

## John's Vision of Jesus

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**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Revelation 1:9-20

**MAIN POINT:** Jesus appeared to John in a vision to tell about the end of time.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Revelation 21:5

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** What will happen when Jesus returns? Jesus will destroy all evil and make all things new.

**INTRODUCE THE STORY**  
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## Leader BIBLE STUDY

The apostle John wrote the Book of Revelation from the island of Patmos. Patmos was a small Greek island where the Roman emperor often exiled prisoners. John was likely sent to Patmos as a prisoner, arrested for preaching the gospel.

With this session, introduce kids to the Book of Revelation—the last book of the Bible. Other Bible books tell us about things that happened in past, but Revelation tells about things that will happen in the future. A glimpse of the future kingdom of God gives believers hope and encourages them to remain faithful to Christ.

In Revelation 1, Jesus appeared to John in a vision to tell

about the end of time. John was on the island of Patmos when he heard a voice telling him to write what he saw. John turned and, in a vision, saw Jesus: He was wearing a long robe with a gold sash wrapped around His chest. His head and hair were as white as snow, and His eyes were like a fiery flame. Because the Book of Revelation is highly symbolic, avoid dwelling on the physical description of Jesus. Jesus' appearance to John reveals what Jesus is like: worthy of all honor, powerful, and victorious.

John saw Jesus walking among seven lampstands, symbols for the seven churches. Explain to the boys and girls you teach that lampstands are used to bring light into dark places. That is the purpose of the church—to bring the light of the gospel into a dark world.

When John saw Jesus, he fell at Jesus' feet. Jesus reached down and put His hand on John. He said, "Don't be afraid" (Rev. 1:17). Jesus explained that He is the First and the Last, the Living One. While Jesus was on earth, He defeated sin and death by dying on the cross and coming back to life. Now Jesus is lifted up in glory and honor. We can look forward to a future with Him forever.



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# The BIBLE STORY

## Bible Storytelling Tips

## John's Vision of Jesus

*Revelation 1:9-20*

- **Change your posture:** Stand as you tell narrated portions and then kneel down when John encounters Jesus.
- **Use props:** Label seven floor lamps with the names of the churches. Walk to each lamp as you say the name of a church and turn it on.

Like many believers, **the apostle John faced suffering and persecution for telling people about Jesus. The Roman emperor punished John by sending him to an island called Patmos (PAT muhs).**

**While John was on the island, he had a vision. John heard a loud voice like a trumpet. The voice said, “Write on a scroll what you see. Then send the message to the seven churches** in Ephesus (EF uh suhs), Smyrna (SMUHR nuh), Pergamum (PUHR guh muhm), Thyatira (THIGH uh TIGH ruh), Sardis (SAHR diss), Philadelphia (FIL uh DEL fih uh), and Laodicea (lay AHD ih SEE uh).”

**John turned around to see whose voice he heard. He saw seven gold lampstands, and he saw Jesus—the Son of Man. Jesus was wearing a long robe with a gold sash wrapped around His chest.**

**When John saw Jesus, he fell at Jesus’ feet. Jesus put His hand on John and commanded him, “Do not be afraid! I am the First and the Last, and the Living One. I was dead, but look—I am alive forever and ever.”**

**Jesus explained that the seven lampstands were the seven churches. He told John to write about everything he had seen.**

*Christ Connection: Jesus showed Himself to John and explained that He is the First and the Last, the Living One. While Jesus was on earth, He defeated sin and death by dying on the cross and coming back to life. Now Jesus is lifted up in glory and honor forever and ever.*



**WANT TO  
DISCOVER  
GOD'S WORD?  
GET  
ADVENTURE!**

Invite kids 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](http://www.lifeway.com/devotionals).

# Introduce the STORY

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## Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive, ask them to share about a vivid dream they have had. What happened in their dream?

**SAY** • Today we'll hear a story about a man named John, who had a vision of Jesus. A vision is like a dream, except you are awake.

## Activity page (5 minutes)

- "Hidden Vision" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the "Hidden Vision" activity page. Instruct kids to find and circle the different images hidden in the Bible story art.

**SAY** • Sometimes the Bible uses symbols to teach us something. A *symbol* is something that we can see that helps us understand something we can't see or something that's hard to explain. In the Book of Revelation, lots of symbols might seem a little confusing, but everything is written so that we might understand what God is trying to teach us.

## Session starter (10 minutes)

### OPTION 1: Old and new

Draw a line down the middle of the dry erase board and label each side *Old* or *New*. Show examples (or photos) of various items, some old and some new. As you show the examples, allow the kids to tape them to the correct side of the board.

**SAY** • Can you imagine a world where socks don't wear out? Or where apples always stay fresh? Things wear out now because our world is marked by sin. Sin leads to death, which means that all things decay. But Jesus has promised to make everything new again—even us! One day He will wipe away all traces of sin, and everything that God has made will be perfect again.

### OPTION 2: Bad for good

Form smaller groups of three or four kids. Give each group an index card with a scenario written on it. Scenarios should be things that seem bad or painful but are actually for our good, such as getting a tooth pulled, getting a shot, or receiving a consequence for a wrong choice. Challenge the groups to list the reasons why their scenario would be a good thing.

**SAY** • Sometimes God uses things that seem bad to do something good. The worst thing that has ever happened—the death of Jesus on the cross—God used for our good. Jesus' death and resurrection provides our salvation. Jesus has promised to return and make everything new again. We'll hear more during our Bible story.



LOW PREP

- dry erase board
- dry erase marker
- old and new items or images
- tape

- index cards
- marker

## Transition to teach the story

# Teach the STORY

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- room decorations
- Theme Background
- Slide (optional)

**Suggested Theme Decorating Ideas:** Use a large basket, such as a laundry hamper, to mimic the basket of a hot air balloon. Hang a giant beach ball or balloon from the ceiling over the basket and use rope to connect them. Hang items like binoculars or maps around the room.

## Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as the session begins.

## Introduce the session (3 minutes)

- leader attire
- binoculars

*[Leader enters wearing pilot gear and carrying binoculars.]*

**LEADER** • Hello, boys and girls! My name is *[your name]*, and I'm so excited that you are able to join me today because I have something really extraordinary to share with you! You see, last week was my birthday, and I got the most amazing gift. All my friends chipped in and bought me something I've really wanted for a long time. I have always wanted to go up in a hot air balloon, and my friend bought me lessons to learn how to fly one! That's right, I am going to learn how to pilot a hot air balloon!

Well, I just had my first lesson the other day and it was so cool. I've never been up that high in my whole life. You wouldn't believe all the amazing things I was able to see way up there. I flew over farms and saw the fields. From that high, they looked like squares on a quilt! I flew over a river and saw how it wound back and forth for miles before reaching the ocean. It really changed the way I look at things when I'm back on the ground.

That reminds me of the Bible story I want to share with you today. It's about a man who experienced something truly remarkable. He didn't go up in a hot air balloon, but what he saw changed his perspective for sure.

## Big picture question (1 minute)

**LEADER** • Over the next few weeks, we are going to hear about an amazing vision John had of Jesus. In this vision, Jesus spoke to John about the future. As we hear these stories of John's vision, we will answer our big picture question: ***What will happen when Jesus returns?*** Any guesses? [*Allow time for kids to respond.*] Our question is answered with a promise. We'll learn more soon.

## Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline or big story circle.

**LEADER** • We have learned a lot from God's Word about Jesus and His promise to one day return. We've read from some of Paul's letters to the churches, encouraging them to stand strong in their faith as they wait for the Lord. Today we will read from the

• Giant Timeline or  
Big Story Circle

Book of Revelation, which was written by John. John was one of Jesus' disciples and closest friends. He was with Jesus from the beginning of His ministry up until the time of Jesus' crucifixion. He was with the disciples when Jesus was raised from the dead, and he saw Jesus ascend into heaven. John also heard Jesus' promise to one day return and make all things new. Our story this week is called "John's Vision of Jesus."

## Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Revelation 1:9-20. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "John's Vision of Jesus."

**LEADER** • Have you ever done something wrong and been sent to your room for time-out? John, Jesus' disciple had been exiled to the island of Patmos. Being in *exile* is kind of like being in a permanent time-out. What was John's crime? Telling people about Jesus and the good news of how they can be rescued from their sin. But even though John suffered on Patmos, while there he received an incredible revelation from Jesus Himself!

John had a vision, which is like a dream except he was awake. In his vision, he saw Jesus and heard Him speak. Can you imagine what John must have been feeling? Here was Jesus in all His glory standing before him. The Bible says that Jesus' hair was as white as snow, and His eyes blazed like fire. His feet were like bronze from a furnace, and His voice sounded like a rushing waterfall. John was so overwhelmed at the sight that he fell down at Jesus' feet. How do you think you would react to seeing

- Bibles
- "John's Vision of Jesus" video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Jesus in all His glory?

Jesus showed Himself to John to give John a job. What was this job? To write down the things that Jesus would show him. **Jesus appeared to John in a vision to tell about the end of time.** In the coming weeks, we will hear more about what John saw and experienced in his vision.

## Christ connection

**LEADER** • Jesus showed Himself to John and explained that He is the First and the Last, the Living One. While Jesus was on earth, He defeated sin and death by dying on the cross and coming back to life. Now Jesus is lifted up in glory and honor forever and ever. At just the right time, Jesus will come back to earth. ***What will happen when Jesus returns? Jesus will destroy all evil and make all things new.***

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

## Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Revelation 21:5.

**LEADER** • What kind of person sits on a throne? The key passage tells us that the person speaking is a king. But not just any king. He is the King of kings—Jesus! He promises to make everything new. Even though we have been rescued by Jesus and forgiven of our sin, sin's effects are everywhere. We still face sickness, sin, and death. But one day Jesus will take away all the bad things, and He will restore everything to the way God created it in the very beginning. What an incredible promise that is! Lead boys and girls in singing "Everything New."

- Key Passage Poster
- "Everything New" song

- “Unit 36, Session 1” discussion starter video

## Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

**LEADER** • Have you ever wondered what the future will be like? Does it make you feel happy or afraid? Think about that as we watch this video.

Show the “Unit 36, Session 1” discussion starter video. Discuss what the cupcakes were looking forward to. Ask the kids what kinds of things they look forward to in the future. Is there anything in their futures that scares them? How can we know what the future holds?

**LEADER** • We cannot know everything that will happen in our lives, but we do know how God’s story will unfold. God gave us the Bible, which includes the Book of Revelation. Jesus will return and set everything right.

## Sing (4 minutes)

- “I Stand Amazed” song

**LEADER** • Jesus appeared to John in a vision to tell about the end of time. One day, every believer will stand before Jesus, amazed at His goodness.

Sing together “I Stand Amazed.”

## Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

**LEADER** • God, thank You for allowing us to hear Your Word today. We thank You for the promise that one day Jesus will make everything new. We praise You because You are in control and Your ways are perfect. Thank You for giving us eternal life with You. Amen.

## Dismiss to apply the story

## The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



**God rules.** Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



**We sinned.** Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



**God provided.** Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



**Jesus gives.** Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



**We respond.** Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

# Apply the STORY

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## Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- index cards
- markers
- timer

Before the session, create a set of cards with the words to the key passage written out, one or two words per card. Hide the cards. Challenge the kids to find all the cards and assemble them in the correct order of the key passage. Set a timer to see how quickly they can complete the task.

**SAY** • Who is speaking in this passage? That's right, Jesus. Jesus is on the throne because He is the King of kings. That means He is in control over everything. We can trust that His promises are true because He rules the world!

## Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster
- dry erase board or large sheet of paper
- marker

Distribute Bibles to the kids and help them find Revelation 1:9-20. Ask a volunteer to retell what they heard in the Bible story. Ask the following review questions.

Questions:

1. What book of the Bible did our story come from? (*Revelation*)
2. Is Revelation in the Old or New Testament? (*New*)
3. In which division of the New Testament is the Book of Revelation? (*Prophecy*)

4. Who wrote the Book of Revelation? (*John, Rev. 1:9*)
5. On which island was John exiled? (*Patmos, Rev. 1:9*)
6. John described the voice as like what? (*a trumpet, Rev. 1:10*)
7. In his vision John saw seven golden \_\_\_\_\_.  
(*lampstands, Rev. 1:12*)
8. Whose voice did John hear? (*Jesus' voice, Rev. 1:13*)
9. Jesus told John to not be \_\_\_\_\_. (*afraid, Rev. 1:17*)
10. How many churches did John write to? (*seven, Rev. 1:20*)
11. ***What will happen when Jesus returns? Jesus will destroy all evil and make all things new.***

**SAY** • Great job, everyone! **Jesus appeared to John in a vision to tell about the end of time.** Jesus had special messages for seven churches, and He wanted John to be His messenger. Jesus also calmed John's fears by reminding John that He is alive. Jesus said that He is the First and the Last. Jesus never ends! He has always existed and always will exist. This vision reminds us of Jesus' incredible promise to come back for us one day! We will live forever with God if we believe in Jesus.

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

## Activity choice (10 minutes)

**OPTION 1:** Who holds the keys?

Bring in a padlock with its key and other keys that do not fit. Invite the kids to sit in a circle. Select one kid to sit in the middle of the group with the lock. Give each key to one of the other kids. Then, allow the kid in the middle three guesses of who has the correct key. When she guesses, allow the kid she chose to come and try his key in the lock. If she is unable to get the lock open in three guesses, mix up the

LOW PREP

- padlock
- several keys

keys and play again with a new kid in the center with the lock.

**SAY** • The Bible says that Jesus is the Living One. He was dead but is alive again. He is the One who holds the keys to death, which means only He can free us from the power of death so that we can live forever with God. Jesus is the only way that we can have freedom from sin and death. We must turn to Him to be saved, and only in Him will we find eternal life.

**OPTION 2: Writings on a scroll**

- paper
- markers
- craft sticks
- glue
- string (optional)

Provide each kid with paper and markers. Help the kids to write the main point on their paper and glue craft sticks to the corners to look like handles. Then instruct the kids to roll the paper tightly toward the center so that it looks like a scroll. You may use string to tie the scrolls closed.

**SAY** • In our story today, **Jesus appeared to John in a vision to tell about the end of time.** John didn't have this vision so he could keep what he saw to himself. Jesus told John to write everything that he saw in his vision on a scroll. The vision was a message to the local churches and also to us. It told about what will happen before Jesus comes back, and what will happen when He does. He is still alive and will return. He has always existed and always will exist. We can trust Jesus because He is God's Son.

## Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute each child's journal. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?

Make sure each child secures this week's sheet in the journal, and then collect them. Keep the journals in the classroom so they will be available every week or as often as you wish to use them.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.

- pencils and crayons
- Journal Page
- Bible Story Coloring Page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.