

Study Series: Seamless

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 Lesson Title: “The Messiah” (pp. 73-86)

Session 6

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The main point of this lesson is: The seamless nature of God’s plan comes together in the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Focus on this goal: To help adults recognize Jesus as the fulfillment of God’s work in the Old Testament and provision for our salvation

Key Bible Passage: Matthew–Acts 12

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

Ask adults if they like action movies with heroes who save the day. Ask: Does the main character sweep in heroically in the first scene or is their appearance usually more gradual? State: In contrast to super-hero stories, God’s seamless story is true. But like those stories, the appearance of the main character is gradual. He has been alluded to since Genesis 3, and now, finally, the seamless nature of God’s plan comes together in the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Step 2. The Synoptic Gospels

Discuss Day One, activity 1 (p. 73). Ask: You would think Jesus would swoop in and save the day, but what was his arrival really like? Note the details about Jesus’s humble birth come from Matthew’s and Luke’s Gospels.

Explain the meaning of synoptic Gospels. Request adults identify from Day One (p. 73-74) the main audience and purpose of Matthew’s Gospel. Guide adults to compare and contrast Jesus’s genealogy in Luke 3:23-38 with the genealogy in Matthew 1 (focus on Matt. 1:2 and Luke 3:38). Ask what that difference can tell us about the main audience and purpose of Luke’s Gospel.

Invite a volunteer to read Luke 4:16-21. Declare Jesus came to fulfill this for everyone.

Request adults identify the main audience and purpose of Mark’s Gospel.

Step 3. John the Baptist

Request adults identify the role John the Baptist played in God’s seamless story. Discuss Day Two, activity 1 (p. 75). Walk the group through Matthew 3–13, using paragraph headings and Day Two remarks (pp. 75-76) to aid your summation.

Ask: At this point why might the common people and disciples have thought Jesus was the hero getting ready to swoop in and save the day?

Discuss Day Two, activity 2 (p. 76). Note Jesus had to repeatedly explain to the disciples that the real Messiah of God’s seamless story was not the Messiah they had created for themselves in their minds.

Step 4. Gethsemane

Jesus’s refusal to bend to anyone’s ideas of who the Messiah should be disappointed some people, and infuriated others. Explore who was most infuriated by Jesus and why (see first two paragraphs of Day Three, p. 77).

Summarize Matthew 21, noting the religious leaders challenge of Jesus’s authority, and His response to their challenge.

Invite a volunteer to read Matthew 26:17-20,26-28. Ask: How did what we explored about the Passover in Session 3 (Day Two, pp. 37-38), give greater light and significance to this passage in Matthew?

Request two volunteers read Matthew 26:21-25 and 31-35. Ask: What would you most likely do if you knew all your friends were about to betray you? Read John 13:1-5. Ask: Does this make Jesus more or less of a “hero” in your eyes? Explain.

Discuss Day Three, activities 1 (pp. 77-78) and 2 (p. 78).

Read Luke 23:1-5. Briefly summarize Pilate’s actions.

Step 5. The Crucifixion & Resurrection

Read Matthew 20:17-19. Ask: If Jesus knew this was going to happen, why didn’t He take steps to avoid it?

Read Matthew 26:27-35. Invite a volunteer to read the second paragraph of Day Four (p. 79).

Discuss Day Four, activity 1 (p. 79-80). Describe what happened to Jesus’s body. Request adults state why Matthew 28:1-2; Mark 16:1-4; Luke 24:1-2; and John 20:1 are some of the most exciting sentences in any story that’s ever been told.

Relate how John’s Gospel differs from the synoptics. Request adults silently read John 20:30-31 and state why John wrote his Gospel.

Discuss Day Four, activity 2 (p. 81). Evaluate whether adults think it’s fair this apostle has been nicknamed “Doubting Thomas” and why.

Step 6. The Beginning of the Church

Request a volunteer read Matthew 28:16-20. Discuss: What’s the command? What’s the promise? What is radical about the command and promise?

Note Luke wrote Acts as a continuation of his Gospel. Read Acts 1:1-3. State the Gospels tell what Jesus began to do and teach; His story isn’t finished but is carried on by His church.

Discuss Day Five, activity 1 (p 82). Summarize Acts 2:5-13. Read Acts 2:14,22-24,36. Ask: How might you assume the crowd would respond to these words? Determine how they did respond according to Acts 2:37. Analyze the only reason for that kind of response (the Holy Spirit).

Brainstorm various ways the question “What should we do” is answered in our day. Ask: What is the only real answer to that question? Ask a volunteer to read Acts 2:38-40.

Discuss Day Five, activity 2 (p. 83).

Use the last three paragraphs of Day Five (p. 83) to summarize Acts 3–12.

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Ask: How is it evident from God’s seamless story that He “picks the least likely candidate to change the world” (p. 83)? Do we have to be heroes to fulfill our part of Christ’s commission? What do we need to be?

Close in prayer.

