

# Jesus Christ: Lord and Savior

## Student Preparation

- Students were asked to read Chapter 2: Jesus Christ: Lord and Savior (pages 40–65) in preparation for this session.
- Students were asked to complete Parts 1 and 2 of the “Chapter 1 Test” (online at [www.avemariapress.com](http://www.avemariapress.com)).

## Warm-up (15–20 minutes)

- Check the students’ responses to the “Chapter 1 Test,” Parts 1 and 2. Answers may be found on page 59 of the TWE. Take time to address any difficulties and/or questions the students may have.
- Ask students to name any biographies they have read. (*Note:* The biographies need not be entire books). Use questions like the following to help the students tell which were their favorites and why:
  - What traits, qualities, or values did the subject of the biography possess and use well?
  - Did the person say anything, do anything, or make any decisions that changed his or her life? What?
  - Did the person say anything, do anything, or make any decisions that changed *your* life or the lives of others? What?

Write the phrase “**It’s All About Me**” on the board. Distribute drawing paper and markers. Invite the students to think about their own positive traits, qualities, and values. Have them design a book jacket that hints about what’s “inside” them—what’s the gist of their personal story. Suggest that the jacket include the following:

- *Title:* something that will capture others’ interest;
- *Subtitle:* a descriptive phrase that speaks to a personal trait, quality, value, or ability;
- *Author:* their name;
- *Photo and/or artwork of their choosing.*

Take time to share some of the students’ work with the entire group. (*Note:* You will have time to share more later on.) Afterward, post the book jackets around the room. Explain that the students will come back to these later in the session.

## Part I: Lesson (30–40 minutes)

**Text Reference: Encouraging Words; Beliefs about Jesus Christ; Evidence for Jesus and His Life (pages 40–50)**

- Remind the students that in their last session they discovered that the mystery of God is so vast, so deep, God must open and uncover and make the first advance. God must speak. Tell the students that God did just that, and in a language we best understand. God spoke to us through a *person*, a human being like us. Call attention to the passage from the Gospel of John on page 40 and have the class read it aloud together. Then have the teens turn to page 43 and read aloud the passage from Hebrews under the text heading “Beliefs about Jesus.”
- Ask the students why they think God spoke through a *person*: “Why should God, the ‘Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth’ choose to become a human being?” Accept all reasonable replies. Afterward, write the following on the board: “In Jesus, God became a human being because God knew we could not love anything we couldn’t put our arms around” (G. K. Chesterton). Explain that in Jesus the transcendent God becomes imminent, visible, embraceable. In Jesus we learn that God is not “up there” but living among us and that there is no chasm separating us from God, no hostility that can’t be healed. We learn all this not just from what Jesus says or does—but from what he is: not a good man, but the God-man.
- Make sure the teens understand that we call God’s taking on human flesh the “Incarnation.” Draw attention to the definition on page 43. Ask one of the students to read it aloud.
- Make sure everyone has—or can share—a copy of the bible. Distribute copies of the activity sheet “Who Do You Say I Am?” Have the students fill in the blanks with the correct titles. If necessary, refer the teens to

pages 44–46 in the text. Then, to find the response to the opening sheet’s question “Who Do You Say I Am?” direct the students to complete the puzzle by filling in the correct letters from the list of titles. Afterward, share all responses. Explain that the question is Jesus’ and the response is Peter’s—and ours—and may be found in Matthew 16:15–16.

- Use the third “Discussion Question” on page 46 to help the teens decide on the title for Jesus that most appeals to them. Discuss the question, calling on different students to give their response. Afterward, distribute the business cards you collected prior to this session, making sure each student has one or shares one. Call on volunteers to read a few of the cards aloud. Note how most cards list the person’s name and title, which is often his or her occupation. Distribute card stock and markers. Direct the students to create a “business card” for Jesus that uses his given name (Jesus) and the title for Jesus that they just chose that most appeals to them. Point out the traditional symbols of Jesus on pages 46–47. Tell the teens that they can include on the card one of these *or* a symbol of own creation that speaks to who Jesus is. Afterward, share cards. Be sure to ask the teens to tell why they chose the title and symbol they did. Also be sure to compliment the teens’ creativity.
- Choose a famous person who is no longer living, but whom the students should know (e.g., Archbishop Romero, Dorothy Day, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., or Mother Teresa), and ask the students what direct proof they could bring you of that person’s existence: for example, birth and death certificates, photos, film of the person, voice recordings, eye witnesses. Discuss what kind of evidence would constitute proof that the person actually lived and did the things for which they have become famous. Go on to do the same for a more ancient person (e.g., Joan of Arc or Caesar). Ask: Would the proof you can offer change? Would your standards for what constituted convincing evidence change? How?
- Continue with a discussion of the historical evidence that exists for the life of Jesus. Have the students note examples from the text (page 47).
- Call attention back to the book jackets the students made to indicate the deeper story of who they are. Take a moment to read some that were not shared earlier. Tell the students that we can find out much, much more about the story of Jesus in the New Testament. Remind the teens that the word *bible* means “books.” Ask: “How many books are in the New Testament?” (twenty-seven). List on the board:
  - **Gospels (4)**
  - **Acts of the Apostles (1)**
  - **New Testament Letters: (14)**
  - **The Catholic Letters (7)**
  - **Revelation (1)**
- Call on volunteers to name the four gospels and to tell the purpose of the other categories of New Testament books (see page 49). Finally, give the teens copies of the activity sheet “Ode to the New Testament” at the end of the lesson which is a mnemonic poem that lists the twenty-seven books of the New Testament in order. Challenge the teens to learn the poem or to create their own device to learn the names of these important books.
- Write the word “**Gospel**” on the board. Explain that although the Gospels tell the story of Jesus, they are not biographies. Rather, they are announcements of great good news—*Gospel* means “good news.” The Gospels are not “Once upon a times.” They are “Yo! Listen up!” They announce that Jesus *brings* good news, and *is* himself good news. They are not invitations to read and admire. Instead, they are calls to pay attention, to believe, and to follow. The Gospels are testaments of faith about the early Christians’ experiences of Jesus—Son of God, Christ-Savior, Lord, King, Suffering Servant. They put us in touch with Christ, present in our lives—right here, right now—and invite us to place our faith in him. Point out that each Gospel writer had a different audience and a different focus, so their Gospels are different. Even so, they have much in common, because the subject matter is the same—the good News of Jesus Christ.
- Have the teens open their bibles to Luke 4:16–21. Have a volunteer read it aloud while everyone follows along. After the reading, ask:
  - What/Who is the Good News announced here?
  - Why is this announcement still Good News for us today?
- Have the students turn to page 49 in their texts. Take a moment to go over the three stages in the formation of the Gospels: (1) The Historical Jesus; (2) Oral Tradition; (3) The New Testament Writings. Help the teens recognize that as eyewitnesses to Jesus died, the followers wanted to record the early witness to the good news.

## Break/Writing Exercise (10–15 minutes)

- Join the students in a break with refreshments.
- Invite the students to journal something they have experienced and want to share with others who were not eyewitnesses.

## Part 2: Lesson (35–40 minutes)

Text Reference: *Mysteries of Christ's Life; Christ Died for Our Sake; What We Believe about Jesus*

(pages 50–65)

- Introduce this section by looking at the word “mystery” in context of the life of Christ. Remind the teens how they learned (in Chapter 1) that mystery is not the unknown. Mystery is intelligible, but it is also inexhaustible. The more we become involved in mystery, the deeper the mystery becomes. A good example is how long-married people will tell how they keep discovering new things about each other. Explain that when we speak about the “mysteries” of Christ’s life, we are talking about God’s saving plan that was gradually revealed in human history.
- Divide the students into three work groups. Hand out copies of the activity sheet “The ‘Mysteries’ of Christ’s Life.” Assign each group to one of the three categories on the sheet. Allow group members about ten minutes to work together, using their student texts and bibles, to respond to the questions regarding their assigned section. Afterward, have each group present its findings to the class. Use the following to help the teens along should they have difficulty.

Infancy Narratives:

- Which Gospels include stories of Jesus’ birth? (*Matthew and Luke.*)
- Why does Jesus undergo Jewish ritual circumcision? (*To show that he was part of the Chosen People.*)
- What do the Epiphany and Presentation reveal about Jesus? (*At the Epiphany, Jesus is shown to be the Savior of all nations; at the Presentation, he is revealed as belonging to God.*)
- What events from Jesus’ infancy portray forces of evil and God’s protection? (*The flight into Egypt and Herod’s slaughter of the innocents.*)
- Where is Jesus when the Gospel first reports he is God’s Son? (*In the Temple during the feast of Passover, speaking to his mother.*)

Public Life:

- What did Jesus’ baptism by John reveal? (*Jesus’ baptism revealed that Jesus was obedient to God’s will, foreshadowed his death for the forgiveness of sin, and served as a model for our own baptism.*)
- Why is it important that we know Jesus suffered temptation? (*Jesus’ suffering temptation shows us that he identifies with us in our trials and shows us that we can resist the lure of sinfulness.*)
- What are some of the major points of Jesus’ announcement of the Good News? (*(1) The Kingdom of God—God’s saving and presence—is among us. (2) God is not some faraway, cold deity but a close, approachable, and loving Father. (3) God is no harsh judge, but a forgiving parent, full of mercy. (4) Jesus himself is present always with us, especially in the Church. (5) Accepting Jesus means accepting our own personal crosses and living a life of service.*)
- What are Jesus’ miracles signs of? (*Jesus’ miracles are signs of the Messianic age, showing that God’s Kingdom was present and active on our behalf.*)
- When did Jesus first reveal his divine glory and who was present for this revelation? (*Jesus revealed his divine glory at his Transfiguration. His apostles Peter, James, and John were present, as were the prophets Moses and Elijah.*)

*Note:* Before moving on to the third small group presentation, pause for a moment to explore in more depth what Jesus revealed about the Kingdom of God. Begin by writing the phrase “**The Kingdom of God**” on the board. Then, tell the students that Jesus made it clear that the Kingdom of God points to a way of being in the world, a way of relating to God and others, a way of living a just life. Go on to distribute copies of the activity sheet “Kingdom of God Matching” from the end of the lesson. Correct matching answers are: A = 3; B = 4; C = 1; D = 5; E = 6; F = 2. Be sure to allow the students to share their analogies for the Kingdom of God. Remind the teens how Jesus emphasized that there are no “lost,” no abandoned, no strangers, no outsiders in God’s Kingdom. All are welcome. Finally, write the following questions on the board and ask

the students to discuss them: **“Is God’s Kin-dom’ another appropriate name for the Kingdom of God?”** and **“What are you doing to build up the Kingdom of God?”**

After the discussion, before moving on, make certain the teens understand the term **“Paschal Mystery.”** Write it on the board. Remind the students that the word paschal comes from the word *pasch*, meaning “to pass over.” The Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ is the mystery of his passing over (Passover) from death to new life and to glory.

Go on to have the third small group present its assigned section of “The ‘Mysteries’ of Christ’s Life” activity sheet. Again, use the following to help the teens along should they have difficulty.

Paschal Mystery:

- Why did Jesus have to suffer and die? (*If Jesus had not suffered and died, he wouldn’t have been one of us and one with us. Jesus realized that we saw death as the ultimate end. Jesus turned that idea on its head. He showed us that death was not the end but the way to life forever with God.*)
- What effect does the resurrection have on human beings? (*Jesus’ resurrection repairs our relationship to God, frees us from sin and death, and gives us hope for our own rising.*)
- What events mark Jesus’ “glorification”? (*The resurrection, his ascension to the Father, and the sending of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.*)
- List on the board the following references to the resurrection: **Mark 16:1–8; Matthew 28:1–10; John 20:1–10; and Luke 24:1–9.** Ask different students to read each one aloud. Afterward, point out how there is no hoopla, no fanfare in any of the accounts. The evangelists describe the resurrection pretty matter-of-factly. Why? Maybe because they wanted us to realize that dying and rising are part of the rhythm of life of the Christian. Help the students understand that the resurrection doesn’t so much *prove something* as it *reveals everything*. Jesus himself said that resurrection would not convince the non-believer. Resurrection is a fact and the only response to it is one of faith. There are so many death-dealing things around us that it is common to see death as the dictator of human destiny. But those who believe in resurrection recognize that life is the stronger force. Ask: What are some ways you share in Jesus’ death and resurrection daily? (*For example, choosing for others, not self; letting go of sinful ways; making little sacrifices; offering hope to others; working for justice.*)
- Call the teens’ attention to the first two “Discussion Questions” on page 63. Read each question aloud. In order for the students to respond to the questions, allow a few minutes for them to look again at the teachings about Christ listed on page 62. Then go on to discuss the questions as a group.

### **Prayer Experience (10 minutes)**

- Have the students gather in a circle around the Paschal (Easter) Candle. Light the candle. Observe a moment of silence.
- Invite the teens to listen to God’s word by saying: “My sisters and brothers, let us turn to God’s word that we may follow in the footsteps of Jesus and so pave the way for God’s Kingdom to come.
- Have one of the students proclaim Paul’s wonderful blueprint for Kingdom living in Romans 12:9–21. Lead the students in a litany. Have them respond, “May God’s Kingdom come!” to each invocation:
  - Through God’s becoming one of us and one with us . . .
  - Through Jesus the Christ, God’s Son and our loving Lord . . .
  - Through the power of the Good News proclaimed . . .
  - Through the life, death, resurrection, and glorification of Christ . . .
  - Through our own willingness to follow Christ by sharing Good News, working for justice, and dying and rising . . .
- Invite the teens to join hands and pray for the Kingdom’s coming with the words Jesus himself taught us (the Lord’s Prayer).

### **Conclusion (5 minutes)**

- Call attention to “Prayer Reflection” (page 65). Direct the students to read this section again at home and to write their responses to its two questions. Tell them to be ready to share what they write at their next session.
- Ask the students to read Chapter 3: The Holy Spirit Is God (pages 66–89) in preparation for the next session.

# Who Do You Say I Am?

\_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ is the human name given by the angel to the word-made-flesh.  
1 2 3 4 5

It means \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_.  
6 7 8 9 10 11

Now read Philippians 2:5–11. Write in your own words what Paul said about this name.

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Jesus identified himself with God in a way that caused others to consider him a blasphemer. Read John 19:7.

Who did Jesus claim to be? The \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ of God.  
12 13 14

\_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ is the Greek title given to Jesus that is the same as the  
15 16 17 18 19 20

Hebrew word *Messiah*. The title means the \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ one.  
21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

As Messiah, Jesus saved us by acting as: a \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ , one who  
29 30 31 32 33 34 35

speaks for God; as \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ one who acts as a  
36 37 38 39 40 41

\_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ between us and God; and as \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ .  
42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53

When we want to refer to Jesus' divinity, use the title \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ , the same term  
54 55 56 57

used to render the sacred name of Yahweh.

Y \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ ,  
13 4 46 17 39 35 10 27 42 2 40 12 45 7 33

\_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ F \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_  
3 31 52 55 20 33 43 54 18 8 51 14 53

\_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ .  
53 48 57

# Ode to the New Testament

Matthew, Mark, plus Luke and John  
Tell the story of our Savior,  
While the Acts of the Apostles  
Show our early Church behavior.

Paul wrote letters to the churches  
That he founded: one to Rome,  
Two were written to the folks  
Who claimed Corinth as their home.

Then he wrote six more epistles:  
Galatians, Ephesians were his next.  
Philippians, Colossians followed after  
The Thessalonians got two texts.

Paul had friends he loved to talk with,  
Friends like Timothy and Titus.  
Philemon he wrote to briefly,

Then the Hebrews begged him, "Write us!"

Other preachers of God's Kingdom  
Also wrote of God above:  
James wrote once, and Peter twice,  
But John three time said, "God is love!"

Jude wrote also of the Kingdom  
And the need to know God's Son.  
Last of all, John's Revelation,  
And with that, our list is done.

# The “Mysteries” of Christ’s Life

## I. INFANCY NARRATIVES

Which Gospels include stories of Jesus’ birth?

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Why does Jesus undergo Jewish ritual circumcision?

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What do the Epiphany and Presentation reveal about Jesus?

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What events from Jesus’ infancy portray forces of evil *and* God’s protection?

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Where is Jesus when the Gospel first reports he is God’s Son?

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## II. PUBLIC LIFE

What did Jesus’ baptism by John reveal?

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Why is it important that we know Jesus suffered temptation?

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What are some of the major points of Jesus’ announcement of the Good News?

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What are Jesus’ miracles signs of?

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When did Jesus first reveal his divine glory and who was present for this revelation?

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## III. PASCHAL MYSTERY

Why did Jesus have to suffer and die?

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What effect does the resurrection have on human beings?

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What events mark Jesus’ “glorification”?

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# Kingdom of God Matching

Look up the passages below. Match them to what they reveal about God's Kingdom.

\* Luke 7:18–23

\* Matthew 18:1–5

\* Matthew 13:31–32

\* Matthew 13:33

\* Mark 4:26–29

\* Matthew 18:23–35

- A. \_\_\_\_ The Kingdom starts out small, but soon it will grow.
- B. \_\_\_\_ The Kingdom will eventually transform the world.
- C. \_\_\_\_ The Kingdom exists in the person, words, and acts of Jesus.
- D. \_\_\_\_ The Kingdom will grow even though we can't see or explain how it's happening.
- E. \_\_\_\_ Forgiveness is at the heart of the Kingdom: God forgives, so we must be forgiving.
- F. \_\_\_\_ Entering the Kingdom means recognizing our dependence on God.

Complete your own analogy for the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God is like \_\_\_\_\_

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