

Paul Made Much of Jesus

BIBLE PASSAGE: Colossians 1:15–2:3

MAIN POINT: Paul said that Jesus is most important.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 1:21

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: When should we tell others about Jesus? We should tell about Jesus all the time.

INTRODUCE THE STORY
(15–20 MINUTES)
PAGE 58



TEACH THE STORY
(10–15 MINUTES)
PAGE 60



EXPERIENCE THE STORY
(20–25 MINUTES)
PAGE 62



Leader BIBLE STUDY

5 Paul wrote his letter to the church at Colossae not long after he arrived in Rome as a prisoner. The letter served to correct false teaching in the church and to encourage right living among believers. Focus on verses 15-20, in which Paul described who Jesus is.

Paul's teaching to the Colossians was important because the believers were trying to figure out what it meant to follow Jesus. They were struggling to understand the gospel and discern what is really true. These are the same questions we face as believers today: Who is Jesus? What is the gospel? What is true about God and about myself?

Before you teach boys and girls about Paul's letter to the Colossians, pray for the Holy Spirit's help. Pray that Jesus would be lifted up and treasured. Keep these points in mind as you prepare for the session.

1. Jesus is the image of the invisible God. (Col. 1:15) If you want to know what God is like, look at Jesus. His life and teaching tells us what is true about God. He reflects God's character. (See Heb. 1:3.) Jesus Himself said, "The one who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9).

2. Jesus is Creator. (Col. 1:16-17) Because He created everything, He is in charge of everything—even invisible things! He controls and sustains all things. Because He is at the center, we can take comfort in Him even when life is hard.

3. Jesus is King. (Col. 1:18) The reality is that we live in God's kingdom. If we live for ourselves instead of Him, we sin. Sin is rebellion against the King. We deserve to die for our sin, but the good news—the gospel—is that Jesus came to save sinners.

Paul made much of Jesus because Jesus is better. He has authority over everything—including us and our salvation. Jesus is great, and He is all we need.

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The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

Paul Made Much of Jesus

Colossians 1:15–2:3

• **Look at stars:** Dim the lights before telling the story. Tape black paper to the end of a flashlight and poke pin-sized holes all through the paper. When you come to the part of the story where Paul writes that Jesus was with God before the world was created, build anticipation. When you mention that God created everything, turn on the light and marvel at the stars.

• **Read a letter:** Print out the Bible story and roll the paper like a scroll. Invite another adult leader to deliver the scroll to you at the appropriate moment in the Bible story. Open it and tell the rest of the Bible story as if reading the letter.

When Paul was a prisoner in Rome, people came to tell him news about believers and churches all over the world. Paul had visited many of the churches, and **he wrote letters to tell the believers to keep following Jesus.**

Paul wrote a letter to the church in Colossae (koh LAHS sih). The believers there knew the good news about Jesus, but there was a problem. **New teachers had come and told them things that were not true. Paul's letter reminded them what is true about Jesus. This is what Paul wrote:**

“Jesus shows us what God is like.

The Son of God was with God before God created anything.

**He created everything in heaven and on earth,
Everything you see and don't see;
Everything is for Him.**

The church—all the believers in the world—are the body, and He is the head.

**God was happy to send His Son to earth to rescue people from sin
through His blood on the cross.”**

Paul reminded the believers that their sin had kept them away from God. Our sin makes us God's enemies. But God rescues us from sin and forgives us through Jesus.

Paul said, “This is the gospel. If anyone tells you the gospel is something else, that person is lying.

“Have courage and love one another. All wisdom and knowledge comes from God.”

Christ Connection: Paul reminded believers that Jesus is most important. Jesus is God's Son, and He died on the cross to rescue people from sin. This good news is all we need; Jesus is all we need.



**WANT TO
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Invite preschoolers to check out this week's devotionals to discover how God's Word can help them grow in the gospel. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Introduce THE STORY

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Welcome time

- “Don’t Stop” song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert download
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play the unit theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church’s security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- “Making Much of Jesus” activity page, 1 per child
- pencils or crayons

Help preschoolers identify the spaces with a circle shape inside and color only those shapes to reveal a cross.

SAY • Whom do you think of when you see a cross? Yes, Jesus! In today’s Bible story, Paul wrote a letter to the believers in Colossae. The believers there knew the good news about Jesus, but new teachers had come and told them things that were not true. Paul’s letter reminded them what is true about Jesus. We will hear what Paul wrote in our Bible story.

Sing “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes”

Lead preschoolers in singing “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes.” If you are unfamiliar with the lyrics or motions, look them up online before the session. Begin slowly and increase speed as preschoolers master the lyrics and motions.



Make it more fun by varying the speed.

SAY • What do you think is the most important part of your body? I think the head is the most important because your brain is in your head and it controls the rest of your body. In today's Bible story, Paul said that Jesus is like the head and believers are like the body. Let's listen to what else Paul said about Jesus in today's Bible story.

Draw on maps

Cut pages out of an atlas or cut road maps into manageable sheets. Encourage a preschooler to trace the roads or simply draw pictures on the map paper. Spin a globe, show a child where your town is, and talk about how big the world is.

Show the Bible story picture.

SAY • Paul wrote a letter to his friends in the church of Colossae. They lived far away from where he was in Rome. He wanted them to remember that Jesus, God's Son, was with God before anything was created. **Paul said that Jesus is most important.** because He came to earth to rescue people from sin.

- atlas or road maps
- scissors
- pencils or crayons
- globe

Transition to teach the story

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, flip off the lights, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Invite children to say J-E-S-U-S with each step they make as they move to group time.

- countdown video (optional)

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Introduce the Bible story

Ask preschoolers: “What is true about Jesus?” Listen as children brainstorm. Gently clarify any misunderstandings if necessary.

SAY • The Bible tells us what is true about Jesus. In today’s Bible story, the people in the church at Colossae were being taught things about Jesus that were not true. Paul wrote a letter to remind them of the truth.

Watch or tell the Bible story

Place a bookmark at Colossians 1 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY • The Bible is a true book. It is the only book that has all God’s words in it. The letter Paul wrote in our Bible story today is in the Book of Colossians in the New Testament part of the Bible.

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

Talk about the Bible story

SAY • **Paul said that Jesus is most important.** Jesus is God’s Son, and He died on the cross to rescue people

- Bible
- bookmark
- “Paul Made Much of Jesus” video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

- Main Point Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

from sin. This good news is all we need; Jesus is all we need.

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline or big story circle as you ask the following review questions:

1. Why were believers in Colossae confused about the good news? (*New teachers had told them things that were not true.*)
2. Since he was a prisoner in Rome, how did Paul talk to his friends in Colossae? (*He wrote a letter.*)
3. Who did Paul say has always been with God? (*Jesus, God the Son, has always been with God.*)
4. Whom did God send to earth to rescue people from sin? (*Jesus*)

Learn the big picture question

SAY • The gospel—the good news about Jesus—is the most important news there is. Paul wanted to make sure people got this good news right. ***When should we tell others about Jesus? We should tell about Jesus all the time.*** We should share what is true about Jesus every chance we get. We want all people to be rescued from sin!

• Big Picture Question Poster

Practice the key passage

Open your Bible to Philippians 1:21. Read the key passage aloud several times. Sing together the key passage song, “To Live Is Christ.”

SAY • Paul looked forward to the day when he would be with Jesus. Until then, he was happy to do what God had called him to do.

• Key Passage Poster
• “To Live Is Christ” song

Transition to experience the story

Experience THE STORY

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- puzzles about Jesus
- Bibles

Tip: Place the puzzle pieces faceup on the left side of the frame or work area. Working from left to right is a pre-reading skill.

Work puzzles

Display a variety of puzzles that depict Jesus in all kinds of situations. Encourage boys and girls to work the puzzles, and talk briefly about the situation depicted in each. If puzzles are unavailable, print past Bible story pictures and cut them into pieces. Open illustrated Bibles to show Bible stories with Jesus being the predominant figure in each.

SAY • The whole Bible is about God's Son, Jesus. He existed before God created anything, and Jesus created everything in heaven and on earth. This is news we all need to share. ***When should we tell others about Jesus? We should tell about Jesus all the time.***

Experiment with invisible ink

Before the session, mix equal parts baking soda and water in a cup. Dip a cotton swab or a paintbrush into the mixture, and draw a cross on a sheet of paper for each preschooler. Allow the papers to dry before class. It should only take a few minutes.

Set out cups of grape juice and paintbrushes. Give each preschooler paper. Explain to preschoolers that there is an invisible message on their paper, and they must paint over it

- paper
- paper cups
- baking soda
- water
- grape juice
- paintbrushes
- cotton swabs (optional)
- smocks

with grape juice to discover the message. Once the message is revealed, allow preschoolers to draw their own invisible ink messages.

SAY • Paul told the Colossian believers that everything we see and don't see, everything is for Jesus. **Paul said that Jesus is most important!** Jesus is God's Son, and He died on the cross to rescue people from sin. This good news is all we need; Jesus is all we need.

Decorate Jesus' name

Print *JESUS* on a sheet of paper for each child. Run a bead of glue over the letter *J*. Show a child how to place yarn along the glue line to make a *J*. Repeat with the other letters. Older preschoolers may be able to follow the outline of the letters with the glue. Say Jesus' name often as a child works.

- paper
- liquid glue
- pieces of yarn
- scissors

SAY • When Paul learned that his friends in Colossae were hearing untrue things about Jesus, he knew he needed to write to them. **Paul said that Jesus is most important.** Paul told them that Jesus created everything in heaven and on earth. He reminded the Colossians that Jesus is the head of the church.

Match truths about Jesus

Before the session, print two copies of the "Jesus Is" printable in color. Cut apart one set of strips and place them in a Bible at the listed reference. Cut apart the other set of strips and place them in a basket or bag. Allow preschoolers to take turns pulling a strip from a bag. Read what each strip says about Jesus. Then let a preschooler open the Bible to the matching strip. Read the referenced verse.

- "Jesus Is" printable, 2
- Bible
- basket or bag

SAY • Jesus shows us what God is like. **Paul said that Jesus**

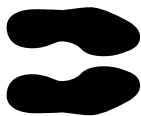
is most important. Jesus is God's Son, and He died on the cross to rescue people from sin. This good news is all we need; Jesus is all we need.

Hop and tell

- "Hopping Feet" printable
- tape
- "Don't Stop" song (optional)
- "To Live Is Christ" song (optional)

Print several copies of "Hopping Feet" onto colorful paper. Securely tape the footprints on the floor where the feet are not all facing the same direction. A child will not only hop from print to print, she will hop and spin. Play music, and demonstrate how a child will hop from footprint to footprint. Say each word of the main point, repeat the big picture question and answer, or spell *JESUS* as a child hops.

SAY • Paul knew that no one could ever love us like Jesus does. He died on the cross and rose again so we could be saved from our sin. Jesus wants us to love one another. We can show our love by telling people this good news. *When should we tell others about Jesus? We should tell about Jesus all the time.*



Snack

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Guide preschoolers to clean their areas. Take a restroom break and wash hands. Gather preschoolers for snack time. Thank God for the snack.

Serve O-shaped cereal on plates. Observe the random pattern made by the cereal and compare it to the stars in the sky. Mention that Jesus created the sun, moon, and stars. Comment that **Paul said that Jesus is most important** by pointing out this truth to the believers who had been taught things that were not true.

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert download
- snack food
- paper cups and napkins

Transition

When a child finishes his snack, guide him to throw away any trash. He may select a book or puzzle to examine, play quietly with play dough or a favorite toy, or color the Bible story coloring page.

Offer the journal page and invite preschoolers to print the letter *J* or draw a picture of Jesus, the One who rescues us from sin and forgives us. Pray for the children.

SAY • God, thank You for giving us the best gift of all, Jesus, who died on the cross so we can have forgiveness from sin. Help us to tell that good news to everyone we meet. Amen.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- books
- puzzles
- play dough
- Journal Page printable, 1 per child
- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers