

# activate

THE  
BUILDING  
BLOCKS  
OF FAITH

**What we want students to learn:** That Jesus was the Rescuer God had been promising for centuries, serving as the highpoint in God's mission to reconcile sinful people to Himself.

**What we want them to do with what they've learned:** To consider all that God accomplished through Christ on their behalf, and to creatively voice a personal response to God as a result.

**Scripture Focus:** Mark 1:9-15, 2:1-17

**Overview:** God's mission was set in motion with Adam and Eve's Fall. From that moment on, God has been working to restore the relationship between Him and His children. This restoration is seen most vividly in the Person of Christ. The highlight of God's mission was sending the Rescuer, Jesus, to redeem us from the consequences of our sins, creating the possibility of peace between God and humankind. Only Jesus can free us from sin's effects. And He made it clear that this is precisely why He was sent to our earth. When we internalize all that was accomplished through Christ's coming, and all the intentionality (motivated by love) that went into the orchestration of this plan, we can't help but have an emotional response. In this lesson, your students will be challenged and guided to voice a personal emotion to God based on how being rescued by Christ causes them to feel.

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## TEACHER PREP VIDEO

Each **Activate** lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These are short videos designed to help you grasp the main point of the lesson as you prepare to teach.

To access your **God's Mission** lesson 21 Teacher Prep Video, login to your Lesson Manager, navigate to lesson 21, and click on the "Background" tab. You'll notice the Teacher Prep Video near the top of the Lesson Manager window.

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## BIBLE BACKGROUND

The **Bible Background** is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. The Details gives you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what's happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every **YM360** Bible study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context" we mean at the very least helping students know **who** wrote the book, **when** it was written, and **why** it was written.
- **What's the big deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

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## THE DETAILS

### Mark

- **Author:** The Gospel of Mark was written by its namesake. Mark, also known as John Mark, is believed to have received most of his information for his Gospel from Peter's firsthand accounts.
- **Timeframe:** Mark is thought to have written his Gospel in the mid 50's AD.
- **Purpose:** Mark was writing primarily for a non-Jewish audience. His Gospel explains Jewish customs to non-Jews to get them to see the big picture of Jesus' identity.

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## THE MAIN POINT

The main point is to help students see that Jesus came to earth on a mission, commissioned by God. These passages show us Jesus at work fulfilling His mission. Mark 1:9-15 gives us God's stamp of approval on Jesus, as well as, the message of Jesus' mission. Mark 2:1-17 gives us examples of Jesus on mission, healing the sick, speaking for God, calling followers, and reaching out to sinners.

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## LESSON PLAN

The **Lesson Plan** contains three elements: An introductory activity called **The Lead In**; the Bible study section called **The Main Event**; an application-focused segment called **The Last Word**.

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## THE LEAD IN

- **Goal:** To help students see why Jesus came to earth by discussing possible communication breakdowns.
- **Set-Up:** None.

FIRST, remind your students that this is the second of the three lessons you'll be studying on God's mission. Begin by discussing the differences between communicating with someone in person versus text or Internet. There are some obvious limitations with communicating with people when we can't see them or hear their tone of voice. Say:

- **Communication experts say that a significant portion of our communication is nonverbal. Facial expressions, tone of voice, and body position communicate as much, if not, more than our words.**

THEN, discuss with the students their experience with communication breakdowns.

- **Have you ever experience miscommunication over text or the Internet? If so, share your experience with us. Here are some possible examples:**
  - Have you ever sent a break-up text?
  - Have you ever received a break-up text?
  - Ever been fired from a job via text?
  - Lost a prom date over text?

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- **What's the funniest/worst autocorrect text you have ever sent or received?**
  - Answers will vary
- **Why does digital communication lead to miscommunication more easily than face-to-face communication?**
  - Answers will vary

FINALLY, wrap up the discussion by explaining that sometimes what we intend to communicate gets lost in translation through phone calls, texting, or the Internet. In the same way how we understand God can be lost in translation. Say:

- **But, God decided that His most important message needed to be communicated in person, so He sent His Son as the high point of His rescue mission to save sinners. In today's lesson, we're going to examine how Jesus came in person to enact God's plan to rescue people.**

## THE MAIN EVENT

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- **Goal:** For students to learn that Jesus was the Rescuer God had been promising for centuries, serving as the highpoint in God's mission to reconcile sinful people to Himself.
- **Set-Up:** None.

FIRST, briefly review last week's lesson with your students. Make sure to review the main idea from lesson one:

- **Ever since our sin caused separation between God and humankind, God has been working in and through His creation—including the events of history and the lives of people—to rescue people from their sin**

THEN, explain to students that during today's lesson we're going to examine the person who God centers His rescue mission on. Instruct students to find Jeremiah in their Bibles. While they are searching for it, make sure to provide a little context for the Jeremiah. Explain that this passage is going to help us identify the characteristics of the man who is the lynchpin for God's rescue mission. When you've done that, read or have a student read Jeremiah 23:5-6. Ask:

- **What are some characteristics of the man described in this passage?**
  - Answer: Righteous, from the family of David, a King, wise, does what is just, will save Israel, His name is The Lord Our Righteousness.
- **Do you know someone who fits this description? If so, who?**
  - Answer: Right, this is a total "Sunday School" answer, Jesus.

Explain that God's work to rescue people from sin focuses on a person, Jesus. Jesus alone is uniquely qualified to completely accomplish God's mission to rescue sinners. Explain that He is the one described in Jeremiah 23:4-5 and He is the one God sent to rescue us. Explain that you're going to look at a few examples of how Jesus fulfilled God's mission to save sinners.

NEXT, go to Mark 1:9-15. Provide some context for the passage using the Bible Background. Then, read or have a student read verses 9-11. Ask:

- **Can you describe the scene?**
  - Answer: Jesus is baptized in the Jordan River. When He comes out of the water, God speaks from heaven and identifies Jesus as His Son.
- **What is the significance of God's words regarding Jesus in verse 11?**

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- o Answer: God is giving Jesus a public blessing. He is placing His stamp of approval on Jesus and letting everyone know that Jesus is His Son.

Then, read or have a student read verses 12-15. Explain that these verses describe when Jesus faced being tempted by Satan. We know from other Gospel accounts (Matthew 4:1-11, Luke 4:1-13) that Jesus did not succumb to the temptation. Ask:

- **Why is it significant the Jesus faced and overcame temptation?**
  - o Answer: Remember from Jeremiah 23:5-6, we're looking for a righteous rescuer. Jesus' ability to overcome temptation proves His righteousness.
- **What does Jesus begin to teach?**
  - o Answer: The Gospel. Gospel means 'good news' so Jesus is teaching people the good news about God.
- **What is the good news of God?**
  - o Answer: That God is rescuing people who 'repent and believe.'

Say something like:

- **OK, let's put this all together: God puts His stamp of approval on Jesus, who demonstrates His worthiness by overcoming temptation. Jesus proclaims the message of God's Kingdom. These three observations help us to see that: Jesus was the Rescuer God had been promising for centuries. The descriptions of Jesus in this passage line up with Jeremiah 23:5-6.**

NEXT, flip over to Mark 2:1-12. Read or have a student read the passage. Then, ask the following questions:

- **What bold declaration does Jesus make in verse 5?**
  - o Answer: Jesus forgives the man of his sins.
- **Why are His words so audacious?**
  - o Answer: The scribes get one part right: only God can forgive sins. Jesus is speaking on behalf of God and doing what only God can do, offer people forgiveness. In other words, not only is Jesus forgiving, but He is also claiming to be God.
- **Jesus asks a question back to the scribes, "Which is easier, to say... 'Your sins are forgiven' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk?' Which is easier?"**
  - o Answer: It's easier to say your sins are forgiven because the results of forgiveness can't be physically seen. It's harder to pronounce healing over someone because everyone can immediately see if the healing has happened.
  - o It's important to note that Jesus does both, He forgives the man's sin, and He heals his physical condition.
- **What does Jesus accomplish in this scenario?**
  - o Answer: Jesus proves that He has God's authority to rescue people from the effects of sin.
  - o Jesus rescues the man from his sin by offering him forgiveness.
  - o He brings physical restoration to the man by healing him.

Explain to students that Jesus is fulfilling God's mission to rescue people from both the spiritual and the physical consequences of sin. The main idea is that Jesus carried out God's mission to bring glory to God and to rescue people from the consequences of their sins.

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THEN, explain the story continues by describing when Jesus calls Matthew (Levi) to be one of his disciples. Keep reading through Mark 2:13-17. Here we see Matthew responding by following Jesus and throwing a massive party at his house to introduce all of his friends to Jesus. Then ask:

- **Why are the religious leaders upset with Jesus?**
  - Answer: They are upset because He is spending time with tax collectors and sinners. The leaders are not impressed with the company that Jesus is keeping.
- **How does Jesus explain why He is spending time with sinners?**
  - Answer: In verse 17, Jesus says His mission is to call sinners. He is on a mission to rescue people from their sin.
- **Who are in the greatest need to be rescued by Jesus?**
  - Answer: Sinners. In the same way that sick people need a doctor, sinners need Jesus to rescue them.

FINALLY, explain that in this passage we see that Jesus' mission on earth lines up with God's mission in history. Jesus is fulfilling the heart of God's Mission: to rescue people from the effects of sin, restoring peace between them and God.

Transition into the Last Word by recapping the lesson and reminding students of the many ways we've seen Jesus fulfilling God's mission to rescue sinners. Say:

- **Jesus is God's ultimate rescue plan. All of God's work in history culminates in Jesus.**

## THE LAST WORD

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- **Goal:** To creatively voice a personal response to God as a result of what He accomplished through Jesus.
- **Set-Up:** You will need to provide pens and paper to each student in our group.

FIRST, pass out a piece of paper and a pen to every student. Instruct your students to draw a line down the middle of their piece of paper. On the top of the left side instruct them to write the word "Truth." On the top of the right side ask them to write the word "response."

THEN, ask them to look back at the passages we read and identify the ways Jesus was on mission to rescue people from sin. Instruct them to compile their list by writing it down on the left side under "Truth."

NEXT, revisit the story of Jesus calling Levi to be a disciple with your students. This time, however, read the portion of the story as it is recorded in Luke 5:27-29. Say:

- **I'm going to read the story of Jesus calling Levi out of the book of Luke. While I read it to you, think about this question: What was Levi's first response to Jesus calling him to be a disciple?**
  - Answer: Levi threw a party (a great feast) at his house. He invited a bunch of his friends to come who needed to meet Jesus. Levi's response was to leverage what he had (his home, his table, his food) to make sure that his friends met Jesus.

THEN, explain that if Levi can use something as simple as hospitality and food ask your students to think about their own lives.

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- What do you have that you can use to introduce other people to Jesus?
- Instruct your students to make a list of all the things in their lives that God could use on the other side of the paper.

FINALLY, explain to your students that we're going to spend the next few minutes in individual prayer. Instruct them to thank God for the things they wrote on the left side of their paper. Example, "God thank you that you sent Jesus to rescue me from my sin." Then, instruct them to respond to those truths by praying that God would use the things from the right side of their list. (Example, "God, please help me to use my time on Xbox Live to tell others about Jesus.") After a few minutes, close the prayer time by praying for your students.

- Don't forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you're posting them on Instagram, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.
- Use the **Social Media** guide to stay in touch with students via text or Instagram, and to encourage them to follow through with reading their devotions.

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
- Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at [feedback@youthministry360.com](mailto:feedback@youthministry360.com).