

Jesus: In the Gospels-In My Life

Purpose

Family members will be able to identify and respond to important events in the life of Jesus and discern how Jesus is alive in our midst.

Materials Needed

- ♦ Bible
- ♦ Candle and matches
- ♦ Plain paper
- ♦ Pencils and/or markers, (young children and playful adults might enjoy using modeling clay for the activity)
- ♦ Chart: *Events in the Life of Jesus* (see last two pages)
- ♦ Optional video: Selected scenes from *Jesus of Nazareth* (Available on Amazon Prime. The whole movie is 6 ½ hours long so pick out a few scenes or you can watch the whole movie over a few days.) (This session can also be done without the video by reading from the Bible – see the suggested readings at the end of this document.)

Length of Activity

Time: 30-60 minutes. With young children or for households on a tight time schedule you could use the material in more than one session.

Session Outline

- 1 Gather the family in one room, and invite everyone to sit comfortably. If you will be using the video, gather around the computer/television.
- 2 Explain that you are going to lead them through some activities and faith sharing about Jesus -- his life and importance in our lives.
- 3 Tell them that you would like to play a video about the life of Jesus. Make sure that all members can see the video. After the video go to number 5 below. If you are not using the video go on to number 4 below.
- 4 Guide members through an activity of remembering the life of Jesus using the following directions.
 - Give them each a piece of paper, pencil and/or markers. Give younger members clay or paper and crayons.
 - Tell them that you would like for them to think about what they know about Jesus. Consider his life from birth to his ascension into heaven, his miracles and teachings, and the people who were part of his life. (For scripture passages review the chart: *Events in the Life of Jesus*.)
 - Tell younger members they can either model or draw something about Jesus. You might need to help them get started. Tell the others that they are to draw a horizontal line across the paper about mid-way on the page. Then tell them that this is a time-line of Jesus' life on earth. They can use either words or pictures to indicate important events in the life of Jesus. Tell them to consider his life from birth to his ascension into heaven.
 - Give them time to work. Members can share while they work, especially if younger ones need assistance with remembering.
 - After sufficient time, invite them to share what they have on their timelines. Include younger members by asking what they have made. Then go on to number 5 below.
- 5 After the video or after you have covered highlights of the life of Jesus invite discussion using the following questions.

Younger members may continue to work with their drawing or clay. Include them in the discussion by asking them to share what they have drawn or made.

- What is your favorite part about the life of Jesus? Why?
- Do you think of Jesus as a real person? Why or why not?
- Of the things that Jesus said and did, which do you find the most affirming?
- Of the things that Jesus said and did, which do you find the most challenging?

6 Together decide on one story about Jesus that you could portray in some way. Be creative. Here are several suggestions: a) act it out, b) make up a song or poem that retells the story in contemporary language and images, c) have someone pretend to be Jesus and someone else interview Jesus (these parts could be rotated so different ones get to play Jesus and the interviewer), etc. If you act-out a story of Jesus, be sure to include everyone. Those who do not have a central part can serve as bystanders. There were always lots of followers around Jesus. Use household items for costumes or props.

Be sure to read the gospel story you are portraying.

7 After you have had enough time at this activity tell them that we believe that Jesus is with us even though we cannot see him the way we can see one another.

8 Light the candle. Remind them that the candle is a symbol of the presence of Jesus with us. Tell them to focus on the candle for a few moments and consider the following questions.

- What do you suppose Jesus sees as he looks at us?
- What does he hear?
- What might Jesus say to us right now?
- What would you like to say to Jesus?

9 Take some time to share their responses to the first two questions above.

10 Ask them to put the words they think Jesus might say now, or the words they would like to say to Jesus now into a short

prayer. After each prayer the group could respond, "Jesus, we believe you are with us."

11 When prayers seem finished, tell them that one of the important ways Jesus is with us right now is in one another. Sometimes it takes a great act of faith to remember that when we greet one another we greet Jesus. Jesus told us that we are all one with him, with his Father and the Holy Spirit. Invite them to share a sign of love and respect, greeting one another as Jesus would greet each person.

12 Thank them for their participation and enjoy a snack together.

Events in the Life of Jesus as Recorded in the Gospels

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Early Years				
Birth	1:18-25		2:1-7	
Visit of the Wise Men	2:1-12			
Flight into Egypt	2:13-21			
Teaching in the Temple			2:41-51	
Jesus' baptism	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21-22	
Changing water into wine				2:1-11
Temptation in the Wilderness	4:1-11	1:12-13	4:1-13	
Jesus' Ministry				
Start of the Galilean ministry	4:12-17	1:14-15	4:14-15	
Summoning the first disciples	4:18-22	1:16-20	5:1-11	1:35-51
Sermon on the Mount	5:1-7:29		6:20-49	
Naming the Apostles	10:1-42	3:13-19; 6:7-19	9:1-6	
Feeding 5,000	14:13-21	6:32-44	9:10-17	6:1-14
Walking on water	14:22-33	6:45-52		6:16-21
Peter declares Jesus to be the Christ	16:16	8:29	9:20	
Transfiguration of Jesus	17:1-13	9:2-8	9:28-36	
Raising of Lazarus				11:1-44

Final Days

Entry into Jerusalem	21:1-11	11:1-10	19:28-44	12:12-19
Cleansing of the Temple	21:12-13	11:15-17	19:45-46	2:13-17
Judas betrays Jesus	26:14-16	14:10-11	22:3-6	
Preparations for Passover	26:17-19	14:12-16	22:7-13	
Last Supper	26:20-29	14:17-25	22:14-18	13:1-30
Arrest	26:47-56	14:43-52	22:47-53	18:2-12
Trial	26:57-27:26	14:53-15:15	22:54-23:25	18:13-19:16
Crucifixion and death	27:33-54	15:22-39	23:33-47	19:17-37
Burial	27:57-61	15:42-47	23:50-56	19:38-42
Resurrection	28:1-10	16:1-8	24:1-11	20:1-18
Appearances to disciples	28:16-20	16:12-18	24:13-49	20:19-21:23
Ascension		16:19	24:50-51	