

# “That Ye Might Believe That Jesus Is the Christ”

## Lesson 1

*Isaiah 61:1–3; Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 3:4–11; John 1:1–14; 20:31*

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**Purpose** To encourage class members to strengthen their testimonies of Jesus Christ by studying the New Testament.

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- Preparation**
1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
    - a. Isaiah 61:1–3; Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 3:4–11. Isaiah and John the Baptist prophesy of the Savior’s mission.
    - b. John 1:1–14; 20:31. The Apostle John testifies that Jesus Christ is “the true Light.” He declares that his purpose in writing his testimony is to help others “believe that Jesus is the Christ.”
  2. Obtain a copy of the *New Testament Class Member Study Guide* (35682) for each person in your class. (The ward should have ordered these study guides as part of the annual curriculum order. A member of the bishopric should give them to the Sunday School presidency.)
  3. If you use the attention activity, ask a few class members to prepare to read or summarize a favorite passage in the New Testament and to explain briefly why that passage is inspiring or helpful to them.
  4. If the following pictures are available, use them during the lesson: Isaiah Writes of Christ’s Birth (62339; Gospel Art Picture Kit 113) and John Preaching in the Wilderness (62132; Gospel Art Picture Kit 207). If you use the attention activity, also bring several pictures that depict events from the New Testament, such as Healing the Blind (62145; Gospel Art Picture Kit 213) and Mary and the Resurrected Lord (62186; Gospel Art Picture Kit 233).
  5. Suggestion for teaching: Encourage class members to complete the assigned reading every week and to come to class prepared to discuss what they have read. This preparation will help fulfill the Lord’s promise that “he that preacheth and he that receiveth [by the Spirit of truth] understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together” (D&C 50:22).
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### Suggested Lesson Development

- Attention Activity** As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.
- Display pictures that depict events from the New Testament.
- Ask class members to think about the following question:
- What accounts or teachings in the New Testament have particularly inspired or helped you?
- Give class members a moment to think, and then invite each of the assigned class members to read or summarize a favorite New Testament passage. If other class members would like to share a favorite passage, allow a few of them to do so.

Express your feelings about being able to teach and study the New Testament this year. Explain that the purpose of this year's study of the New Testament is to help class members strengthen their faith in Jesus Christ and become better acquainted with his life and mission.

Scripture Discussion  
and Application

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As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

**1. Isaiah and John the Baptist prophesy of the Savior's mission.**

Read and discuss Isaiah 61:1–3 and Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 3:4–11. (The Joseph Smith Translation of Luke 3:4–11 is found on pages 805–6 in the appendix of the LDS edition of the King James Bible.)

Display the picture of Isaiah writing about the birth of the Savior. Explain that we can strengthen our testimonies of Jesus Christ and our appreciation of the New Testament by studying the words of Isaiah and others who prophesied of the Savior's mission.

- What aspects of the Savior's mission are described in Isaiah 61:1–2? (List class members' responses on the chalkboard. Answers may include those listed below.)
  - a. "Preach good tidings unto the meek" (verse 1).
  - b. "Bind up the brokenhearted" (verse 1).
  - c. "Proclaim liberty to the captives" (verse 1).
  - d. "Comfort all that mourn" (verse 2).
- How has Jesus fulfilled these prophecies? (Encourage class members to cite examples from the scriptures and to share personal experiences.)

Point out that Jesus quoted this passage at the beginning of his ministry to declare that he was the Messiah (Luke 4:16–21; see lesson 6).

Display the picture of John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness. Explain that John the Baptist prophesied of the Savior's mission just before Jesus began his mortal ministry.

- How did John the Baptist describe the Savior's mission? (See Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 3:4–9. List class members' responses on the chalkboard. If the Joseph Smith Translation of these verses is not available, list the prophecies as shown below.)
  - a. "Take away the sins of the world" (verse 5).
  - b. "Bring salvation unto the heathen nations" (verse 5).
  - c. "Gather together those who are lost" (verse 5).
  - d. "Make possible the preaching of the gospel unto the Gentiles" (verse 6).
  - e. "Be a light unto all who sit in darkness" (verse 7).
  - f. "Bring to pass the resurrection from the dead" (verse 7).
  - g. "Administer justice unto all" (verse 9).
  - h. "Convince all the ungodly of their ungodly deeds" (verse 9).
- How has Jesus fulfilled these prophecies? (Encourage class members to cite examples from the scriptures and to share personal experiences.)

- How do you feel as you think about the things that Jesus has done for us? What would our lives be like if Jesus had not done these things for us?

## 2. The Apostle John testifies that Jesus Christ is “the true Light.”

Read and discuss John 1:1–14; 20:31. (Use the Joseph Smith Translation of John 1:1–14 if it is available. It is found on pages 807–8 in the appendix of the LDS edition of the King James Bible.)

- What can we learn about Jesus Christ from John 1:1–3, 14? (See the list below. Note that “the Word” in John 1:1, 14 refers to the Savior.)
  - a. He “was in the beginning” with God the Father (John 1:1–2). Note that the Savior’s mission began in the premortal world, long before he was born in Bethlehem.
  - b. He is God (John 1:1). Explain that when we speak of God, we usually refer to Heavenly Father. However, “the personage known as Jehovah in Old Testament times . . . is the Son, known as Jesus Christ, . . . who is also a God. Jesus works under the direction of the Father. . . . Many of the things that the scripture says were done by God were actually done by . . . Jesus” (Bible Dictionary, “God,” 681).
  - c. Through him the gospel was preached in the premortal world (Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:1).
  - d. He made all things (John 1:3).
  - e. He is the Only Begotten Son of God in the flesh (John 1:14; see also 1 Nephi 11:14–21). This doctrine is discussed in lesson 2.
- The Apostle John said that “in [Jesus] was life” (John 1:4). He also testified that Jesus is “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9). How has the Savior given you life and light? (As class members discuss this question, you may want to refer to John 8:12; 1 Corinthians 15:20–22; Moroni 7:15–18, 41; D&C 88:6–14; and Bible Dictionary, “Light of Christ,” 725.)
- What was John’s purpose in writing his testimony? (See John 20:31.) What does it mean to “believe that Jesus is the Christ”? (Explain that *Christ* is a Greek word meaning anointed. When we have a testimony that Jesus is the Christ, we know that he is the Son of God and was anointed and foreordained to be our Savior.) How might studying the New Testament in Sunday School this year help strengthen your testimony that Jesus is the Christ?
- What can we do individually and as a class to be guided by the Spirit as we study the New Testament? (See James 1:5–6; D&C 50:17–22; 88:118.)
- How can the words in John 1:10–14 apply to us, even though we were not on the earth during the Savior’s mortal ministry?

Elder Thomas S. Monson taught:

“We need not visit the Holy Land to feel him close to us. We need not walk by the shores of Galilee or among the Judean hills to walk where Jesus walked.

“In a very real sense, all can walk where Jesus walked when, with his words on our lips, his spirit in our hearts, and his teachings in our lives, we journey through mortality” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1974, 70; or *Ensign*, May 1974, 48).

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## Conclusion

Testify of Jesus Christ and express your feelings about learning of him through studying the New Testament.

Assure class members that their testimonies of the Savior will increase as they seek the Spirit's guidance in their study of the New Testament and as they participate in class discussions. Encourage them to use the *New Testament Class Member Study Guide* as they study the scriptures in preparation for each class.

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## Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

### 1. Overview of the New Testament

Invite class members to turn to the Contents page of the Bible and review the names of the 27 books in the New Testament. Explain that the New Testament can be divided into four parts (you may want to list these on the chalkboard):

- a. The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John), which are a record and witness of Jesus Christ's life, mission, and teachings.
- b. The book of Acts, which is an account of the ministry of the Apostles after Jesus' death and Resurrection. This book focuses on Peter's work among the Jews and Paul's work among the Gentiles.
- c. The epistles (letters) of Paul and other Church leaders, written to instruct and edify the Saints of their time.
- d. The Lord's revelation to the Apostle John on the isle of Patmos.

### 2. Video presentations

If *Family Home Evening Video Supplement 2* (53277) is available, you may want to show the five-minute segment "What Think Ye of Christ?" Use the presentation to introduce the New Testament and to emphasize the importance of having a testimony that Jesus is the Christ.

If *New Testament Video Presentations* (53914) is available, you may also want to show "The Message of the New Testament," a two-minute segment.

### 3. "He . . . was sent to bear witness of that Light" (John 1:8)

Have a class member read John 1:6–8.

- Who is the man mentioned in these verses? (John the Baptist.) What was his mission? (See John 1:8.) How can we, like John, "bear witness of that Light"?