

The One Big Story of the Bible

BIBLE PASSAGE: Luke 24:13-27

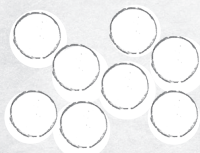
MAIN POINT: All of the Bible is about Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE: Luke 24:27

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is the Bible about? The Bible is one big story about Jesus.

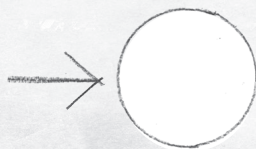
SMALL GROUP OPENING
(10–15 MINUTES)

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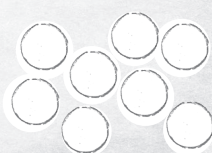
LARGE GROUP BIBLE STUDY
(25–30 MINUTES)

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SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES
(25–30 MINUTES)

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HOW TO USE THIS SESSION

This session is designed to remind kids that all of the individual Bible stories in The Gospel Project for Kids tell one big story: the story of Jesus. If you are completing your first three-year journey through the Bible, this would be the perfect time to look at the big picture of the Bible, especially if you are preparing to begin your second three-year journey through the Bible.

The materials you will need to complete this session are available for you to download, but you might consider using leftover materials you have on hand in addition to—or in place of—some of the printable items provided.

Leader BIBLE STUDY

The Bible is an amazing book. Within its pages, we find stories about the creation of the world, the rise and fall of nations, incredible miracles, and God's relentless pursuit of His rebellious people.

But the Bible isn't just a collection of unrelated stories. It's one big story, where everything points to Jesus. His life, death, and resurrection form the heart of the story: God's desire and plan to redeem His people.

God's plan is evident from the very beginning. If we look carefully, we can find signs that point to Jesus on nearly every page.

God used the ark to rescue Noah and his family—pointing to the day when Jesus would become our Rescuer.

God promised to bless the world through Abraham's descendants—a promise that was realized in Jesus.

When Abraham was asked to sacrifice his son, Isaac was ultimately spared. But God willingly offered His only Son for us.

Moses raised a bronze serpent on a pole so the Israelites could be saved—a foreshadowing of Jesus being lifted up on the cross for our salvation.

The sacrifices made in the temple year after year pointed to Jesus, who became the one-time sacrifice for our sins.

Even after Jesus ascended into heaven, He remained the focus of the story. Jesus' followers carried His message to the ends of the earth, just as we do today—waiting for the day when He will return and provide the conclusion to God's awesome narrative.

Yes, the Bible is full of amazing stories. But really, it's all about Jesus.

That's the story. That's His story.

The BIBLE STORY

The Big Story of the Bible

Luke 24:13-27

On the day that Jesus rose from the dead, two of Jesus' disciples were walking to a village called Emmaus. The two disciples were talking about everything that had happened. As they talked, Jesus came and began to walk with them, but the disciples did not recognize Jesus.

Jesus asked the disciples, "What are you talking about?"

The disciples stopped walking. They looked sad. One of the disciples, Cleopas, answered, "Are you the only one in Jerusalem who hasn't heard what happened?"

"What happened?" Jesus asked.

So they told Him, "Jesus of Nazareth was a Prophet. He was powerful when He acted and spoke before God and all the people. The religious leaders handed Jesus over to be sentenced to death, and they nailed Him to a cross.

"We had hoped He was the One who would set Israel free. Besides, it's the third day since these things happened. Early this morning, some women went to the tomb and did not find Jesus' body. They saw angels, who said that Jesus is alive. Some of our friends went to the tomb, and they too saw that the tomb was empty."

Jesus said, "You are foolish to not believe what the prophets said! Isn't this what had to happen to the Messiah?" Then, beginning with Moses and the Prophets, Jesus explained to them what all the Scriptures said about Him.

Christ Connection: Jesus explained that the Bible is about Him. In His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus fulfilled God's promises in the Old Testament and brought salvation to the world.

Small Group OPENING

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WELCOME TIME

Place several items on a table. Allow kids to examine them for one minute. Encourage them to remember each item. Cover the items with a blanket or box and remove one item. Remove the blanket or box and ask kids which item is missing. Play several rounds as time allows.

- various items
- blanket or box

SAY • It sure was hard to remember what was on the table, wasn't it? And it's only been a couple of minutes! How about remembering everything we have learned over the last three years? It might be difficult to remember everything we've learned, but today we are going to see if we can remember the big ideas from the Bible—God's big story.

Activity page (5 minutes)

Guide boys and girls to complete an activity page. Ask kids if they remembered the activity page and if any can share details from the corresponding Bible story.

- activity pages,
1 per kid
- pencils or crayons

SAY • We had fun completing all of these activity pages and learning all of the different Bible stories. Today we are going to remember how all of those different stories fit together to tell one big story. **All of the Bible is about Jesus.**

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Bible story order

Form two teams. Give each team a set of mixed up big picture cards. Challenge each team to put the cards in chronological order. The first group to put the cards in the correct order wins.

As time allows, invite kids to share details they remember about some of the Bible stories.

SAY • Great job, everyone! The Bible is full of individual stories about things that happened long ago. But did you know that all these stories work together to tell one big story? Today we will see how.



• Big Picture Cards for Families, 1 set per team

OPTION 2: What's in common?

Display sets of items on a table, or write the names of items on a large piece of paper where kids can all see them. Prompt kids to identify what the items in each set have in common. Consider these examples:

- spatula, wooden spoon, whisk (*kitchen utensils*)
- chalk, pen, marker (*writing instrument*)
- salamander, pelican, earthworm (*animals*)
- baseball glove, tennis racket, skateboard (*sports equipment*)

SAY • Good thinking! Can anyone tell me what Noah's ark, the prophet Jonah, and King David have in common? Yes, they are all found in the Bible, but they each point us to Jesus also!

All of the Bible is about Jesus. Today we will review how these familiar Bible stories and many others fit together to tell one big story—the greatest story ever told.

• various items
• large sheet of paper (optional)
• markers (optional)

Transition to large group

Large Group LEADER

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Suggested Theme Decorating Ideas: Consider decorating your large group space with a collection of favorite props from previous units that the kids might easily identify. You may also choose to decorate with any previous session Bible story pictures you have on hand. Position a typewriter or a laptop computer on a small table at center stage.

- room decorations
- small table
- typewriter or laptop computer
- Bible story pictures (optional)

Countdown

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

- countdown video

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

[Large Group Leader enters with a pencil over each ear, carrying several sheets of paper and additional pencils. Pace back and forth a few times, staring intently at the papers. Shake your head and crumple a sheet of paper.]

- leader attire
- pencils
- paper
- Bible

LEADER • No, no, no! *[Sigh, then look to kids.]* Oh, hello.

How are you? You're probably wondering what I'm doing. Let me explain: I am a writer, and I am in the middle of writing my masterpiece! *[Make a grand gesture.]*

Well, I'm actually closer to the beginning.

[sheepishly] OK. I am stuck on the first word.

Writing a story is difficult! I know who my main

characters are. I know where the story will take place, and I know some of what I want to happen, but I can't figure out how it will all fit together. Say, since you are here, I wonder if you might be able to help me.

You know, one thing I find that helps me when I get writer's block is to read a good story, and the greatest story ever is found in the Bible. And here is the wonderful thing: every single word in the Bible is true! Would you like to hear about this true story?

Giant timeline (1 minute)

LEADER • The Bible is a collection of many different stories that happened over hundreds and hundreds of years in all sorts of places with many different people. We have heard many of these stories, but we didn't have time to talk about all of them. Who wants to share a favorite Bible story that we learned about?

Invite kids to point to a story on the timeline and briefly tell about it. You may also point out the story on the timeline as kids tell about it from their seats.

• Giant Timeline

Note: If you prefer to use your new timeline or big story circle, you may have to help kids locate their favorite story.

LEADER • Isn't it wonderful that God gave us His Word, the Bible? Remember, everything in the Bible is true! These stories work together to tell one big story—the story of God's plan to save His people and bring glory to Himself through Jesus. **All of the Bible is about Jesus.**

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Our big picture question today is, *What is the Bible about?* Who wants to try to answer that question? [*Invite responses.*] That's right! *The Bible is one big story about Jesus.*

Sing (7–10 minutes)

LEADER • We have certainly sung some great songs over the last three years that helped us remember our key passages and worship Jesus! How about we sing some of our favorites now?

- unit theme songs and key passage songs of your choice

If you still have unit theme songs and key passage songs available, sing a few songs together. Consider selecting favorites to sing or allow kids to request their favorites.

Key passage (5 minutes)

LEADER • We have also memorized some great Bible passages. Memorizing Scripture is important because we can remember the truth of God's Word any time. Does anyone want to recite a key passage you remember?

- Key Passage Posters
- key passage songs

Invite kids to recite key passages as time allows. Be ready to help them out as needed. Sing any key passage songs.

LEADER • Our key passage today shows us what Jesus taught others about the Bible. Let's read it together.

Read the key passage together twice.

LEADER • Jesus taught others that all of the Bible is about Him! **All of the Bible is about Jesus.**

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Luke 24:13-27. Explain that after Jesus was resurrected, He met two of His disciples on the road to Emmaus. He explained that **all of the Bible is about Jesus**—not just the New Testament, but the Old Testament too.

- Bibles
- "The Big Story" video

LEADER • Let's watch our Bible story video. It will help us understand how all the stories fit together to tell a bigger story—a story about Jesus. Listen closely to

hear the big story of the Bible.

Show “The Big Story” video.

LEADER • Did anyone see any Bible story pictures that looked familiar? How about any new pictures?

Invite kids to describe pictures that they recognized and ones that they did not.

LEADER • Good job identifying those pictures. God’s Word is so amazing! We spent three years studying the Bible, but we didn’t even get to hear all of the stories in it! Some of those Bible story pictures are new because we will learn about them over the next three years.

Did you catch what the big story is all about? That’s right, the Bible is one story about God’s plan to provide forgiveness through His Son, Jesus. **All of the Bible is about Jesus** and what He has done for sinners. That’s the gospel, or “good news.” Knowing the big story helps us understand the Bible and see how it can change our lives.

Ask the following review questions:

1. What are some Old Testament stories that point to Jesus? (*Noah’s ark, Abraham’s family, sacrifices, Abraham and Isaac, Ten Commandments, the tabernacle, bronze serpent, and so forth*)
2. Did the story end with Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection? (*No, Jesus’ friends continued the story and we do too; Matt. 28:18-20*)
3. How will the story end? (*Jesus will return to make everything right, Rev. 21:3-5*)
4. ***What is the Bible about? The Bible is one big story about Jesus.***

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (optional)

LEADER • I said a minute ago that the big story of the Bible can change your life. Here's what I mean by that.

Use Scripture and the guide provided with this session to explain to boys and girls how to become a Christian. Assign individuals to meet with kids who have more questions.

Encourage boys and girls to ask their parents, small group leaders, or other Christian adults any questions they may have about becoming a Christian.

Tip: Provide I'm a Christian Now for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

Pray (2 minutes)

LEADER • Well, talking with you about the greatest story ever told got my creative juices flowing again! I think I know how I want to start my story now. But before I go and before you go to your small groups, let's pray together and thank God for His story.

Before transitioning to small group, make any necessary announcements from your kids ministry.

Lead the kids in prayer. Thank God for giving us His Word, the Bible, and for sending Jesus to rescue us from sin. Thank God for what you have learned over the last three years and ask Him to continue teaching you more. Pray that each kid would follow Jesus with love, joy, and total commitment.

Dismiss to small groups

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 3:19.



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.

Small Group LEADER

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Key passage activity (5 minutes)

Choose four or five key passages that your kids are most likely to remember. Write each key passage on a different sheet of paper or on a dry erase board. For each passage, leave blanks for several of the words. Write each missing word on a separate index card or strip of paper. Tape these words onto the wall to serve as your “word bank.”

- Key Passage Poster
- paper or dry erase board
- pens, or dry erase markers
- index cards or strips of paper
- tape

Invite a kid to select a word from the word bank and place it in one of the blanks in a key passage. Ask the group to vote if they think the word is correct. Each kid gets one point for voting correctly. Each kid who places a word in the right place gets two points.

Play until kids place each word from the bank into the correct space. Read the key passages together and determine who has the highest score.

SAY • Very good! It is so important that we remember God’s Word because we don’t always have a Bible with us, do we? When we memorize Scripture, though, we can always have God’s Word with us!

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

Ensure that each kid has a Bible and encourage kids to open the Bible to Luke 24:13-27. Open your Bible and tell the

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- “Bible Passages” printable
- tape

Bible story in your own words using the script provided.

SAY • This story took place the day Jesus raised from the dead. Some of you might remember when we studied this a few months ago. The main point of this story is our main point today. Who remembers it? That's right. **All of the Bible is about Jesus.**

Ask the following review questions.

1. Where were the two disciples heading? (*Emmaus, Luke 24:13*)
2. What was the name of one of the disciples heading to Emmaus? (*Cleopas, Luke 24:18*)
3. Why didn't the disciples recognize Jesus? (*Their eyes were kept from recognizing Him, Luke 24:16*)
4. What were the two discussing as they walked? (*the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, Luke 24:19-24*)
5. Did the disciples understand what had happened to Jesus at that point? (*no, Luke 24:25*)
6. What did Jesus say was necessary? (*that He should suffer and enter His glory, Luke 24:26*)
7. Whom did Jesus say that all of the Bible is about? (*Himself, Luke 24:27*)
8. ***What is the Bible about? The Bible is one big story about Jesus.***

Tape the Bible passages printable on the wall. Form two teams. Explain that you will announce the title of a Bible story and kids should try to find it in the Bible. Point out that the story is found at one of the listed references. Encourage kids to work together as a team.

When a player finds the story, she should stand up. Instruct her to show you where she found the story. If she is correct, award one point to her team. If she is incorrect, allow more time for kids to find the correct passage. Invite

kids to share what they remember about the Bible story. Then play again with other stories.

SAY • We can learn a lot from each of those stories. The Bible does tell us about how to live, but that is not the main point of each of those stories. **All of the Bible is about Jesus.**

The main idea we learn from each story is that Jesus is God's gift to us. Jesus explained that the Bible is about Him. In His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus fulfilled God's promises in the Old Testament and brought salvation to the world. He paid the penalty we deserve for our sin and rose again to conquer death. When we trust in Jesus, all of our sin is forgiven. That is what the Bible is about!

The lessons we learn about how to live are all based on that truth. We live differently, not to earn God's favor, but because we already have it.

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Bible story charades

Write the names of Bible stories or people of the Bible on separate strips of paper. Invite kids to play charades. Instruct them to take turns selecting a paper and silently acting out the story or person. The player who guesses correctly may draw a new strip of paper to act out next. Continue playing as time allows or until each kid has taken a turn.

SAY • We can remember a lot from each of these stories or people in the Bible. But whom do all these stories point us to? That's right—Jesus. **All of the Bible is about Jesus.**



• paper strips
• pens or pencils

OPTION 2: Jesus spiral

Give each boy and girl a Jesus spiral printable. Instruct them to draw images from some of their favorite Bible stories in the outside circles and to color or decorate the picture at the center. Allow time for the kids to work.

- “Jesus Spiral” printable
- pens or pencils
- markers or crayons

When they finish, invite them to show their pictures to the group and share about the stories they chose to include.

SAY • Who can share how one of the stories someone drew points us to Jesus? [*Allow kids to respond.*]

Some of the stories are easier to connect to Jesus than others, but even when it is harder for us to understand the connection, we can remember that all the shorter stories in the Bible fit together to tell the bigger story about God’s promise to send Jesus and save sinners. **All of the Bible is about Jesus.**

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute a journal page to each kid. Instruct boys and girls to draw a scene from their favorite Bible story. Then guide kids to write *Jesus is the center of the story*. Help younger kids write on their journal pages.

- pencils and crayons
- Journal Page
- Bible Story Coloring Page

SAY • The Bible is one big story with Jesus at the center. All of the stories we learned about the last three years and the new ones we will learn about the next three years are about Him. **All of the Bible is about Jesus.**

Make sure each child has her name on her journal sheet. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the coloring page provided.

Pray, thanking God for Jesus. Through Him alone we can be forgiven and have friendship with God forever.