

Jesus Rejected in Nazareth

BIBLE PASSAGE: Luke 4:14-30

MAIN POINT: Jesus explained that the Scriptures tell about Him.

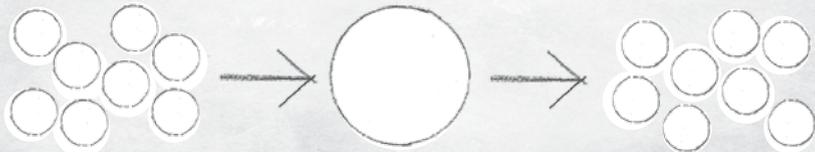
KEY PASSAGE: John 14:6

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who did Jesus say He is? Jesus said He is the Messiah.

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Leader BIBLE STUDY

Jesus was about thirty years old when He began His ministry. After John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River, Jesus was tempted in the desert. Jesus traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover. Then, He headed north to Galilee. He went through the region of Samaria, stopping at Jacob's well to talk to a Samaritan woman.

Jesus began teaching in the synagogues. He went to the town of Nazareth. Nazareth was a small village in the hills between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean Sea. This was where Jesus grew up.

On the Sabbath day, Jesus went into the synagogue. He read

aloud the words of the prophet Isaiah. (See Isa. 61:1-2.) Jesus sat down. Everyone's eyes were on Him as He explained, "Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled." What was Jesus saying? Jesus was saying, It's Me. The words Jesus read were coming true. Some of the people might have remembered Jesus from His youth. They asked, "Isn't this Joseph's son?"

Jesus knew their thoughts; Jesus had performed miracles in Capernaum, and the people wanted Jesus to do miracles in His hometown too. Jesus reminded them of two Old Testament accounts. Many widows lived in Israel when the prophet Elijah was there, but God sent Elijah to help a widow in another country. And Elisha likely encountered Israelites who had leprosy, but he healed Naaman the Syrian.

Jesus wanted the people to understand that His miracles were an act of grace—a gift. No one deserves God's grace, so God may show grace to whomever He pleases—even Gentiles. The people were angry. They drove Jesus away, intending to kill Him, but Jesus escaped through the crowd.

As you teach, explain that Jesus came to give sight to the blind and to set the captives free. He came preaching good news to all the people groups. Finally, the Messiah had come! Jesus was God's plan to save sinners.



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The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

Jesus Rejected in Nazareth

Luke 4:14-30

- **Draw on a chalkboard:**

When you read about Jesus going to the synagogue, draw a picture of a building. As you continue the story, draw a picture of a scroll, an amazed face, a raincloud, and an angry face.

- **Sit and stand:** Begin reading the story as you sit. Stand as Jesus read the Scripture. Then sit down again. Stand and stomp when the people forced Jesus out of town.

Jesus went to His hometown, Nazareth. On the Sabbath day, Jesus went to the synagogue like He usually did.

The Sabbath day was a holy day of rest. On that day, the Jews gathered in the synagogue to worship God. The synagogue was a special building where Jews met together to pray, worship, and learn about the Scriptures.

Jesus stood up to read Scripture. He unrolled the scroll of the prophet Isaiah and read: “The Spirit of the Lord is on Me. He has chosen Me to tell good news to the poor. He has sent Me to tell the captives that they are free, to tell the blind that they can see, to free people who have been treated badly, and to announce that the Lord’s favor is on us.” Then Jesus rolled up the scroll. He gave it back to the attendant and sat down.

Everyone who was in the synagogue stared at Jesus. **Jesus said, “Today as you listened to Me reading these words, they came true.”**

The people said good things about Jesus, and they were amazed at Him. But some of the people in Nazareth had known Jesus from His youth. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked.

Jesus was far from ordinary. Even though Joseph raised Jesus as his own son, Jesus’ true Father is God.

Then Jesus said to them, “You will probably say this old proverb: ‘Doctor, heal yourself.’ You’ve heard about the miracles I performed in Capernaum, and you want Me to do them here in My hometown too.”

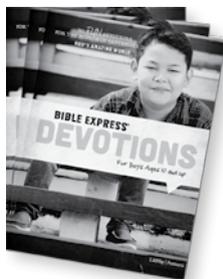
Jesus also said, “No prophet is accepted in his

hometown.” Jesus reminded the people of the prophets **Elijah and Elisha**. When there was a terrible famine in **Israel** and no rain fell there for three and a half years, plenty of widows in the country needed help. But Elijah did not help the widows in Israel. Instead, **God sent Elijah to help a widow in another land**.

And when Elisha was a prophet, many people in Israel had leprosy. They wanted to be healed, **but Elisha did not heal them**. Instead, **he healed a man named Naaman** (NAY muhn), and Naaman was **from Syria**—a country that hated God’s people.

The people listening to Jesus in the synagogue became angry. They forced Jesus out of town. They wanted to throw Him off a cliff, but Jesus walked right through the crowd and went on His way.

Christ Connection: Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah wrote about God’s plan to send a Messiah. He would bring good news and redeem people who were broken and hurting. Jesus read Isaiah’s words and told everyone who was listening that He is the promised Messiah.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD’S WORD?
GET
BIBLE EXPRESS!**

Invite kids to check out this week’s devotionals to discover that Jesus read the scroll as usual (Luke 4:16), and Jesus told the people that they had witnessed the prophecy’s fulfillment. (Luke 4:21) Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: Jesus Rejected in Nazareth

BIBLE PASSAGE: Luke 4:14-30

MAIN POINT: Jesus explained that the Scriptures tell about Him.

KEY PASSAGE: John 14:6

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who did Jesus say He is? Jesus said He is the Messiah.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Ask kids to share a favorite memory from their hometowns. If kids have moved away from their hometowns, invite them to describe their hometown.

Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Face Time” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Provide colored pencils or markers and invite kids to complete “Face Time” on the activity page. Kids should draw a face for each emotion listed.

SAY • These emotions are all things people felt in our Bible story today. When you hear the story, listen carefully to see if you can notice the ways people felt when they heard Jesus speak.

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Accepted or rejected?

Label one piece of paper *Accepted* and tape it to one wall. Label another paper *Rejected* and tape it to the opposite wall. Instruct kids to stand in the middle of the room.

Explain that you will call out an item. If kids accept it or



LOW PREP

- paper
- tape
- marker

like it, they should run to the first wall. If they reject it or don't like it, they should run to the other wall.

Call out items one at a time. Between items, guide kids to return to the center of the room.

Sample items: strawberry ice cream, pickles, golf, basketball, recess, math class, getting up early, staying up late, singing, dancing.

SAY • We usually accept things that we like and reject things that we don't like. Today, we are going to hear a Bible story about a time when Jesus was rejected by people in His hometown. Why do you think they would reject Jesus?

OPTION 2: Newspaper sculptures

Invite kids to work in small groups to create newspaper sculptures. Provide each group with masking tape and several pages of newspaper.

- newspapers
- masking tape
- wet wipes (for cleanup)

Demonstrate how to crumple and twist the newspaper to form different shapes. Explain that kids can use the masking tape to hold their newspaper pieces together. Give kids several minutes to sculpt whatever they desire.

Lead each group to share its creation with the rest of the kids and to describe any difficulties they encountered while sculpting. Provide wet wipes to clean up any ink from the newspaper that may have dirtied kids' hands.

SAY • Many people read newspapers to find out the news. Newspapers are filled with good news and bad news. Today's Bible story is about some good news Jesus shared with the people in His hometown.

Transition to large group

Large Group LEADER

SESSION TITLE: Jesus Rejected in Nazareth

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Countdown

• countdown video

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

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire
• Bibles
• bottles of water
• poster board
• marker

[Large Group Leader enters and stands next to a table with Bibles and bottles of water. The table is labeled with a poster that says, Ask Anything!]

LEADER • Hello, everyone. It's good to see you today. If you're new here, I'm [*your name*]. I have my booth all set up for the city street festival. I have been here for several days, answering people's questions about God and the Bible. This has been a great experience! People really are curious to know about God.

Unfortunately, not everyone wants to talk. Some people just don't like the answers I give them, even though I tell them the truth. But you know what? Not everyone liked Jesus' message either.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Jesus' message was about who He is. *Who did Jesus say He is? Jesus said He is the Messiah.* That's

our big picture question and answer. Each of the Bible stories we have heard show that *Jesus said He is the Messiah*. We will hear another story today about Jesus' message.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline or big story circle. Point out previous Bible stories to help kids understand when they happened in Jesus' ministry.

• Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

LEADER • Jesus was about 30 years old when He began His ministry. We have heard about many people who met Jesus: Nicodemus, John the Baptist, and the Samaritan woman. Jesus traveled with His disciples and taught people in synagogues.

Today's Bible story is called "Jesus Rejected in Nazareth." Jesus returned to His hometown to teach in the synagogue, but the people there did not accept Him. Let's hear what happened.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Luke 4:14-30. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "Jesus Rejected in Nazareth."

• Bibles
• "Jesus Rejected in Nazareth" video
• Big Picture Question Poster
• Bible Story Picture Poster

LEADER • Nazareth was Jesus' hometown. Remember, Jesus was born in Bethlehem when Mary and Joseph traveled there to be counted for a census. When Jesus was still young, Mary and Joseph took Him to Nazareth, and Jesus grew up there. [See *Matt. 2:19-22*.]

Jesus went into the synagogue in Nazareth to teach on the Sabbath. He read from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. [*Open your Bible and read aloud*

Luke 4:18-19.]

When Jesus read these words, He said, “Today as you listen, this Scripture has been fulfilled.” **Jesus explained that the Scriptures tell about Him.** He was saying that Isaiah’s words were about Him!

God chose Jesus to preach good news to the poor, to tell the captives that they are free, and to tell the blind that they can see. God promised in the Old Testament that a Messiah would come to rescue God’s people. ***Who did Jesus say He is? Jesus said He is the Messiah.***

Many of the people in the crowd said good things about Jesus, but some of the people wondered if Jesus was telling the truth. They had seen Jesus grow up in Nazareth. Could He really be the Messiah?

Why wasn’t everyone happy about Jesus’ message? Some of the people got upset when Jesus talked about miracles God had done through prophets like Elijah and Elisha. God had done good things for many people, not just Jews. The people wanted to throw Jesus off a cliff, but He walked away.

Christ connection

LEADER • Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah wrote about God’s plan to send a Messiah. He would bring good news and redeem people who were broken and hurting. Jesus read Isaiah’s words and told everyone who was listening that He is the promised Messiah.

The prophet Isaiah wrote that the Messiah would tell good news to the poor. Jesus came to earth to save people from their sins. Jesus never sinned, but

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

He took the punishment we deserve when He died on the cross. Everyone who trusts in Him is declared righteous and will have eternal life.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together John 14:6.

- Key Passage Poster
- “I Am the Way” song

LEADER • According to our key passage, how many ways can we get to God? (*one way*) That’s right. Jesus said that He is the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Him.

This is a hard message for some people to accept! They want to believe that people can get to God by following all the rules or being nice. But the Bible says that the only way to the Father is by trusting in Jesus. Let’s sing.

Lead boys and girls to sing “I Am the Way.”

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

LEADER • Are you surprised that the people in Jesus’ hometown rejected Him? Have you ever been rejected? How did you feel? Think about that as you watch this video.

- “Unit 21, Session 4” discussion starter video

Show the “Unit 21, Session 4” discussion starter video. Guide kids to talk about how the cupcake felt when the vegetables rejected him.

LEADER • What can you do when someone rejects you? Have you ever been rejected because you follow Jesus? When that happens, God wants us to not give up. Remember, Jesus was rejected at the cross when He carried our sins so that when we trust in Him, God will always accept us.

Lead kids to share ways they could encourage other believers who have been rejected because of their faith in Jesus.

Sing (4 minutes)

• “God Is Here” song

LEADER • Jesus explained that the Scriptures tell about

Him. The Bible shows us that Jesus is the Messiah whom God sent to rescue people from sin. Will you sing with me?

Sing together “God Is Here.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to small groups.

LEADER • Dear God, thank You for Your Word so we can know You and how much You love us. Thank You for Jesus, who died to rescue sinners like us. Without Your grace, we would reject Him too. But You accept us and welcome us into Your family when we trust in Jesus. This is such good news! We love You. Amen.

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 3:18.



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

Small Group LEADER

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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who did Jesus say He is? Jesus said He is the Messiah.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- chalkboard or dry erase board
- chalk or marker

Display the key passage poster. Lead the kids to read John 14:6 aloud. Hide or remove the poster and instruct each kid to raise his right hand. Ask for a volunteer to lower his hand if he knows the first word of John 14:6. Let him say the word. Write it on a chalkboard or dry erase board.

Follow the same steps with each word in succession until kids have recited the entire key passage.

SAY • Good work! According to our key passage, can people get to heaven by doing good works? (*no*) Can they get to heaven by knowing important people? (*no*) Can they get to heaven by being famous? (*no*)

So if our sin separates us from God, how can we have a right relationship with Him? (*by trusting in Jesus*)

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster
- dry erase board or chalkboard
- marker or chalk

Before small group, write the following on separate sticky notes: *Bible skills (100 points); Bible skills (200 points); Bible skills (300 points); All About Jesus (100 points); All About Jesus (200 points); All About Jesus (300 points); Prophets (100 points); Prophets (200 points); Prophets (300 points).*

Form two teams of kids. Call on the first team to choose a category and point value. Ask the corresponding review question. If the team answers correctly, award points. If incorrect, allow the next team to answer. Then the second team will choose a category and point value. Continue until kids have answered all the questions.

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

Bible skills

- (100 points) Is the Book of Luke in the Old Testament or New Testament? (*New Testament*)
- (200 points) In which division of the Bible is the Book of Luke found? (*Gospels*)
- (300 points) Name the four books in the Gospels division of the Bible. (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*)

All About Jesus

- (100 points) In what town did Jesus grow up? (*Nazareth, Luke 4:16*)
- (200 points) Where did Jesus go on the Sabbath day? (*to the synagogue, Luke 4:16*)
- (300 points) The people knew Jesus was whose son? (*Joseph's, Luke 4:22*)

Prophets

- (100 points) What two prophets did Jesus talk about? (*Elijah and Elisha, Luke 4:28*)
- (200 points) Where did Jesus say no prophet is accepted? (*in his hometown, Luke 4:24*)
- (300 points) From which part of Scripture did Jesus read? (*Isaiah, Luke 4:17*)

SAY • Jesus explained that the Scriptures tell about

Him. Isaiah's words were about Him! Jesus knew the people would not accept Him. The people wanted to kill Jesus, but Jesus passed right through the crowd and went on His way.

LOW PREP

- index cards
- markers
- large sheets of paper, 4
- Bibles, 1 per kid

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Who is it about?

Write the following references on separate index cards:

Luke 3:21-22; Luke 4:38-41; Luke 5:27-32; Luke 9:18-20.

Form four groups of kids and give each group a card, markers, and a large sheet of paper.

Instruct kids to find and read their group's Scripture passage from the Bible. Then kids should work together to draw a picture showing what the passage is about.

Challenge kids to write one sentence about the picture.

SAY • When Jesus went to the synagogue in Nazareth, He read the words of the prophet Isaiah from the Scriptures. **Jesus explained that the Scriptures tell about Him.** What do your passages say about Jesus?

Invite groups to explain their drawings. Emphasize what each passage tells us about Jesus:

- Jesus is God's beloved Son. (Luke 3:21-22)
- Jesus is the Son of God and the Messiah. (Luke 4:38-41)
- Jesus came to call sinners to repentance. (Luke 5:27-32)
- Jesus is God's Messiah. (Luke 9:18-20)

OPTION 2: Corner dash

Before small group, write the following on separate pieces of paper: *the poor, the captives, the blind, people who have been treated badly.* Hang them in the corners of the room.

Open a Bible to Luke 4:18-19 and ask a volunteer to read the passage aloud. Remind kids that Isaiah said these words about the coming Messiah. Call out the following phrases and challenge kids to race to the sign that completes the sentence. Repeat as time allows.

- Bible
- paper
- marker
- tape

- He has chosen Me to tell good news to [*the poor*].
- He has sent Me to tell [*the captives*] that they are free.
- He has sent Me to tell [*the blind*] that they can see.
- He has sent Me to free [*people who have been treated badly*].

SAY • Jesus explained that the Scriptures tell about Him.

Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah wrote about God’s plan to send a Messiah.

He would bring good news and redeem people who were broken and hurting. Jesus read Isaiah’s words and told everyone who was listening that He is the promised Messiah. Jesus came to rescue us from sin.

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Encourage kids to think about how they feel when someone rejects them and write a short prayer, thanking God for always accepting us through His Son, Jesus. Lead kids in prayer, thanking God for His Word. Ask Him to give the kids peace when they face rejection by people in the world.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- “Says Who?” activity page, 1 per kid
- Bibles, 1 per kid

SAY • Jesus explained that the Scriptures tell about Him.

The people in Nazareth rejected Jesus, and He was rejected at the cross when He took the punishment for our sins. When we trust in Jesus, God will always accept us.

As time allows, lead kids to complete “Says Who?” on the activity page. Instruct kids to match each quotation to the person who said it. Provide Bibles for kids to look up the Scripture references and check their work. (Answers: *John the Baptist, John 3:30; Nicodemus, John 3:4; Jesus, Luke 4:18; Samaritan woman, John 4:29*)

Tip: Give parents this week’s *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.