Respond

What changes after disobedience besides the broken command?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 The judging person

READ • ROMANS 2:1–11 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the judging person. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Paul turns from visible wrongdoing to the person who judges while practicing the same kinds of evil.

Interpretation in Scripture Religious criticism does not establish innocence. God's kindness calls for repentance, and His judgment is impartial. The argument prepares the conclusion that every group needs grace.

Apply it today Before correcting someone, examine your own conduct. Speak truth without making another's failure a platform for superiority.

Reflect and Respond

How does Paul's turn challenge selective moral attention?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 All need grace

READ • ROMANS 3:9–26 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops all need grace. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Paul describes a shared accountability and then announces righteousness through Christ as God's gift.

Interpretation in Scripture The turning point is God's action rather than human improvement. His justice and mercy are joined in the cross. Interpret the language through the full argument instead of reducing it to a slogan about worthlessness.

Apply it today Receive mercy and extend truthful welcome. Teach younger readers that shared need removes boasting, not human dignity.

Reflect and Respond

What changes at the turning point in verse 21?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 Adam and Christ

READ • ROMANS 5:12–21 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops adam and christ. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense Paul contrasts disobedience and death with Christ's obedience and the abundance of grace.

Interpretation in Scripture The comparison explains both connection and difference. Christ's gift is not merely a return to an earlier moral example; it creates a saving

future. Debates about inherited sin must preserve the passage's emphasis on grace.

Apply it today Ground hope in Christ's faithfulness when your own record discourages you. Let gratitude produce responsible action.

Reflect and Respond

Where does Paul say the gift exceeds the trespass?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 Saved for good works

READ • EPHESIANS 2:1–10 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops saved for good works. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense God brings people from spiritual death into life by grace, and that life has a purpose in good works.

Interpretation in Scripture Works are the fruit of rescue rather than its purchase price. The passage opposes boasting while affirming purposeful obedience. Neither moral achievement nor passive indifference expresses the whole argument.

Apply it today Choose a good work that meets a real need. Explain to a child the difference between receiving a gift and earning wages.

Reflect and Respond

Why does Paul mention good works after denying salvation by works?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 Birth from above

READ • JOHN 3:1–17 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops birth from above. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Nicodemus hears of new birth, the Spirit's work, and life through the lifted-up Son.

Interpretation in Scripture Knowledge and religious standing do not make divine renewal unnecessary. The passage joins the Spirit's initiative with faith in the Son. It does not offer a self-improvement technique.

Apply it today Ask God for renewing life and remain open to correction. Respect a sincere questioner without assuming expertise equals understanding.

Reflect and Respond

What does Nicodemus need that his status cannot supply?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 Repentance and restored responsibility

READ • LUKE 19:1–10 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops repentance and restored responsibility. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Zacchaeus receives Jesus and expresses a changed relation to possessions and those he has wronged.

Interpretation in Scripture His action makes transformation visible. The scene does not make restitution a commercial price for salvation; it shows how received mercy changes conduct. Trust should reach into concrete responsibilities.

Apply it today Address an unpaid obligation or unfair gain where possible. Seek advice if repair is complicated rather than ignoring it.

Reflect and Respond

What evidence of a changed allegiance appears in the encounter?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Assurance and confession

READ • 1 JOHN 1:5–2:2 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops assurance and confession. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The letter calls for truthful walking, confession, and confidence in Christ's advocacy and saving work.

Interpretation in Scripture Assurance does not require pretending to be sinless. Nor does advocacy make sin harmless. The author gives hope precisely so believers can tell the truth and seek a faithful life.

Apply it today Confess specifically and seek help with a repeated pattern. Teach a child that mercy makes honesty possible.

Reflect and Respond

How does Christ's advocacy protect hope without excusing wrongdoing?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Explain the human need without leaving people in shame. Salvation is received through Christ and bears fruit in a changed allegiance and community.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Merciful Father, help us confess sin without hiding. Renew us through Christ and form a life that expresses the grace we receive.

CHAPTER 16

The Passion the Cross and Our Reconciliation

Context The passion narratives place Jesus' death within covenant fellowship, betrayal, prayer, trials, and Roman execution. The letters explain its saving meaning through several complementary images.

Purpose and audience Understand both the historical event and its theological significance. Christ's sacrifice deals with sin, opens peace with God, and forms people who practice reconciliation. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

Luke 22:14–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 The covenant meal

Mark 14:32–42 Prayer in Gethsemane

John 18:28–19:16 Truth before the authorities

Isaiah 53:4–12; 1 Peter 2:21–25 The servant bears sin

Mark 10:35–45; 1 Peter 1:17–21 Ransom and costly release

Romans 3:21–26 God's righteousness and the cross

2 Corinthians 5:14–21 The ministry of reconciliation

Colossians 2:13–15; Hebrews 10:1–18 Victory and sufficient sacrifice

Doctrinal Exposition

Read: Isaiah 53; Mark 10:45; Romans 3:21–26; 5:6–11; 2 Corinthians 5:18–21; Hebrews 9–10.

Why the Cross Matters

Jesus' death is central to the gospel. The New Testament does not treat the crucifixion as an accident that frustrated God's plan. Jesus willingly gives his life, and the apostles proclaim his death and resurrection as the means by which God deals with sin and brings sinners near. The cross exposes the seriousness of evil while revealing the depth of divine love (Romans 5:8).

Christians have used several biblical images to explain this saving work. Each contributes to our understanding, and no single metaphor should be made to carry everything Scripture says. The language of sacrifice, ransom, justification, reconciliation, victory, and covenant should be studied in its own context.

Substitution and Sacrifice

Isaiah 53 describes the servant bearing the sins of others. Jesus says that he came to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). Paul says that Christ died for our sins (1 Corinthians 15:3). These passages ground the conviction that Jesus acts on behalf of sinners. His obedience and sacrifice are not a mere example of courage, although they also reveal the pattern of self-giving love.

Hebrews compares the repeated sacrifices of the old covenant with Christ's once-for-all offering (Hebrews 10:1–18). The point is not that God's earlier covenant was meaningless or that Israelites had no relationship with God.

The earlier sacrifices pointed beyond themselves; Christ's sacrifice accomplishes what those repeated rites could not finally complete.

Redemption and Ransom

Redemption is the language of release through a costly act. In the Old Testament, God redeems Israel from slavery. In the New Testament, believers are described as redeemed through Christ (Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18–19). The image tells us that salvation is not a casual change of opinion. Freedom has been secured through the self-giving work of the Savior.

We should be cautious about imaginative descriptions of a literal financial transaction with Satan. The New Testament announces Christ's victory over the powers of evil (Colossians 2:13–15) but does not require us to invent a contract or payment recipient beyond what the text states.

Justification Propitiation and Reconciliation

Justification is God's gracious declaration that sinners are set right with him through faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 3:21 –26; 5:1). It is not the same as the lifelong process of moral growth, though justified people are called to holiness. Propitiation is a term used in some translations of Romans 3:25 and 1 John 2:2 to express how Christ's sacrifice deals with sin and divine judgment. Christian traditions explain the term's nuances differently; all must take seriously God's holiness and mercy.

Reconciliation emphasizes restored relationship. God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself and entrusting the message of reconciliation to the church (2 Corinthians 5:18–

21). This grace should reshape human relationships. People reconciled to God ought to pursue forgiveness, peace, and truth with one another.

The Scope of the Gospel Invitation

This study emphasizes that Christ is the Savior of the world and that the gospel should be offered freely to all. Passages such as John 3:16, 1 John 2:2, and 1 Timothy 2:3–6 have an important place in that proclamation. Christians disagree about how to describe the precise extent and intention of the atonement. This book does not resolve that longstanding debate by assertion. It proclaims the sufficiency of Christ's work and the sincere call for all people to repent and believe.

The cross within the mission

The passion does not appear as an accidental ending to a successful teaching career. Jesus prepares His disciples, gives the covenant meal, prays in anguish, and goes willingly toward the appointed work. Human betrayal and injustice remain evil, even while God's purpose is accomplished through the event.

The trials reveal misunderstanding, fear, political calculation, and abuse of authority. Roman power carries out the crucifixion; particular religious leaders and other individuals also act within the narratives. It is false to assign inherited guilt to every Jewish person or later generation. Jesus, His family, and His first disciples are themselves Jewish, and the apostles proclaim shared human need for mercy.

The cross reveals both the seriousness of sin and God's self-giving love. A merely sentimental account misses judgment and costly obedience. A purely punitive account can obscure the unity of Father and Son in saving purpose. Scripture presents Christ giving Himself, with God's reconciling action in Him. The explanation must keep holiness, love, and willing mission together.

One saving work through several images

Sacrifice explains offering and cleansing. Redemption and ransom explain costly release. Justification explains a gracious verdict. Reconciliation explains restored relationship. Victory explains the defeat of hostile powers. Covenant explains a new relation established through His blood. These images contribute to one saving work without being reduced to identical meanings.

Christians develop atonement explanations differently, including emphasis on substitution, satisfaction, victory, and transformative love. The text should establish what each image says before later systems are compared. Mark 10:45 speaks of ransom but does not identify a literal payment recipient. Inventing a contract with Satan goes beyond that statement.

The cross also creates a ministry of reconciliation. This does not mean ignoring injustice or demanding that a harmed person instantly resume unsafe contact. Peace grows with truth, repentance, and appropriate responsibility. A child can learn to admit wrong and ask forgiveness. An adult may need to repair damage, seek protection, and allow trust to be rebuilt slowly. Grace supplies the motive without removing moral seriousness.

Study 1 The covenant meal

READ • LUKE 22:14–20; 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with the covenant meal. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus shares a meal, identifies His self-giving with the covenant, and gives remembrance to His followers.

Interpretation in Scripture The meal interprets the approaching death and forms a community that remembers and proclaims it. Christian traditions explain sacramental presence differently; all must attend to His gift and the communal responsibility it creates.

Apply it today Participate with gratitude and concern for others. Refuse a practice that honors the meal while neglecting hungry or excluded believers.

Reflect and Respond

What does remembering His death ask of the gathered church?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 Prayer in Gethsemane

READ • MARK 14:32–42 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops prayer in gethsemane. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus prays in distress, submits to the Father's will, and calls disciples to watch and pray.

Interpretation in Scripture His anguish is real, and His obedience is willing. The passage does not depict a divided divine purpose. It shows the incarnate Son's faithful human response within a mission whose cost He knows.

Apply it today Pray honestly about a hard responsibility and seek support. Teach courage that includes acknowledged weakness.

Reflect and Respond

How does Jesus' prayer join desire and obedience?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 Truth before the authorities

READ • JOHN 18:28–19:16 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops truth before the authorities. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus speaks about His kingdom and truth while the proceedings expose political pressure and the struggle over authority.

Interpretation in Scripture The account locates responsibility in particular actions rather than inherited ethnic guilt. His kingship challenges coercive power without becoming another armed rivalry. Read the political exchange before using its phrases.

Apply it today Refuse a dishonest compromise made to satisfy a crowd. Help young readers distinguish popularity from justice.

Reflect and Respond

Where does fear of losing position distort judgment?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 The servant bears sin

READ • ISAIAH 53:4–12; 1 PETER 2:21–25 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the servant bears sin. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The servant suffers for others, and Peter connects Jesus' sin-bearing with healing and a changed life.

Interpretation in Scripture Peter's application includes refusing retaliatory wrongdoing and returning to the shepherd. It does not require accepting abuse without protection. The atonement grounds both forgiveness and a new moral direction.

Apply it today Receive mercy and choose a truthful response to injury. Seek protection where harm continues.

Reflect and Respond

How does Peter connect Christ's work with the believer's conduct?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 Ransom and costly release

READ • MARK 10:35–45; 1 PETER 1:17–21 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops ransom and costly release. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus gives His life as a ransom, and believers are described as redeemed through His precious blood.

Interpretation in Scripture The image emphasizes the cost of freedom and the Savior's service. It does not specify a financial transaction with Satan. The disciples' status-seeking provides the immediate contrast to His gift.

Apply it today Use freedom to serve someone else. Teach that a redeemed life is valuable without making another person's freedom a possession.

Reflect and Respond

How does ransom challenge the disciples' ambition?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 God s righteousness and the cross

READ • ROMANS 3:21–26 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops god's righteousness and the cross. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Paul explains God's gracious justification through Christ while maintaining the disclosure of divine righteousness.

Interpretation in Scripture Terms such as propitiation and atoning sacrifice are translated and explained differently. The passage insists that God deals with sin justly and gives righteousness to the believer. Read the whole argument before selecting one English term.

Apply it today Tell the truth about sin while proclaiming real mercy. Refuse both self-righteousness and despair.

Reflect and Respond

How are God's justice and the believer's gift held together?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 The ministry of reconciliation

READ • 2 CORINTHIANS 5:14–21 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the ministry of reconciliation. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Christ's love reshapes life, and God entrusts a message of reconciliation to those reconciled through Him.

Interpretation in Scripture The passage places divine initiative before human ministry. Ambassadors announce God's work rather than becoming replacement saviors. New creation should alter how people are regarded and treated.

Apply it today Take a responsible step toward repair in a damaged relationship. Do not force unsafe contact or confuse reconciliation with denial.

Reflect and Respond

What changes when you regard people through Christ's reconciling work?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Victory and sufficient sacrifice

READ • COLOSSIANS 2:13–15; HEBREWS 10:1–18 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops victory and sufficient sacrifice. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The cross is described as forgiveness and victory, while Hebrews emphasizes the effectiveness of Christ's offering.

Interpretation in Scripture The images complement one another. Christ defeats the powers and deals with sin; the believer need not add a second saving sacrifice. Continuing obedience expresses gratitude for sufficient grace.

Apply it today Reject a demand for payment to complete Christ's saving work. Approach God gratefully and pursue holy conduct.

Reflect and Respond

What burden does the sufficiency of His offering remove?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Understand both the historical event and its theological significance. Christ's sacrifice deals with sin, opens peace with God, and forms people who practice reconciliation.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Lord Jesus, thank You for Your saving sacrifice. Let reconciliation with God change the way we face wrongdoing and seek peace.

CHAPTER 17

The Seven Sayings of Jesus on the Cross

Context The seven sayings are collected from different Gospel accounts of the crucifixion. They express mercy, assurance, family care, anguish, bodily need, completion, and trust.

Purpose and audience Read each saying in its own Gospel setting before bringing them together. The traditional collection is useful, but it does not establish every detail of a complete chronology. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

Luke 23:32–38 Father forgive them

Luke 23:39–43 Today with Me in paradise

John 19:25–27 Care for His mother

Matthew 27:45–49; Psalm 22:1–24 The cry of abandonment

John 19:28–29 I thirst

John 19:30 It is finished

Luke 23:44–46; Psalm 31:1–5 Into Your hands

Luke 23:47–49; John 19:31–37 The sayings as a witness

Doctrinal Exposition

Read: Luke 23:34, 43, 46; John 19:26–30; Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34.

1 Father Forgive Them

Luke 23:34 records Jesus praying for forgiveness in the midst of crucifixion. The saying displays mercy toward enemies and the Savior's refusal to answer violence with hatred. Some early manuscripts of Luke differ over the presence of this sentence; a study Bible's textual note should be consulted. Regardless, Jesus' command to love enemies and his own pattern of mercy are abundantly clear in the Gospels.

The application is demanding. Forgiveness is not pretending that injustice never happened, and it does not eliminate the need for protection or accountability. It means refusing to make revenge the ruler of the heart and entrusting judgment to God.

2 Today You Will Be with Me in Paradise

In Luke 23:39–43, one criminal turns toward Jesus in faith. Jesus responds with the promise of fellowship beyond death. The dying man cannot offer a record of religious achievement. His hope rests in the mercy and authority of Christ. This scene does not make obedience unimportant; it demonstrates that salvation is grace from beginning to end.

3 Woman Behold Your Son

John 19:26–27 shows Jesus caring for his mother and entrusting her to the beloved disciple. Even while suffering, he acts with responsibility and love. The saying invites

believers to practice concrete care for parents, family, and those entrusted to them. It does not support the claim that Jesus rejected Mary's motherhood; John's scene is evidence of his concern for her.

4 My God My God Why Have You Forsaken Me

Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34 record Jesus praying the opening words of Psalm 22. The cry must be taken seriously as an expression of real suffering. It also points readers to a psalm that moves through anguish toward vindication. Christians differ in how they explain the relationship between this cry and the mystery of the Trinity; the text should not be used to claim that the divine nature was divided or that the Father ceased to be God with the Son.

5 I Thirst

John 19:28 records Jesus' thirst and connects the moment with Scripture's fulfillment. The saying underscores his genuine humanity. The Savior's suffering was bodily, not theatrical. It should deepen our compassion for people experiencing pain, hunger, and deprivation.

6 It Is Finished

In John 19:30 Jesus declares the completion of his appointed work. This is not the end of the gospel story, for the resurrection follows, but it is the decisive completion of his obedient offering. Believers do not add a second saving sacrifice to his work. They respond by trusting him and living in the grace his sacrifice has secured.

7 Father Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit

Luke 23:46 records Jesus entrusting himself to the Father. The saying echoes Psalm 31:5 and expresses trust even at death. It offers a model of prayer in suffering: we do not always understand the circumstances, but we may commit ourselves to the faithful God who raises the dead.

The crucified Savior speaks

The sayings allow us to hear Jesus within His suffering. He attends to others, prays, acknowledges thirst, and entrusts Himself to the Father. The cross is bodily and relational, not merely an abstract transaction. These words reveal what His saving mission looks like within pain.

Some manuscript traditions differ concerning Luke 23:34. Readers should notice their Bible's textual note rather than treating the difference as a reason to hide the passage. The mercy it expresses is consistent with Jesus' command to love enemies and the apostolic call to refuse revenge. Textual honesty and spiritual confidence can coexist.

The collected order is traditional because the Gospels do not all record the same sayings or provide a complete combined sequence. Explain what each witness supplies and avoid certainty beyond the sources. Faith does not depend on pretending that a teaching arrangement is itself an inspired timeline.

Suffering completion and trust

The cry from Psalm 22 is real anguish and an invocation of a psalm moving toward vindication. Christians explain its atoning significance in different ways. It should not be used to claim that the divine being split apart or that the Father

ceased to be Father. The saving mission remains God's united action even as the incarnate Son suffers.

The declaration of completion concerns His appointed work. It does not remove the necessity of resurrection within the Gospel story. Believers rest in the sufficiency of His offering and then respond through discipleship. Trust is not indifference to the suffering He endured.

The final entrusting of His spirit echoes Psalm 31. It teaches prayer at the limit of human understanding. A child can learn to bring fear into the Father's care. An adult can learn faithful surrender without making passivity a virtue in every situation. The Savior's unique death accomplishes salvation; our response is trusting dependence, mercy toward others, and responsible care.

Study 1 Father forgive them

READ • LUKE 23:32–38 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with father forgive them. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense Jesus is crucified amid mockery, and the received text includes a prayer for His persecutors' forgiveness.

Interpretation in Scripture Some early manuscripts omit the sentence, a difference noted in many Bibles. Its mercy fits His wider teaching. Forgiveness does not declare the violence right or make accountability unnecessary.

Apply it today Pray against revenge while telling the truth about harm. Help a child separate mercy from pretending nothing happened.

Reflect and Respond

How can forgiveness and justice remain together?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 Today with Me in paradise

READ • LUKE 23:39–43 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops today with me in paradise. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense One criminal acknowledges his need and turns to Jesus, receiving a promise of fellowship beyond death.

Interpretation in Scripture The man cannot present religious achievements as a saving claim. The scene displays grace and the Savior's authority. It should not be turned into a rule that obedience is unimportant for someone who continues living.

Apply it today Receive mercy without delaying a faithful response. Offer hope to someone who thinks their past makes approach impossible.

Reflect and Respond

What does the criminal trust in?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 Care for His mother

READ • JOHN 19:25–27 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops care for his mother. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus entrusts His mother and the beloved disciple to a new responsibility of care.

Interpretation in Scripture Even during suffering He attends to a concrete human need. The scene does not show rejection of Mary's motherhood. It shows love taking practical shape when ordinary family arrangements are disrupted.

Apply it today Check on a parent or dependent person. Teach children that love includes reliable responsibility.

Reflect and Respond

What action makes concern visible here?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 The cry of abandonment

READ • MATTHEW 27:45–49; PSALM 22:1–24 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the cry of abandonment. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus prays the opening words of Psalm 22 amid darkness and suffering.

Interpretation in Scripture The cry is neither theatrical nor permission to divide the Trinity. The psalm's wider movement matters alongside the real anguish of the cross. Different atonement accounts must preserve the words and the divine unity.

Apply it today Bring distress honestly into prayer. Do not shame someone because suffering has made their questions painful.

Reflect and Respond

What does the whole psalm add to hearing its opening?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 I thirst

READ • JOHN 19:28–29 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops i thirst. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus expresses bodily thirst within the Gospel's account of Scripture fulfillment.

Interpretation in Scripture His human suffering is real. Fulfillment does not make the need unreal or the body's pain spiritually irrelevant. The detail belongs to the incarnation's concrete cost.

Apply it today Offer practical care to a sick or exhausted person. Help a child recognize that compassion addresses physical needs.

Reflect and Respond

Why does this brief saying matter for understanding His humanity?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 It is finished

READ • JOHN 19:30 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops it is finished. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense Jesus declares completion as His earthly suffering reaches death.

Interpretation in Scripture The declaration concerns the accomplished mission and offering. It does not say that resurrection is unnecessary or that disciples have no further obedience. Salvation's foundation is complete; grateful life follows.

Apply it today Stop trying to add a saving payment to His sacrifice. Identify one act of obedience arising from gratitude.

Reflect and Respond

What is completed, and what response remains?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 Into Your hands

READ • LUKE 23:44–46; PSALM 31:1–5 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops into your hands. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus entrusts His spirit to the Father with words drawn from a prayer of trust.

Interpretation in Scripture The saying joins death and dependence within faithful relationship. It does not offer a technique for removing every fear. Its confidence is grounded in the Father, whose resurrection action follows.

Apply it today Pray a specific fear into God's care while taking faithful responsibilities seriously.

Reflect and Respond

How can entrusting yourself differ from abandoning responsibility?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 The sayings as a witness

READ • LUKE 23:47–49; JOHN 19:31–37 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the sayings as a witness. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The accounts include responses to Jesus' death and testimony concerning what took place.

Interpretation in Scripture The collected sayings belong to historical passion witnesses, each with its own emphases. Their spiritual use is strengthened by returning to those settings. A traditional arrangement should not erase the narrators' distinct contributions.

Apply it today Read a whole passion account aloud before using a saying in teaching. Invite younger readers to notice both words and actions.

Reflect and Respond

What becomes clearer when the sayings are restored to their narratives?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Read each saying in its own Gospel setting before bringing them together. The traditional collection is useful, but it does not establish every detail of a complete chronology.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Crucified Savior, teach us mercy, faithful responsibility, and trust. Help us hear Your words without forgetting the suffering in which You spoke.

CHAPTER 18

The Resurrection and the Appearances of Jesus

Context The resurrection accounts describe the empty tomb and encounters with the risen Jesus. Paul's summary in 1 Corinthians 15 places resurrection within the gospel and the future hope of believers.

Purpose and audience Understand testimony, embodied life, restored discipleship, and resurrection hope. Distinguish the Gospel appearances from later encounters and visions without inventing an exhaustive chronology. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

Matthew 28:1–10; Mark 16:1–8 The empty tomb

John 20:1–18 Mary meets the Lord

Luke 24:13–35 The Emmaus conversation

Luke 24:36–49 Peace and embodied life

John 20:24–31 Thomas and confession

John 21:1–19 Peter restored to care

1 Corinthians 15:1–11 The received gospel and witnesses

1 Corinthians 15:20–28; 1 Corinthians 15:50–58 Firstfruits and faithful labor

Doctrinal Exposition

Read: Matthew 28; Luke 24; Acts 1:1–11; 1 Corinthians 15; Hebrews 1:3; Revelation 21–22.

He Has Risen

The resurrection is not a decorative ending added to the story of the cross. It is God's vindication of Jesus and the foundation of Christian hope. The Gospels describe the empty tomb and appearances of the risen Lord. Luke 24 reports that Jesus spoke with his disciples, explained the Scriptures, and ate in their presence. Paul summarizes the gospel as Christ's death for sins, burial, resurrection on the third day, and appearances to witnesses (1 Corinthians 15:3–8).

Christians should distinguish the central apostolic testimony from attempts to prove every detail by arguments that go beyond the sources. The New Testament offers a public proclamation rooted in testimony, and it calls people to faith in the risen Jesus. If Christ has not been raised, Paul says, Christian preaching and faith are empty (1 Corinthians 15:14–19).

The Meaning of the Resurrection

Jesus' resurrection confirms the defeat of death and inaugurates the promised new creation. He is the firstfruits of those who have died in Christ (1 Corinthians 15:20–23). This does not mean that believers have already received resurrection bodies or that Christians never suffer. It means that their future is secured in the risen Lord. The body matters, creation matters, and God intends restoration rather than abandonment.

The resurrection also transforms discipleship. Fearful followers become witnesses. Forgiveness is preached in Jesus' name, and the church is sent to make disciples among the nations (Luke 24:46–49; Matthew 28:18–20). The risen Christ calls his people to courage joined with humility.

Raised and recognized

The Gospels do not present resurrection as a private idea that Jesus' influence continued after death. They narrate an empty tomb and encounters with Him. His identity is continuous with the crucified Lord, while His life is now beyond death's mastery. Luke includes speech, touch, and eating to emphasize bodily reality.

The witnesses are not all confident from the first moment. They grieve, fear, misunderstand, and sometimes doubt. These responses belong to the accounts and should not be deleted to make disciples appear heroic. The risen Lord teaches, reveals, reassures, and commissions them.

Paul connects death, burial, resurrection, and appearances in the received gospel. His testimony is important evidence, but it is not a license to claim external verification for every listed witness beyond the sources available. Christian proclamation is rooted in this apostolic witness. It calls people to trust the risen Lord and to examine the testimony honestly.

Firstfruits and transformed disciples

Jesus is firstfruits of those who have died. The image speaks of an initial event that secures a coming harvest. Believers still face death, but their future is related to His risen life.

Christian hope includes bodily resurrection, not merely escape from material existence.

His appearances also restore discipleship. Mary receives witness to bear; fearful disciples receive peace and mission; Thomas receives an encounter that deepens confession; Peter receives a renewed responsibility to care for the flock. Restoration leads to service, not simply relief from embarrassment.

The sources give sufficient testimony for their purpose without providing every possible date and sequence. The forty-day period described in Acts 1 should be distinguished from Paul's later encounter and Revelation's visions. Where the accounts are silent, the reader can remain silent. The central truth is larger than a speculative timeline: the crucified Savior lives, sends His people, and gives hope that makes faithful labor worthwhile.

Study 1 The empty tomb

READ • MATTHEW 28:1–10; MARK 16:1–8 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with the empty tomb. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense Women encounter the empty tomb and receive a message of resurrection with fear and joy.

Interpretation in Scripture The accounts emphasize divine action and witness amid astonishment. Mark's ending has a significant textual question concerning later verses; consult the Bible's note before building doctrine on that ending alone. The shared resurrection testimony does not depend on ignoring it.

Apply it today Listen carefully to witness rather than dismissing a person through social assumptions.

Reflect and Respond

What response does the resurrection message call forth?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 Mary meets the Lord

READ • JOHN 20:1–18 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops mary meets the lord. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Mary grieves near the tomb, recognizes Jesus when He addresses her, and receives a message to carry.

Interpretation in Scripture The encounter moves from loss toward witness. Jesus' words about the Father and His going clarify the new stage of the mission. Do not turn an individual encounter into a required pattern for every conversion.

Apply it today Allow Christ's word to redirect grief toward faithful response. Help a child see that being known personally matters.

Reflect and Respond

How does recognition change Mary's next action?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 The Emmaus conversation

READ • LUKE 24:13–35 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the emmaus conversation. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Two travelers discuss disappointed hopes; Jesus explains Scripture and is recognized as they share a meal.

Interpretation in Scripture The explanation joins the Messiah's suffering and glory. Their hearts are engaged, but the teaching is rooted in Scripture rather than emotion alone. Hope is rebuilt through a corrected understanding.

Apply it today Read an Old Testament promise in context and consider its New Testament fulfillment. Do not make a feeling the sole test of truth.

Reflect and Respond

What misunderstanding does Jesus address?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 Peace and embodied life

READ • LUKE 24:36–49 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops peace and embodied life. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus meets frightened disciples, shows His bodily reality, eats, opens Scripture, and commissions witness.

Interpretation in Scripture The passage refuses a merely ghostlike interpretation. Resurrection and mission belong together through Scripture's fulfillment. His physical presence does not mean the disciples already possess the fullness of their future resurrection.

Apply it today Value bodily care and truthful witness. Help younger readers distinguish resurrection from a memory that someone once lived.

Reflect and Respond

Why does Luke include touch and eating?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 Thomas and confession

READ • JOHN 20:24–31 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops thomas and confession. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Thomas's doubts are answered by encounter, and he confesses Jesus as Lord and God.

Interpretation in Scripture John places this confession near his purpose statement. The blessing extends to later believers receiving testimony without the same physical sight. It encourages faith without making honest inquiry shameful.

Apply it today Treat a questioner patiently and direct attention to the Gospel's witness. Let understanding deepen worship.

Reflect and Respond

What does this encounter contribute to John's portrait of Jesus?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 Peter restored to care

READ • JOHN 21:1–19 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops peter restored to care. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The risen Jesus meets disciples by the sea and calls Peter to love expressed through care for the flock.

Interpretation in Scripture Restoration addresses a failed disciple without removing responsibility. Peter's future service belongs to following Jesus rather than controlling others. The repeated exchange should be explained through the narrative without overbuilding a theory on every word variation.

Apply it today Repair a failed responsibility and resume faithful service humbly. Teach that forgiveness can restore vocation without erasing lessons.

Reflect and Respond

What does love for Jesus require of Peter?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 The received gospel and witnesses

READ • 1 CORINTHIANS 15:1–11 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the received gospel and witnesses. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Paul summarizes Christ's death for sins, burial, resurrection, and appearances, including his own later encounter.

Interpretation in Scripture The sequence belongs to the proclaimed gospel. Paul distinguishes his unusual encounter through its timing and his history as persecutor.

The account gives testimony, not an exhaustive diary of all appearances.

Apply it today Learn the gospel's central events and communicate them plainly. Keep secondary speculation from replacing the message.

Reflect and Respond

Why does Paul connect his witness with grace?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Firstfruits and faithful labor

READ • 1 CORINTHIANS 15:20–28; 1 CORINTHIANS 15:50–58 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops firstfruits and faithful labor. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Christ's resurrection secures a future for His people and grounds steadfast work.

Interpretation in Scripture The argument includes bodily transformation and the defeat of death. Present labor matters because the Lord's future is real. Hope is neither denial of suffering nor permission to neglect ordinary responsibilities.

Apply it today Complete a neglected act of service. Comfort the grieving with patient presence and the promised resurrection.

Reflect and Respond

How does future victory change today's work?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Understand testimony, embodied life, restored discipleship, and resurrection hope. Distinguish the Gospel appearances from later encounters and visions without inventing an exhaustive chronology.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Risen Lord, strengthen our hope through Your word. Restore us to faithful service and help us comfort others with resurrection life.

CHAPTER 19

The Exalted Christ and Our New Life in Him

Context Acts follows the risen Lord's commission through the Spirit's coming and the church's mission. The letters explain life in Christ through grace, union, adoption, holiness, and communal love.

Purpose and audience Understand what Christ does now and how His life transforms believers. Relate present reign and intercession to ordinary prayer, identity, relationships, and service. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

Acts 1:1–11 Ascension and witness

Acts 2:1–21; Acts 2:32–39 The Spirit and the exalted Lord

Hebrews 7:23–28; Romans 8:31–34 Enduring priestly care

Romans 6:1–14 Dead to sin and alive to God

Romans 8:12–27; Galatians 4:4–7 Adopted and helped by the Spirit

Ephesians 2:11–22 One new community

Colossians 3:1–17 A renewed way of living

2 Peter 1:3–11 Sharing God's life without becoming gods

Doctrinal Exposition

Eternal Life Begins in Relationship

Jesus describes eternal life as knowing the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent (John 17:3). This does not mean that eternity has no future dimension; it means that everlasting life is relational at its heart. Through Christ, people who were estranged from God are brought near. Eternal life begins now in communion with him and reaches its fullness in the resurrection and new creation.

Read: Genesis 1:26–28; John 1:12–13; Romans 8:14–17; Galatians 4:4–7; 2 Corinthians 5:17–20; 2 Peter 1:3–4.

Created for Fellowship and Stewardship

Humanity is made in God's image and entrusted with responsibility for creation (Genesis 1:26–28). This study emphasizes relationship, dominion, fruitfulness, and God's desire for a family rather than merely subjects. Those themes are best held together. Dominion is stewardship under God's authority, not permission to dominate other people. Fruitfulness includes love, justice, service, and wise care for what God has entrusted to us.

Sin damages our relationship with God and one another. Pride turns service into competition; fear turns obedience into mere performance; and selfish ambition confuses the kingdom of God with the advancement of our own names. Jesus calls people back to God and teaches them to seek first his kingdom and righteousness (Matthew 6:33).

From Slavery to Adoption

Through faith in Christ, believers receive the right to become children of God (John 1:12). Paul describes the Spirit as the Spirit of adoption, by whom believers cry 'Abba, Father' (Romans 8:15–16). Adoption is not a claim that we become divine by nature. It means that God welcomes us into his family by grace, gives us a new standing, and makes us heirs with Christ.

A slave mentality serves mainly from fear of rejection; a son or daughter learns to serve from the security of a loving relationship. Yet freedom is not permission for sin. The Spirit leads God's children to put sinful practices to death and to grow in the likeness of Christ (Romans 8:12–14). Grace creates gratitude, and gratitude produces obedience.

Kingdom Citizens and Ambassadors

Jesus' followers are called to represent his character in the world. Paul describes believers as ambassadors for Christ entrusted with the message of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18–20). Their witness is not measured only by the size of a building, the number of followers, or the wealth of a ministry. It is seen in faithfulness to the gospel, love for neighbors, integrity, hospitality, generosity, and courage in suffering.

The kingdom is present in Christ's ministry and the Spirit's work, yet its fullness is still future. Christians therefore resist both despair and triumphalism. We do not pretend that every promise is already fully realized, and we do not live as though Christ has no authority now. We work, pray, forgive, and serve in hope.

Participation in the Divine Nature

Second Peter 1:3–4 speaks of believers becoming participants in the divine nature. This does not erase the distinction between Creator and creature or make Christians gods. In context, it describes God's gracious gift through which believers escape corruption and grow in godly character. The following verses call for faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly affection, and love (2 Peter 1:5–8).

To partake in this life is to become more like Jesus through the work of God, not to acquire independent divine power. The mark of transformation is Christlike love and holiness. As we behold the Lord, we are changed from glory to glory by the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Ascension and Present Reign

Acts 1:9–11 describes Jesus' ascension. Hebrews and the apostolic letters portray him exalted at God's right hand, interceding for his people and reigning as Lord. His ascension does not mean that he has lost interest in the world. It means that his earthly ministry has reached its appointed transition and that he sends the Holy Spirit to empower the church's witness (Acts 1:8; John 16:7).

Christ's present reign challenges the church to live under his word rather than under fear, personality cults, or the pursuit of wealth. The exalted Lord is still the crucified Savior. His authority is never detached from his love and holiness.

The Lord who reigns and intercedes

Ascension marks the transition from Jesus' earthly appearances to His exalted reign. It is not abandonment. Acts joins departure with promised witness in the Spirit's power, and Hebrews describes continuing priestly care. The One enthroned is the same Savior who gave Himself.

Intercession means His people remain represented in His saving ministry. It does not mean persuading an unwilling Father to love them. Father and Son are united in the purpose of grace. The believer's confidence grows from the enduring priest rather than from an unbroken record of spiritual performance.

The Spirit brings the church into witness and renewed life. Christ's presence must not be reduced to the physical location of His ascended body or to a private feeling of nearness. The New Testament holds bodily ascension, divine presence, and the Spirit's work together. His lordship governs a community that learns truth, prayer, generosity, and mission.

New identity and transformed community

Union with Christ describes belonging to Him and sharing the benefits of His death and resurrection. Romans 6 uses baptismal language to explain a changed relation to sin. Galatians 4 speaks of adoption; Ephesians 2 speaks of peace between divided peoples; Colossians 3 describes renewed conduct.

Participation in the divine nature in 2 Peter 1 does not mean becoming independent gods. The passage connects God's gift with escape from corruption and growth in virtue. Transformation forms character through relationship with

God rather than making a person a new source of divine authority.

These truths reach the home, workplace, and church. A child receives a ground of belonging beyond comparison. A parent learns patient responsibility. An employer learns justice. A congregation learns welcome across divisions. Christology becomes visible when allegiance to Jesus changes how power, money, conflict, and speech are handled. Spiritual maturity is tested through those ordinary choices as well as through formal confession.

Study 1 Ascension and witness

READ • ACTS 1:1–11 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with ascension and witness. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus speaks of the kingdom, promises the Spirit, and ascends while the disciples receive a call toward witness.

Interpretation in Scripture The account redirects curiosity about timing toward mission. His departure does not leave them without help. The promised return and present task belong together.

Apply it today Pray for strength to bear witness in your actual setting. Teach a child that waiting for God's promise can include preparation and obedience.

Reflect and Respond

What question is redirected, and what task is given?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 The Spirit and the exalted Lord

READ • ACTS 2:1–21; ACTS 2:32–39 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the spirit and the exalted lord. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The Spirit comes, and Peter explains the event through Scripture and Jesus' resurrection and exaltation.

Interpretation in Scripture Pentecost directs attention to God's saving purpose rather than a display detached from Christ. The announcement calls for response and forms a community. Different traditions discuss later experiences, but the passage's center must remain clear.

Apply it today Seek the Spirit's help for truthful witness and holy life. Avoid measuring faith solely by a dramatic experience.

Reflect and Respond

How does Peter connect the Spirit's gift with Jesus?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 Enduring priestly care

READ • HEBREWS 7:23–28; ROMANS 8:31–34 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops enduring priestly care. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus' continuing intercession grounds assurance against accusation.

Interpretation in Scripture His priesthood rests in His enduring life and sufficient offering. Intercession expresses the continuing application of saving care, not a second sacrifice or conflict with the Father. Assurance should form gratitude and courage.

Apply it today Bring a specific accusation or fear into prayer. Seek correction where needed without surrendering hope.

Reflect and Respond

What makes His care enduring?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 Dead to sin and alive to God

READ • ROMANS 6:1–14 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops dead to sin and alive to god. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Paul connects belonging to Christ with His death and resurrection and calls believers to refuse sin's rule.

Interpretation in Scripture Grace does not encourage continued wrongdoing. Union with Christ changes allegiance, while obedience learns to express that new relation. The text's images are not permission to deny ongoing struggle.

Apply it today Choose one concrete way to refuse a destructive pattern. Ask for support rather than relying on willpower alone.

Reflect and Respond

What change of allegiance does Paul describe?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 Adopted and helped by the Spirit

READ • ROMANS 8:12–27; GALATIANS 4:4–7 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops adopted and helped by the spirit. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense Believers receive family standing, cry to the Father, and receive help amid weakness and groaning.

Interpretation in Scripture Adoption supplies belonging rather than proof that suffering has ended. The Spirit's presence joins assurance and hope while creation awaits

renewal. Read family language without implying believers become equal divine persons.

Apply it today Pray honestly as a child who can approach the Father. Help a young reader separate belonging from winning approval.

Reflect and Respond

How do assurance and weakness coexist here?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 One new community

READ • EPHESIANS 2:11–22 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops one new community. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Christ brings peace across a major division and forms a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Interpretation in Scripture The passage addresses Jew and Gentile in a particular covenant history. Its application challenges hostility while preserving that setting. Unity does not require erasing every cultural distinction.

Apply it today Welcome someone across a social boundary. Examine a practice in your church that makes belonging unnecessarily difficult.

Reflect and Respond

What does Christ create that neither group can boast of producing?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 A renewed way of living

READ • COLOSSIANS 3:1–17 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops a renewed way of living. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Believers set their lives toward the risen Christ and put away destructive conduct while clothing themselves with love.

Interpretation in Scripture The commands follow received identity rather than earning it. Forgiveness, peace, gratitude, and truthful speech make theology visible. The passage concerns shared life, not merely private spiritual mood.

Apply it today Change one pattern of speech and one response to conflict. Teach character through an action a child can practice.

Reflect and Respond

How does the new identity shape the listed commands?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Sharing God s life without becoming gods

READ • 2 PETER 1:3–11 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops sharing god's life without becoming gods. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense God's gift enables escape from corruption and growth in faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, and love.

Interpretation in Scripture Participation in divine nature is read through the moral purpose that follows. Creator and creature remain distinct. The passage does not grant independent deity or exemption from accountability.

Apply it today Select one virtue for deliberate practice this week. Invite someone trustworthy to observe your progress.

Reflect and Respond

What kind of participation does the surrounding passage describe?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Understand what Christ does now and how His life transforms believers. Relate present reign and intercession to ordinary prayer, identity, relationships, and service.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Exalted Lord, thank You for Your continuing care. By Your Spirit form truthful love, a secure identity, and a community of peace.

CHAPTER 20

The Return of Christ and Knowing Him Today

Context Jesus and the apostles teach a future return, judgment, resurrection, and renewal. Those promises call the church toward present faithfulness, love, and hopeful witness.

Purpose and audience Keep Christian hope centered on Christ rather than predictions. Let knowing Him form readiness, integrity, worship, and responsibility to the next generation. This chapter serves younger readers learning the foundations and adults preparing to live or teach the subject.

Read each passage in the map below in your own NKJV Bible. Notice its setting before connecting it with the other texts.

Passage Map

Matthew 24:36–44 Watchfulness without date setting

Matthew 25:14–30 Responsibility while waiting

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 Hope for those who grieve

John 5:25–29; Revelation 20:11–15 Righteous judgment

Revelation 21:1–8 God dwelling with His people

Revelation 22:12–21 The coming Lord and invitation

Philippians 3:7–16 Knowing Christ above achievement

Matthew 28:16–20; 2 Timothy 2:1–2 Teaching the next generation

Doctrinal Exposition

The Return of Christ and the Renewal of All Things

The New Testament teaches that Jesus will return, judge evil, raise the dead, and bring God's purposes to completion (Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; Revelation 21–22). Christians differ on the detailed sequence of end-time events and the interpretation of the millennium. The shared center is clear: the Lord will come, justice will prevail, and God will dwell with his people.

Hope in Christ's return should produce readiness, not date-setting or panic. Jesus calls his disciples to watchfulness and faithfulness. We prepare by loving God and neighbor, serving responsibly, caring for the vulnerable, and proclaiming the gospel. The future belongs to Christ, and therefore our labor in him is not in vain (1 Corinthians 15:58).

A Final Invitation

The study of Christology begins with a question and ends with a call. Who is Jesus? Scripture answers: the eternal Son, the Word made flesh, the promised Messiah, the faithful high priest, the crucified Savior, the risen Lord, and the coming King. What should we do? Believe him, receive his grace, obey his word, and make him known.

The aim of theology is not merely to win arguments. It is to lead us to worship, humility, holy living, and love. As the original teaching notes repeatedly urge, let us fix our eyes on Jesus. He is not one subject among many; he is the center of the Christian life.

The future belongs to the Lord

The return of Christ is a shared New Testament expectation. Detailed interpretations of prophetic sequence and the millennium differ among Christians. The common center is His coming, righteous judgment, bodily resurrection, and God's final renewal. A sound explanation distinguishes that center from a particular timeline.

Judgment says evil is not granted the final word. It also exposes the seriousness of present choices. Readiness is therefore faithful living rather than repeated prediction. Jesus warns against claims of secret knowledge and calls His disciples to watchfulness. The church cannot improve that command by claiming an exact date.

Hope should not make believers indifferent to creation or suffering people. Revelation's conclusion portrays God dwelling with His people and death removed. The future strengthens care in the present. We serve because labor in the Lord is not futile, even when a result remains small or unseen.

Knowing Christ and passing on His word

Paul's desire to know Christ in Philippians 3 includes the power of resurrection and participation in suffering. Knowing is relational allegiance, not merely collecting facts. It forms humility because righteousness is received through Him rather than displayed as a personal accomplishment.

The Great Commission joins teaching, discipleship, baptism, and the Lord's presence. A generation needs more than memorable slogans. It needs the capacity to read a passage, ask questions, compare evidence, pray, and act faithfully.

Teachers should welcome questions while refusing to make every private opinion equal to Scripture.

The study ends where it began: with Jesus at the center. His deity grounds worship, His humanity grounds sympathy, His cross grounds forgiveness, His resurrection grounds hope, and His reign grounds allegiance. These convictions belong in everyday conduct. A reader who can explain a doctrine but refuses truthful love has more learning to do. The next generation will hear our words and observe the kind of life they produce.

Study 1 Watchfulness without date setting

READ • MATTHEW 24:36–44 • NKJV

Place in this chapter Begin with watchfulness without date setting. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Jesus distinguishes unknown timing from the responsibility to remain ready.

Interpretation in Scripture The passage does not invite a secret calculation that bypasses His warning. Its purpose is faithful watchfulness. Readiness is formed through allegiance and conduct rather than panic over rumors.

Apply it today Complete a responsibility you have postponed. Teach a child to be faithful today instead of fearful about predictions.

Reflect and Respond

What is unknown, and what remains clear?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 2 Responsibility while waiting

READ • MATTHEW 25:14–30 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops responsibility while waiting. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Servants are accountable for what has been entrusted while the master is absent.

Interpretation in Scripture The story connects waiting with action. It does not guarantee commercial success or reduce God's gifts to money. Its warning addresses fearful unfaithfulness and the refusal to serve.

Apply it today Use a skill or resource for a real need. Ask for guidance if fear has kept you from beginning.

Reflect and Respond

How does waiting change when trust becomes active?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 3 Hope for those who grieve

READ • 1 THESSALONIANS 4:13–18 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops hope for those who grieve. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Paul comforts believers concerning those who have died through the promise of the Lord's coming and resurrection.

Interpretation in Scripture The purpose is encouragement rooted in Christ's death and rising. The passage does not prohibit grief or settle every later timetable debate. Its central promise is being with the Lord.

Apply it today Offer comfort without arguing over speculative details. Let a grieving person speak about the one they miss.

Reflect and Respond

What assurance does Paul ask believers to share?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 4 Righteous judgment

READ • JOHN 5:25–29; REVELATION 20:11–15 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops righteous judgment. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The texts connect resurrection with judgment and accountability before God.

Interpretation in Scripture Judgment is neither private revenge nor an excuse for human cruelty. It belongs to the righteous Lord. Christian proclamation must retain moral seriousness while offering the grace announced elsewhere.

Apply it today Refuse a dishonest act hidden from other people. Teach accountability through truth rather than terror.

Reflect and Respond

How does God's judgment challenge both wrongdoing and vengeance?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 5 God dwelling with His people

READ • REVELATION 21:1–8 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops god dwelling with his people. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter’s other texts.

Literal sense John sees renewal, God's presence, and the removal of death and tears.

Interpretation in Scripture The vision expresses the completion of God's saving purpose. Its imagery should be read as visionary testimony, not forced into a speculative architectural plan. The hope includes a renewed creation and faithful relationship.

Apply it today Care for someone experiencing loss and for the place where you live. Let future renewal encourage present responsibility.

Reflect and Respond

Which part of the promise most addresses your present sorrow?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 6 The coming Lord and invitation

READ • REVELATION 22:12–21 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops the coming lord and invitation. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The conclusion joins Christ's coming, moral seriousness, the gift of life, and the invitation to come.

Interpretation in Scripture The ending is both warning and grace. It calls readers toward the Lord rather than endless curiosity. Preserve its invitation without deleting the demand for faithful response.

Apply it today Respond to the invitation through prayer and honest trust. Share the hope clearly with someone who asks.

Reflect and Respond

How do warning and invitation belong together in the closing words?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 7 Knowing Christ above achievement

READ • PHILIPPIANS 3:7–16 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops knowing christ above achievement. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense Paul reorders former advantages around knowing Christ, received righteousness, resurrection hope, and continued pursuit.

Interpretation in Scripture He does not claim to have already reached complete maturity. Grace and determined discipleship belong together. Knowledge of Christ changes what counts as ultimate gain.

Apply it today Release one achievement as the basis of your worth. Pursue one act that expresses deeper allegiance to Jesus.

Reflect and Respond

What does Paul relinquish, receive, and continue to seek?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Study 8 Teaching the next generation

READ • MATTHEW 28:16–20; 2 TIMOTHY 2:1–2 • NKJV

Place in this chapter This study develops teaching the next generation. Read the whole passage before comparing it with the chapter's other texts.

Literal sense The risen Lord commissions disciples, and Paul calls for faithful transmission of teaching.

Interpretation in Scripture The mission includes obedience and responsible teachers, not merely public claims of success. Christ's presence grounds the work. Passing on the message requires clarity, patience, and a life accountable to it.

Apply it today Prepare a short lesson from a whole passage and let a younger listener ask questions. Model the conduct you teach.

Reflect and Respond

What must be passed on besides information?

Record one observation, one question, and one faithful response.

Chapter Review and Prayer

Review the eight passages before answering. Use the text to support your explanation and mark any point that is an inference or illustration.

Explain the central teaching Keep Christian hope centered on Christ rather than predictions. Let knowing Him form readiness, integrity, worship, and responsibility to the next generation.

Choose one passage from the chapter and explain its setting and main point in words a ten-year-old could understand. Keep its meaning intact when simplifying.

Compare two passages. What do they contribute together, and what distinct point must be preserved in each?

Choose one practical response from the studies. State whom it affects, what you will do, and how you will know you have followed through.

Prayer Coming Lord, keep us faithful while we wait. Teach us to know You, serve our neighbors, and pass on Your word with patience.

Christ Across the Books of the Bible

This survey follows the sixty-six-book Protestant ordering used in the source manuscript. Other Christian traditions include additional Old Testament books. Some connections below are explicit New Testament interpretations; others are thematic summaries. Their difference matters.

Genesis

promised offspring, blessing to the nations, last Adam (Genesis 3:15; 12:3; Romans 5:14–21).

Exodus

Passover, deliverance, bread and water in the wilderness (Exodus 12; John 6; 1 Corinthians 10:4).

Leviticus

sacrifice, holiness, priesthood, and atonement (Leviticus 16; Hebrews 9–10).

Numbers

God's guidance and the lifted bronze serpent (Numbers 21:4–9; John 3:14–15).

Deuteronomy

the promised prophet like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15–19; Acts 3:22).

Joshua

God's provision of rest; compare the greater rest in Christ (Joshua 21:44; Hebrews 4:8–11).

Judges

the need for a righteous deliverer and king (Judges 21:25; Luke 1:32–33).

Ruth

family redemption and the line of David (Ruth 4:13–22; Matthew 1:5).

1 Samuel

the anointed king and the limits of human leadership (1 Samuel 16; Luke 4:18).

2 Samuel

God's promise to David's house (2 Samuel 7:12–16; Luke 1:32–33).

1 Kings

royal wisdom and the temple; Christ is greater than Solomon (1 Kings 3; Matthew 12:42).

2 Kings

the failures of kings and the hope of restoration (2 Kings 25; Luke 1:68–79).

1 Chronicles

David's line and worship before God (1 Chronicles 17; Matthew 1:1).

2 Chronicles

the temple and the need for faithful kingship (2 Chronicles 7; John 2:19–21).

Ezra

return from exile and restored worship (Ezra 3; Ephesians 2:19–22).

Nehemiah

rebuilding and covenant renewal (Nehemiah 8–9; 1 Peter 2:4–5).

Esther

providential preservation of God's people; a thematic analogy, not direct prophecy (Esther 4; Romans 8:28).

Job

the righteous sufferer and longing for a mediator (Job 19:25; 1 Timothy 2:5).

Psalms

the anointed king, suffering righteous one, and priest-king (Psalms 2; 22; 110).

Proverbs

divine wisdom and godly living (Proverbs 8; 1 Corinthians 1:24).

Ecclesiastes

the limits of life without eternal hope (Ecclesiastes 3:11; John 11:25).

Song of Songs

covenant love; bridegroom language is an analogy, not a direct identification (Song 2; Ephesians 5:25–32).

Isaiah

Emmanuel, servant, king, and good news (Isaiah 7; 9; 42; 53; 61).

Jeremiah

righteous Branch and new covenant (Jeremiah 23:5–6; 31:31–34).

Lamentations

grief and the Lord's enduring mercies (Lamentations 3:21–26; Luke 19:41).

Ezekiel

new heart, shepherd, and Spirit-given life (Ezekiel 34; 36–37; John 10).

Daniel

the Son of Man and everlasting kingdom (Daniel 7:13–14; Mark 14:62).

Hosea

covenant faithfulness and the Father's call (Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:15).

Joel

outpouring of the Spirit and salvation for those who call on the Lord (Joel 2:28–32; Acts 2).

Amos

justice, judgment, and restored Davidic hope (Amos 9:11–12; Acts 15:15–17).

Obadiah

the Lord's kingdom and final justice (Obadiah 21; Revelation 11:15).

Jonah

a sign of death and rising (Jonah 1:17; Matthew 12:39–41).

Micah

Bethlehem and the shepherd-ruler (Micah 5:2–5; Matthew 2:5–6).

Nahum

God's judgment on oppressive power (Nahum 1; Revelation 19:11).

Habakkuk

living by faith amid injustice (Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17).

Zephaniah

judgment and a purified people (Zephaniah 3:9–20; Titus 2:14).

Haggai

restored worship and the glory of God's house (Haggai 2; John 2:19–21).

Zechariah

humble king, pierced one, and shepherd (Zechariah 9:9; 12:10; John 19:37).

Malachi

the coming messenger and the day of the Lord (Malachi 3:1; Mark 1:2).

Matthew

Jesus the promised Messiah and Davidic king (Matthew 1:1; 28:18–20).

Mark

Jesus the suffering servant and Son of God (Mark 1:1; 10:45).

Luke

Jesus the Savior for all peoples (Luke 2:10–11; 19:10).

John

Jesus the eternal Word and giver of life (John 1:1–18; 20:31).

Acts

the risen Christ proclaimed to the nations (Acts 1:8; 2:32–36).

Romans

righteousness and new life through Christ (Romans 3:21–26; 5:12–21).

1 Corinthians

Christ crucified and risen, the last Adam (1 Corinthians 1:23; 15:45).

2 Corinthians

reconciliation and transformation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17–21).

Galatians

freedom and sonship through Christ (Galatians 4:4–7; 5:1).

Ephesians

Christ head of the church and cornerstone (Ephesians 1:22–23; 2:20).

Philippians

the humbled and exalted Lord (Philippians 2:5–11).

Colossians

the supremacy and fullness of Christ (Colossians 1:15–20; 2:9).

1 Thessalonians

the returning Lord and resurrection hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18).

2 Thessalonians

the Lord's justice and final vindication (2 Thessalonians 1:5–10).

1 Timothy

the one mediator and Savior (1 Timothy 2:5–6).

2 Timothy

the risen Christ and faithful gospel (2 Timothy 2:8).

Titus

our great God and Savior and blessed hope (Titus 2:11–14).

Philemon

forgiveness and reconciliation in Christ (Philemon 8–21).

Hebrews

the superior Son, sacrifice, and high priest (Hebrews 1; 7–10).

James

faith shown in works under the Lord of glory (James 2:1, 14–26).

1 Peter

the suffering Christ and living hope (1 Peter 1:3; 2:21–25).

2 Peter

the glory of Christ and promise of his return (2 Peter 1:16–18; 3:13).

1 John

the incarnate Son and God's love (1 John 1:1–4; 4:9–10).

2 John

walking in truth about Jesus Christ (2 John 7–9).

3 John

walking in truth and faithful hospitality (3 John 3–8).

Jude

Jesus Christ our Lord and the call to persevere (Jude 17–25).

Revelation

the Lamb, faithful witness, King of kings, and coming Lord (Revelation 1; 5; 19; 22).

Miracles of Jesus

The Gospels repeat some events and summarize many unrecorded works, so totals vary with counting method. This index distinguishes named encounters and supplies their main passages. It supplements Chapter 10; parallel accounts should be compared rather than counted automatically as separate miracles.

Water into wine

Read John 2:1–11.

The first sign recorded by John reveals glory at Cana. Read the actual narrative rather than denying its explicit description to protect a preferred application.

The official s son

Read John 4:46–54.

Jesus' word brings healing at a distance, and the household responds. The event explores trust before the father sees the outcome.

The synagogue deliverance

Read Mark 1:21–28; Luke 4:31–37.

Authority is expressed in teaching and deliverance. The scene distinguishes the Lord's command from the crowd's astonishment.

Peter s mother in law

Read Matthew 8:14–17; Mark 1:29–34; Luke 4:38–41.

Healing leads back into ordinary service. The surrounding summary shows that the writers record selected encounters among many.

The cleansing of a leper

Read Matthew 8:1–4; Mark 1:40–45; Luke 5:12–16.

Cleansing addresses exclusion as well as bodily need. Jesus' instructions concerning restored participation are part of the care.

The paralytic brought by friends

Read Matthew 9:1–8; Mark 2:1–12; Luke 5:17–26.

Healing reveals authority associated with forgiveness. The account does not establish that every disability results from a particular sin.

The withered hand

Read Matthew 12:9–14; Mark 3:1–6; Luke 6:6–11.

A Sabbath dispute exposes the priority of doing good and the resistance of opponents. The healed person must not disappear behind the argument.

The centurion s servant

Read Matthew 8:5–13; Luke 7:1–10.

The encounter shows confidence in Jesus' authority across a social boundary. Compare the accounts without pretending their different emphases are identical.

The widow s son at Nain

Read Luke 7:11–17.

Jesus meets a grieving mother and restores her son. Compassion and authority are presented together.

The storm calmed

Read Matthew 8:23–27; Mark 4:35–41; Luke 8:22–25.

Nature obeys His command, leading to a question about His identity. The event does not promise that disciples will never face danger.

The Gerasene or Gadarene encounter

Read Matthew 8:28–34; Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:26–39.

Deliverance leads toward restored human life and witness. The accounts vary in geographical wording and narrative detail; note those differences honestly.

The bleeding woman

Read Matthew 9:20–22; Mark 5:25–34; Luke 8:43–48.

Healing is joined with personal recognition. Jesus attends to an individual within the urgent movement toward another household.

Jairus s daughter

Read Matthew 9:18–26; Mark 5:21–43; Luke 8:40–56.

Death and grief are answered through His authority. The child returns to mortal life; this differs from the fullness of Jesus' resurrection.

Two blind men

Read Matthew 9:27–31.

The men appeal to the Son of David and receive sight. Their title should be read within Matthew's royal presentation.

A mute man delivered

Read Matthew 9:32–34.

An encounter involving oppression and restored speech produces sharply different responses. Astonishment does not automatically resolve resistance.

The man at Bethesda

Read John 5:1–18.

Longstanding infirmity is met with healing, followed by controversy. The later warning should not be generalized into blame for all illness.

The feeding of five thousand

Read Matthew 14:13–21; Mark 6:30–44; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:1–15.

Provision reveals compassion and prepares deeper teaching. Matthew mentions women and children beyond the five thousand men.

Walking on the water

Read Matthew 14:22–33; Mark 6:45–52; John 6:16–21.

The disciples meet fear and Jesus' presence. Matthew includes Peter's response and a confession of the Son of God.

The Syrophoenician woman s daughter

Read Matthew 15:21–28; Mark 7:24–30.

Persistent appeal and mercy unfold across a boundary. Explain the difficult dialogue in context without using it to demean a whole people.

The deaf man

Read Mark 7:31–37.

Hearing and speech are restored in a personal encounter. The account shows attention to an individual's need rather than only a crowd's response.

The feeding of four thousand

Read Matthew 15:32–39; Mark 8:1–10.

A second feeding account again joins compassion and provision. Do not merge it automatically with the five-thousand narrative simply because both involve bread.

The blind man at Bethsaida

Read Mark 8:22–26.

Healing is narrated in stages. The unusual sequence should be described before a symbolic explanation is offered.

The boy with an unclean spirit

Read Matthew 17:14–20; Mark 9:14–29; Luke 9:37–43.

A father's distress, the disciples' failure, and Jesus' help reveal the need for dependence. Avoid converting the account into a universal diagnosis.

The coin in the fish

Read Matthew 17:24–27.

The event occurs in a discussion about the temple tax and responsibility. Its theological point should not become a promise of effortless money.

The man born blind

Read John 9:1–41.

Physical sight and spiritual response are developed through healing, questioning, exclusion, and faith. Jesus rejects an automatic blame explanation.

A woman unable to stand upright

Read Luke 13:10–17.

Restoration is joined with a Sabbath controversy and the woman's dignity. The account calls leaders to recognize care rather than protect restrictive pride.

The man with dropsy

Read Luke 14:1–6.

Jesus heals amid scrutiny and questions concerning doing good. The surrounding meal teaching develops humility and welcome.

Ten lepers

Read Luke 17:11–19.

Cleansing is followed by differing responses of gratitude. The returning outsider directs attention to thanksgiving and faith.

Lazarus

Read John 11:1–44.

The raising reveals resurrection authority amid real tears. Lazarus's return to mortal life points toward a greater victory.

Blind men near Jericho

Read Matthew 20:29–34; Mark 10:46–52; Luke 18:35–43.

Mark names Bartimaeus, while the accounts vary in number and location description. Record the differences and the shared appeal to the Son of David.

The fig tree

Read Matthew 21:18–22; Mark 11:12–25.

The symbolic act belongs beside the temple action and teaching on faith. It requires literary context rather than an isolated lesson about gardening.

The servant s ear

Read Luke 22:47–53.

Healing occurs during the arrest and stands beside Jesus' restraint of violent resistance. Compassion continues within hostility.

The large catch of fish

Read Luke 5:1–11.

Abundant provision leads to a call to discipleship. The story's destination is following, not a general formula for business expansion.

The catch by the risen Lord

Read John 21:1–14.

The post-resurrection encounter includes provision, recognition, and shared food before Peter's restoration. Keep it distinct from Luke's earlier call narrative.

Summary accounts of healing and deliverance

Read Matthew 4:23–25; Matthew 12:15; Mark 1:32–34; Luke 6:17–19.

These summaries show that the named encounters are not an exhaustive record. John 20:30 and 21:25 also acknowledge unrecorded works.

The resurrection of Jesus

Read Matthew 28; Luke 24; John 20–21; 1 Corinthians 15.

This is the decisive victory rather than one more return to mortal life. It grounds future resurrection and the church's witness.

Resurrection Appearances

The sources attest appearances without supplying every detail of a complete combined chronology. This index distinguishes the forty-day period from later encounters and visions. It supplements Chapter 18 and marks where a witness is named without a narrated conversation.

Mary Magdalene

Read John 20:11–18.

The Gospel narrates her encounter and commission to tell the disciples. Her grief becomes witness without being mocked.

Other women

Read Matthew 28:8–10.

Matthew records an encounter on their way from the tomb. This witness belongs alongside John's particular focus on Mary.

Simon Peter

Read Luke 24:33–34; 1 Corinthians 15:5.

The appearance is affirmed, but these texts do not narrate its full conversation. Do not invent a dialogue to fill the silence.

The Emmaus travelers

Read Luke 24:13–35.

Scripture is explained and Jesus is recognized. The account links suffering, glory, and renewed hope.

Gathered disciples

Read Luke 24:36–49; John 20:19–23.

The Lord brings peace, shows bodily reality, teaches, and commissions. John records Thomas's absence at the first encounter.

Thomas and the disciples

Read John 20:24–29.

A later gathering includes Thomas and his confession. The blessing also addresses future believers receiving testimony.

The disciples by the sea

Read John 21:1–23.

The encounter includes provision, a meal, and Peter's renewed responsibility. Restoration leads to faithful care.

The commissioned disciples

Read Matthew 28:16–20.

Authority, discipleship, baptism, teaching, and promised presence are joined. Matthew also notes a response of doubt.

More than five hundred

Read 1 Corinthians 15:6.

Paul reports this witness without supplying a complete narrated setting. Its place in his summary should not be embellished with invented details.

James

Read 1 Corinthians 15:7.

Paul names an appearance to James. The verse does not provide the conversation or a detailed chronology.

The apostles and ascension period

Read Acts 1:1–11; 1 Corinthians 15:7.

Acts describes teaching over forty days and the ascension. The various summaries should not be forced into details they do not state.

Paul s later encounter

Read Acts 9:1–19; 1 Corinthians 15:8–11.

Paul distinguishes his encounter from the earlier witnesses. It belongs to his calling after the ascension rather than the forty-day period.

Later visionary witness

Read Revelation 1:9–20.

John's vision presents the exalted Lord in symbolic majesty. It is not another ordinary meeting during the post-resurrection forty days.

Essential Christology Terms

Christology

The study of the person and work of Jesus Christ. It asks who He is, what He accomplishes, and how His identity and mission shape faith.

Messiah and Christ

Titles meaning the Anointed One. Christ is the Greek form corresponding to Messiah; it is not Jesus' family name.

Pre existence

The Son's existence before His human birth. The claim is distinct from deity and is studied through passages such as John 1 and John 17:5.

Deity

Divine identity and nature. Christians confess the Son as truly divine, rather than merely a gifted human teacher or created spirit.

Trinity

The confession of one God with real distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The persons are not parts of God or three separate gods.

Incarnation

The eternal Son becoming truly human while remaining divine. His humanity is complete and real, not a disguise.

Two natures

A way of describing the full deity and humanity of the one Christ. It preserves His unity without mixing the natures or creating two separate saviors.

Typology

Recognizing earlier biblical persons, institutions, or events as patterns fulfilled more fully in Christ. The New Testament's explicit connections guide the strongest examples.

Theophany

A manifestation of God. Some Christians interpret particular Old Testament appearances as appearances of the pre-incarnate Son; not every angelic appearance is explicitly identified that way.

Kingdom of God

God's saving reign, revealed in Jesus' mission and awaiting its full manifestation. It calls people to repentance, faith, and allegiance.

Mediator

One who brings parties together. Christ uniquely reconciles humanity to God through His person and saving work.

Atonement

Christ's saving work dealing with sin and bringing people into peace with God. Scripture explains it through several related images.

Redemption

Costly release through Christ's saving work. The word's imagery must be explained in its passage rather than turned into an invented financial contract.

Justification

God's gracious favorable verdict concerning those who trust Christ. It belongs with renewed life but is not identical to gradual moral growth.

Reconciliation

Restored relationship and peace with God through Christ. Received reconciliation creates responsibility for truthful peace with others.

Propitiation

An atonement term used in some translations concerning the way Christ's sacrifice deals with sin and judgment. Interpret its nuance through the full passage.

Adoption

The gracious standing of God's children and heirs. It supplies belonging and assurance through the Spirit without making believers divine persons.

Sanctification

God's work forming holiness in His people. It includes growth in faithful conduct and dependence on Christ.

Union with Christ

Belonging to Christ and sharing the benefits of His death and resurrection. This relation creates a new allegiance and way of life.

Resurrection

God's raising Jesus bodily from death and the future bodily hope of His people. It is more than the continuing memory of a departed teacher.

Ascension

The transition described in Acts 1 from the risen Lord's earthly appearances to His exalted reign. It does not mean abandonment.

Intercession

Christ's continuing priestly care for His people. It expresses the united saving purpose of Father and Son.

New creation

God's renewing work, already expressed in life in Christ and awaiting completion in the restoration of all things.

Hermeneutics

The practice of interpreting a text carefully through language, setting, literary form, context, and responsible application.

A Guide for Teachers and Families

Use the twenty chapters as a substantial course rather than rushing through facts. Each includes eight passage studies. A group may work through one chapter over several meetings, with time for reading, questions, discussion, prayer, and practical action.

Teaching a mixed age group

Let a younger reader begin with the literal sense and one concrete example. Let an older reader explain the interpretation and compare another passage. Both should be invited to ask honest questions. Do not measure understanding only by repeating technical words.

For example, after John 10 ask a child what a good shepherd does. Ask an adult how that picture challenges a ministry practice. Then return to Jesus' actual words so the illustration remains connected with the text.

Testing an explanation

Ask four questions: does the explanation follow the passage's point, does it preserve the literary form, does it distinguish evidence from inference, and does the application honor both truth and the person affected? A lesson that encourages harm needs correction even when it includes many Bible references.

A weekly practice

Read a passage together, ask someone to summarize it, discuss one question, and agree on one act of response. At the next meeting, ask what was learned and what remains difficult. This makes application reviewable without turning discipleship into competition.

Questions for continued theological study

Study divine and human knowledge through John and Mark without deleting either witness. Compare biblical atonement images before choosing a preferred system. Examine John 6 and Christian sacramental readings respectfully. Explore ministry gifts through Ephesians' purpose of maturity. Read eschatological passages for their moral and pastoral point before constructing a timeline.

Further research can add careful comparison with modern and African Christian scholarship. Use actual works and verified passages; do not invent quotations or claim that all scholars agree. This edition includes an initial historical selection rather than an exhaustive scholarly survey.

A closing invitation

Return to Jesus as the center of the study. Receive His grace, examine His word, and practice His love. Let the next generation inherit a way of reading and living that remains open to correction and firmly rooted in the Savior.

Prayer Father, keep our teaching faithful to Your word. Let knowledge of Your Son become trust, holiness, compassion, and hope. Help us pass on the gospel clearly and live in a way that serves those who hear it. Amen.

References

Biblical text

Read the listed passages in the New King James Version or another reliable translation. This study uses references and original paraphrases, with short quoted expressions where needed. Translation notes help identify textual and interpretive questions.

Source manuscript

CHRISTOLOGY-1.pdf, a sixty-eight-page classroom document bearing a Harvest Teaching Ministries heading; the earlier Christology Simplified edited manuscript; and the expanded research foundation prepared on 12 October 2026.

Romans study reference

The Book of Romans Simplified Study Edition by Ssentaba Ronald, the current edition used as the reference for chapter context, doctrine, passage studies, reflection, and readable page design.

Athanasius

On the Incarnation of the Word, especially the account of the Word's saving incarnation, sacrifice, and victory over death. https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2802.htm

Augustine

On the Trinity, Book I, especially the discussion of unity and personal distinction. https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/130101.htm

Chalcedon

Definition of Faith, 451, reproduced in Philip Schaff's Creeds of Christendom, Volume II. Distinguish the definition from Schaff's later editorial notes. https://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/creeds2.iv.i.iii.html

John Calvin

Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book II, Chapter 15, on Christ's prophetic, royal, and priestly offices.
https://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes/institutes.iv.xvi.html

Irenaeus

Against Heresies, Book III, Chapter 11, section 8, on the fourfold Gospel and living-creature imagery.
https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0103311.htm

About the Author

Ssentaba Ronald Salongo writes and teaches on biblical theology, discipleship, Christian character, and the life of the church. His books are prepared for Theos Transforming Ministries Library with the aim of making Christian teaching accessible to students, preachers, and families.

His purpose in this study is to introduce Jesus Christ clearly, help readers follow the Bible's witness, and encourage a faithful response that can be passed to the next generation.

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Ssentaba Ronald Salongo teaches biblical theology and discipleship through Theos Transforming Ministries Library.

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