

Week 3: Jesus, The Word of God

This week we will practice loving others as Christ, the Word, has loved us by speaking truth in love.

Supplies:

- Bread or gluten free cornbread with butter and honey for optional opening activity
- Scriptures (on the next page) cut into cards for activity, copies of the family lesson for parents
- Music player
- Tissues for when the tears flow

Optional Opening Activity as People Arrive: Serve bread with honey and butter. Jesus said in John 6 that he is the Bread from heaven, declaring himself to be like the bread that came down from heaven, called manna, that fed the Israelites in the wilderness. This bread tasted like honey. Jesus quoted scripture when he said that we don't live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God (Matthew 4:4). Invite people to share favorite scriptures that have been like manna or sweet bread, sustaining them in their own journey through the wilderness of life.

Worship: Play the song "Holy and Anointed One (Your Name is Like Honey)" by Jesus Image. (A link can be found on the worship playlist at the bottom of the Puzzle Piece 3 page at TillingMinistries.com.) Think about the sweet taste of honey and bread as you worship Jesus, the Bread from heaven.

Prayer: "Holy Spirit, we invite you to come and lead us into a deeper revelation of Jesus, the Word who became a human to show us what the Father is like. Help us to love each other as the body of Christ."

Remaining in the Word: Encourage people to have their Bible open as you read.

1. **Read Isaiah 55:10-11.** *"The rain and snow come down from the heavens and stay on the ground to water the earth. They cause the grain to grow, producing seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry. ¹¹ It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it" (NLT).*

Discuss: According to this passage, what happens when God sends his word? As one who is filled with the Spirit of Jesus, the Word, what happens when you declare the scriptures with faith?

2. **Read John 15:7-8.** Jesus said, *"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! ⁸ When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father."*

Discuss: Based on this passage and the previous passage, how does aligning our words to the words of Jesus produce fruit? Why does praying scripture lead to answered prayer?

3. **Read Ephesians 4:15.** *"We will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church."*

Discuss: How does speaking truth in love mature us to be like Jesus? How does viewing yourself as part of Jesus' physical body, the Word made flesh, change how you speak and act?

Activity: Hand out scripture cards and ask those who receive them to share their scripture at the time they feel it's appropriate as you read the scenarios below. (It's okay if there's more than one!)

- **A friend shares that they are going through difficult financial times.** (Scripture: *"My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."* - Philippians 4:19, NIV) **Discuss:** Give an example of how someone might speak this truth in love, versus just sharing scripture.

- **A friend is struggling to discern what path to take.** (Scripture: *"The LORD says, I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you."* – Psalm 32:8)
Discuss: Give an example of how you might speak this truth in love, versus just speaking truth.
- **You encounter someone who is sick.** (Scripture: *"Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven."* – James 5:14-15)
Discuss: Give an example of how you might speak this truth in love, versus just speaking truth.
- **How would you turn these scriptures into prayer for someone?** (For example: "Father, your word says that we are to pray over each other and believe that our prayer of faith will heal the sick, so I ask in Jesus' name for healing. Let this person encounter the love of Jesus right now and be made well because your word always accomplishes what you send it to do.")
Discuss: What do you think happens when we combine acts of kindness with praying scripture promises, believing that God will respond to our prayer of faith and love? How is praying scripture different from praying out of fear or even sympathy?

Closing Prayer: Break into groups of three to share prayer requests. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you God's heart toward each person in your group and bring to mind any scriptures to pray over them. Invite the Holy Spirit to lead you in truth and love as you pray God's promises over people in your group with faith!

Optional Handout for Families: Print off copies of the next page to hand out to parents in your group who would like to teach their children about Jesus, the Word of God.

Scriptures to cut out for activity:

"My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." - Philippians 4:19, NIV

"The LORD says, I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you." – Psalm 32:8

"Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven." – James 5:14-15

Word of God Family Lesson

Learn how the Word of God helps us separate good things that are of God from bad things that harm us.

Bible Verse: 2 Timothy 3:16. “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right” (NLT).

Supplies: Bread or pancakes (whatever bread product you have), peanut butter (or peanut butter substitute), jelly/jam, knife, optional heart cookie cutter, cup of dirt or gravel, pad of sticky notes, pen

Activity 1: The Word of God helps us separate good from bad.

1. **Set out a piece of bread.** Jesus is like bread from heaven. Just like the bread we eat becomes part of us and gives us energy, Jesus’ words in the Bible become part of us and help us live a healthy life.
2. **Spread peanut butter on the bread.** God’s love is sticky like peanut butter to help us stay connected to God and each other. Can you separate the peanut butter from the bread? (No!) Neither can you separate God’s words in scripture from his love because Jesus said that all of God’s instructions help us love God and people.
3. **Spread jelly on the peanut butter.** The Holy Spirit helps us stay connected to God’s truth and love so that we produce good fruit, just like this jelly is made from fruit and tastes good. As we learn to obey the voice of the Holy Spirit who lives inside of us, he helps us do good things.
4. **Carefully sprinkle some dirt on part of the sandwich.** Should we eat the sandwich now? Why not?
5. **Use the knife to cut off the part of the sandwich covered in dirt.** The Bible says that the Word of God is like a sword or knife that separates good from bad. Scripture helps us know what is dirty and needs to be cut off just like we cut the dirty part of the sandwich off. The Holy Spirit helps us remember what we’ve learned from the Bible and helps us know when we need to use the knife.
6. **Place a piece of bread on top of the remaining good part of the sandwich and cut out a heart (or 2) from the center.** The Bible tells us that Jesus is the Word or voice of God in the Bible who became a human like us. God’s Word now lives inside us so we can hear his voice. As we eat our sandwich, it represents inviting Jesus and his words to live in our heart, helping us love God and people.

Activity 2: The Word in Me

1. **Draw a picture of a knife on a sticky note and put it on your forehead.** The Holy Spirit gives us a mind like Jesus so we can separate good from bad things that we hear and see. The Holy Spirit helps us keep the junk out of our mind by teaching us right from wrong through scripture.
2. **Draw a stick figure inside of a heart on another sticky note and put it over your heart.** Jesus is the living Word of God who lives in our heart. The more we talk to Jesus about the things we see and hear, and listen for his voice, the more he guides us to what is true and keeps our feelings healthy.
3. **Draw a smiley face on another sticky note and put it over your lips.** (Go ahead and try to talk with the sticky note on your top lip. It will make kids laugh and that is good!) Jesus said that we speak from the overflow of what’s in our heart. If we’re listening to Jesus and filling our heart with God’s Word, what comes out of our mouth will be good.
4. Ephesians 4:29 says, *“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen”* (NIV). If the words we speak come from what is in our heart, how do we guard our heart so that only good things come out? (Hint: Go back to step 1!)