

Grade 4

Introduction to Salvation History

Note to catechist: See Salvation History Overview in Introduction.

LESSON FOCUS

This lesson will introduce students to one another and to the theme of their book, *Jesus Our Guide*. God the Father loves us unconditionally, and he has a plan for us to be in communion with him in heaven. God tells us the love story between himself and each of us in the Bible; this story is our love story. God makes a covenant of love with Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David. This covenant is fulfilled through Jesus Christ. Each of us is invited to come to know and love Jesus, who will guide us to eternal life. Part of God's plan for us is that Jesus would be our guide in everything we do. We grow closer to Jesus through prayer, our life in the Church, and the Sacraments.

AIMS

- Students will be introduced to one another and to the new Student Text, *Jesus Our Guide*.
- Students will know that Jesus fulfills Old Covenant promises.
- Students will know that our ultimate goal in life is to be with God in heaven.

Begin the Lesson

Preparation (5–10 minutes)

Use one or more of the following resources for prayer and student preparation for the lesson.

SCRIPTURE:

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him”
(1 Corinthians 2:9).

Jesus has prepared a place for us in heaven far beyond what our eyes have ever seen, far beyond what our ears have ever heard, and far beyond anything that has ever entered our hearts.

SACRED ART: Student Text cover

Christ and the Money Changers, Van Dyck

We see the face of Jesus, who will lead us to heaven. Jesus promises us that heaven will be beyond our imagination.

PRAYER WITH CHILDREN: Our Father, Student Text, p. 161

Welcome (15–20 minutes)

- Optional ice breaker activity: Scavenger hunt. Make up one bingo card and copy for all students. The bingo card should have the squares already filled in with things such as “a person who is the oldest sibling,” “a person who owns a cat,” “a person who went to another state for vacation,” etc. (suggestions below). Students (even though they know each other, they get to learn things they don’t know) have to go around the room and get a signature for each square (only one signature from each student per card); the teacher is included in the game. After five minutes, the one with the most signatures wins.

(Optional: Have a small treat for the one who gets the most right. The following are suggestions only; you’re welcome to use your own creativity!)

1. A person who is the oldest child in the family
2. A person who owns a cat

MATERIALS

- Bible
- White board and markers
- Grade 4 Student Text, *Jesus Our Guide*

Optional:

- Blank bingo cards; small treat for prize (see Welcome Activity)

WORDS TO KNOW

salvation history: the story of God's plan to save each of us from the consequences of sin. Salvation history began with Creation and will continue to the end of time. Each of us is a part of this love story in our own lives. As the story unfolds, God's love and mercy become evident through his Son, Jesus Christ, as well as through the Church and grace received in the Sacraments.

3. A person who went to another state over vacation
4. A person who owns the most pets
5. A person who is the youngest child in the family
6. A person who has lived in ____ since birth
7. A person who moved to ____ the most recently
8. A person who has a birthday closest to today's date
9. A person who likes black jelly beans
10. A person who can touch his nose with his tongue

- Welcome students to their fourth grade class. Take some time to point out the features of their Student Text, *Jesus Our Guide*, in the Table of Contents.
 - First section: B.C., Before Christ
 - Second section: A.D., In the Year of Our Lord
 - ***What do you think we are going to learn about this year? (The Old Testament and the New Testament; Jesus fulfills the promises of the Old Covenant.)***
- Hold up a Bible and show students that the Bible is divided into two similar parts; explain that everything in the Bible points to Jesus Christ. The name of their book this year is *Jesus Our Guide*—Jesus is our guide to heaven!

Proclamation (1 minute)

(Proclaim slowly, then repeat.)

Everything in the Old Testament points to Jesus Christ; everything in the New Testament shows that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of all that God promised. Jesus is our guide to eternal life.

Lesson Explanation (30–35 minutes)

Explain focus points in your own words or use the discussion points and questions.

Focus 1: Our ultimate goal in life is to be one with God in eternal happiness.

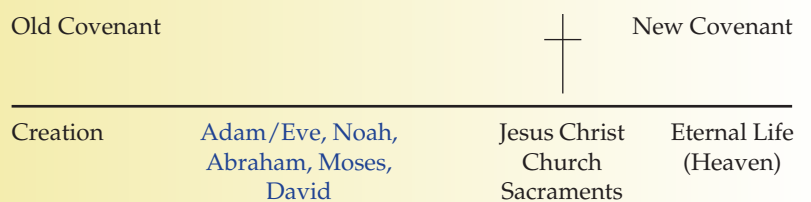
- Use any or all of the following questions to prompt students to take a look at the bigger picture of life and the fact that we are made for God, to be one with him in eternity.
 - Our lives can be so busy and caught up with school, sports, family, and friends that sometimes we forget about the bigger picture of our lives.
 - ***Have you ever asked yourself, where am I really going in this life? (Answers will vary.)***
 - ***Is it all about getting good grades, winning the next game, getting the most recent video gadget, or is there more to life? (Answers will vary.)***

- *After all, when we die, we cannot take any of this with us, can we? (No.)*
- This life is only a drop of water in the ocean compared to eternity.
- *Why do you think we should want to learn more about God? (Answers will vary. Lead students to say: for guidance in our journey here on earth, like a compass; for hope, when in trouble or sad; to help us know how to be the best person we can be; to receive God's grace through the Sacraments; etc.)*
- *Do you think having faith (believing and trusting in God) makes a difference in your life? (Answers will vary. Remind students that our faith gives our life meaning and purpose. You may share an experience with them if you wish to help them identify their own stories.)*

Conclusion: This life will end. Our ultimate goal is to be with God in heaven.

Focus 2: The Bible tells us everything we need to know about our lives. God loves us and he wants to be in communion with us, now and one day in eternal life.

- Tell the story of God's saving plan. Keep it simple; draw a simple timeline, and point to people and events on the timeline.



- *What was God's main purpose in creating us? (He loved us and wanted to share his life with us.)*
 - When God created the world and mankind, everything was perfect. The first man and woman, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God.
 - When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, everything changed. *Exactly what did change? (The gates of heaven were closed. The life of grace was lost. Adam and Eve were banished from paradise. Man was in need of a Savior.)*
- What happens next is a love story between God and mankind, between God and you. We learn about this love story in the Bible. The Bible tells a love story between God and his people.
 - *What are the two parts of the Bible? (The Old Testament and the New Testament.)*
 - The Old Testament tells the story of God's saving plan before Jesus came.

- This story is about covenant love: God made a covenant (promise) with us in the Old Testament. Each promise showed God's people that he would take care of them and send a Savior.
- *Who were the five people/covenants that God made in the Old Covenant? (Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David.)*
- With each of these covenants we learn that God never abandons his people; God is always merciful despite the sins of mankind; God always keeps his promises.
- *Can anyone tell about a time that you needed God and he took care of you? (Answers will vary. Note: This would be a good opportunity for the catechist to witness about a time that God provided for him.)*
- In the Bible, God makes promises to us that he will take care of us and send a Savior. The New Testament tells the story of how Jesus fulfills God's plan. (Point to New Covenant on timeline.)
 - Jesus Christ redeems mankind (gives us hope for heaven) through his life, death, and Resurrection. Jesus is the Savior that God promised in the Old Covenant.
 - *What did Jesus leave us with that guides us to heaven? (The Church.)*
 - *What is the main way we receive God's grace and are nourished so that we may become like Jesus? (Through the Sacraments.)*
 - *What do you think it might be like if Jesus had not yet come to save mankind? (No Church, no Sacraments, no real guidance to heaven, no truth of Jesus Christ, no peace, no real joy, etc.)*
 - On the other hand, many people in our culture today live as though God did not exist; they forget God and think only of the things of this world.
 - *Does your life ever get so busy that you forget about God? (Answers will vary.)*

Conclusion: God became man because he loves us. Jesus Christ is the center of **salvation history**, and he should be at the center of our lives. Each of us is called by Jesus to come to know and love him who will lead us to heaven.

Review Supplemental Lesson—Introduction to Salvation History

- Our ultimate goal in life is to be one with God in eternal happiness.
- The Bible tells us everything we need to know about our lives.

Application (5–10 minutes)

Choose one or more of the following for discussion.

- **How will we get to heaven? Who must ultimately lead us to heaven?** (Jesus Christ. No matter how hard we may try, we cannot get to heaven by ourselves.)
- **Tell students** to think about Jesus as their guide to heaven as they look at the cover of the book. Have students close their eyes and picture Jesus knocking on the door of their home, room, or hearts.
 - Jesus invites us to heaven; however, *we must respond in faith.*
 - **Read** Revelation 3:20: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.”
 - **Knowing that God is knocking on the door of your heart, what is one thing you can do today to open that door?** (Allow students some time to reflect.)
 - **Pray:** Jesus, help me to allow you to guide me so that I know you will never abandon me; you will always be my guide to everlasting happiness. You give yourself to me in the gift of the Eucharist. You are always present to me in Holy Communion; help me to be present to you. Your love never stops pouring out to me; help me to love you in return. Jesus, please tell me what I can do to respond in faith.
 - **Would anyone like to share how you will respond to God?** (Answers will vary. Lead students to say: love God and our neighbor; pray; obey; be thankful and follow God’s direction for our lives through our parents, teachers, and priests.)

Celebration (5 minutes)

- **Pray:** Dear Jesus, thank you for revealing your love to us in the story of salvation history. Thank you for inviting us to enter the gates of heaven and for the gift of the Eucharist. Help us to open the door to eat with you.
- **Read** Revelation 3:20: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.”

