



UNIT 28 | SESSION 4

GOD WANTS US TO KNOW HIM

MATTHEW 28

KEY PASSAGE:

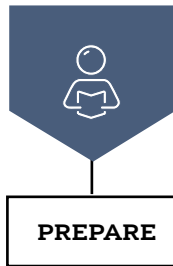
John 17:3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How do we know that God wants us to know Him? We can know that God wants us to know Him because He has revealed Himself through His Word.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus came to earth as a baby, lived a perfect life, and died on the cross for our sins. He rose from the dead and invites us into God's family forever. God wants us to know Him and to tell others about Him, too.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

Today's passage from Matthew 28 is referred to as "The Great Commission." We see here that the resurrected Jesus purposely brought His eleven disciples together to receive the invitation and instruction they would need to fulfill the Father's will. God's overall plan for His creation has always been that they would know Him and lead others to know Him, too.

What was the significance of Christ drawing near to them in this passage? Why does the Lord promise to be with them as He commissions them to teach the good news to others?

Verse 18 tells us that, despite the disciples' fear and doubt, the Lord chose to draw near to them. His words offered the encouragement and direction they needed to hear. The Word made flesh—Immanuel—draws near to His people, even amid their unworthiness. This is the essence of the gospel message, and it is the good news that sustained the church then and still does today.

Jesus also knew the trials and persecution His disciples would face in the days to come. This is why He promised to never leave or forsake them, even when their situations seemed hopeless, disheartening, or dangerous. No matter what, until the end

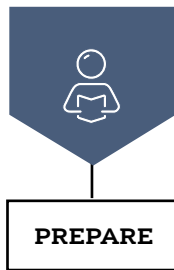
of the age, the Lord continues to remain near to His people.

Consider how the Great Commission began with Jesus declaring that all authority belongs to Him because He has perfectly completed the Father's plan for salvation, accomplishing what we cannot. Then, reflect on the reality that Christ continues the call to create new disciples: to inform others of how they, too, may respond to this invitation to know Jesus for themselves. Christ—our perfect example, our God-made-flesh—has invited us into His story of redemption so we would guide others to Him as well.

Explain to kids that despite our fear and doubt, Christ extends the Great Commission to us and has given us the authority and power to share the good news with those around us. Our call to know Jesus was never meant to end with us, but to be extended to others.

DOCTRINE TO KNOW

God is immanent: God is personable and relatable to those made in His image, while remaining completely distinct and unique from all of His creation.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "Great Commission Word Search" activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ music, "Go Tell It on the Mountain"



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "God Wants Us to Know Him" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ dry erase board (optional)

Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 28, Session 4" questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ "Dubale Family Photo" printable

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "This Is Eternal Life (John 17:3)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)
- ☐ cardstock, 1 per group



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ "Map It" printable, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “What is something you love about Christmas? Why?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Great Commission Word Search” on the activity page.

| **SAY** “The words you searched for can be found in Matthew 28 of the Bible. These are words Jesus spoke to His disciples before He went back to heaven and are known as the Great Commission.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: CHARADES



Form kids into two teams. Invite one kid from the first team to act out an activity you whisper to him such as making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich or water skiing on a lake. Direct him to not use any words but to only act out the motions. Lead his team to guess what he is acting out. Allow 30 seconds for the team to come up with the correct answer. Switch teams and play again. Continue until kids from each team have had an opportunity to act out an activity.

| **SAY** “It was fun acting out different activities, but it would have been so much easier if we could have used our words to tell others what we were doing. In today’s story, we will learn how important it is to use our words to tell others about Jesus.”

☐ OPTION 2: MUSICAL CHAIRS

Place chairs in a circle facing outward, using one less chair than the total number of kids. Play the song “Go Tell It on the Mountain” while you direct kids to move in a circle around the chairs. When the music stops, tell kids to sit on a chair as quickly as possible. Explain that whoever doesn’t find a chair is out and must sit down. Continue the game until two kids remain and one sits on the last chair. Then start a new round.

| **SAY** “Did anyone pick up on what song was playing? [Allow responses.] ‘Go Tell It on the Mountain’ reminds me of Christmas as it tells of Jesus’ birth and the events that took place. It also reminds us of the importance of ‘going’ to tell others about Jesus. Today, we will learn that Jesus commanded His followers to go into all the world and share the gospel.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





Week 4

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

~~Show the countdown video~~ as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Hi, I’m [your name]. I’m so excited you are here! Who brought their Bible to church today? Hold up your Bible and show me! [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] The Bible teaches us that God wants us to know Him.

God made a special plan for us to know Him. He sent His Son, Jesus, to be born as a baby. This is why we celebrate Christmas. Jesus, the Word made flesh, was born to save us from our sin. Jesus grew up and lived a perfect life in our place. Then He died on the cross for our sins and rose again. Through Jesus, we can know God.”

* Praise
* Great Things → * Offering

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “This is our last week learning our big picture question and answer. Let’s see if you can all say the big picture question. [Allow responses.] How do we know that God wants us to know Him? What is the answer we have been learning? [Allow responses.] We can know that God wants us to know Him because He has revealed Himself through His Word.

The Word of God can mean both Jesus and the Bible. When we read God’s Word, we learn about God and how to know Him through Jesus. When we trust in Jesus as our Savior, we can know God because Jesus brings us to God and shows us what God is like.”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “Let’s review what has happened since Jesus rose from the dead. First, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene at the empty tomb. Jesus opened her eyes to see and know Him when He said her name. Then Jesus appeared to the men on the Emmaus road. Next, Jesus appeared to ten of His disciples. Later, Jesus appeared to Thomas. Even though Thomas doubted at first, when he saw Jesus’ wounds, he believed and confessed Jesus as his Lord and God. Finally, last week we learned how Jesus appeared to His disciples a third time and how He forgave Peter. Each time Jesus appeared, He taught Scripture or gave instructions so that others could come to know Him too. Today, we will read how Jesus commanded His disciples to go to all nations and share the good news of the gospel so that more and more people would know Him.”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story



1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 28. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “God Wants Us to Know Him.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

GOD WANTS US TO KNOW HIM

“After Jesus had been raised from the dead, He met with His disciples over the next 40 days. During that time, Jesus told them even more about God’s kingdom. Jesus told His eleven disciples to go to a mountain in Galilee, so they did. They saw Jesus there, and they worshiped Him. But some of the disciples still doubted. Was this really Jesus? Yes!

Jesus went up to them and said, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” Jesus is God the Son; He always had authority. But after Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, God gave Him all authority in heaven and on earth. Jesus is the King over all creation, and He rules over God’s kingdom.

Jesus gave the disciples—and everyone who follows Him—a job to do. He said, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel. Make disciples of people from every nation.” A disciple is a follower. Jesus wants His followers to tell people all over the world how to be rescued from sin and death by trusting in Jesus’ death and resurrection. Then those people who believe become disciples of Jesus, too.

Jesus also said, “Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” New disciples are cleansed from sin by Jesus’ blood. When believers are baptized, they show the world that they have turned away from sin and trusted in Jesus as their Savior.

Jesus continued, “Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Disciples who love Jesus will want to obey Him. Then Jesus said, “Remember this: I am always with you, until the very end of the age.”

Christ Connection: Jesus came to earth as a baby, lived a perfect life, and died on the cross for our sins. He rose from the dead and invites us into God’s family forever. God wants us to know Him and to tell others about Him, too. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Make a list: Using a dry erase board, make a list of the commands of the Great Commission.

Create hand motions: Allow kids to create hand motions for the Great Commission. Encourage them to share the motions with others and explain what they mean.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY ☞ After Jesus was raised from the dead, He spent time with His disciples for 40 days. Then Jesus invited them to come with Him up a mountain. On the mountain some worshiped Him. But some disciples did not. Why? **[Allow responses.]** Some still doubted who Jesus is. So Jesus told them who He is by sharing how He has all authority. What is authority? **[Allow responses.]** Authority is the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience. Just like a parent or guardian has authority over you, God has given Jesus authority over heaven and earth. Jesus is the King over all the universe.

Since Jesus has all authority, He gave the disciples a job to do. What did Jesus command His disciples? **[Allow responses.]** Jesus commanded that His disciples go into all the world and share the gospel. He said that His disciples are to baptize people who believe in Him and teach them to obey His words.

What is a disciple? **[Allow responses.]** A disciple is a follower of Jesus. When we trust in Jesus as our Savior, we become His disciples. Just as Jesus commanded the eleven disciples to share the gospel, He also commands us. We can help others know how much God loves them and how He wants all people to know Him. ☞

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY ☞ Jesus came to earth as a baby, lived a perfect life, and died on the cross for our sins. He rose from the dead and invites us into God's family forever. God wants us to know Him and to tell others about Him, too. ☞

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

✱ Show the "Unit 28, Session 4" questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. What can we do now to tell people about Christ?
2. How are you obeying Jesus' command to tell others about Him?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the "Dubale Family Photo" as you share about the church planters.

SAY ☞ Alayu (ah LAY oo) Dubale (dee BAH lay), his wife Yegile (yih JHAHL), and their five kids live in Denver, Colorado. The husband-and-wife team have been planting churches for 24 years. Currently, they serve as church planters in Denver. Their kids actively participate in church services by playing musical instruments. Alayu preaches, teaches, and trains while his wife and kids help by leading prayers, worship, and evangelism. ☞

Tell kids that the Dubale family has helped train thousands of leaders and church planters in the United States and in other countries. Share how they are passionate about planting



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

churches in Denver, Ethiopia, and other communities around the globe. Pray for the Dubale family and other missionaries helping start churches in Denver, Colorado, and around the world. Pray that many more people can hear about Jesus through these church plants.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)



Before the session, write the key passage on three individual pieces of cardstock and draw lines to create puzzle pieces. Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 17:3 together.

SAY “God gives us the gift of eternal life when we know and trust in Jesus. Everyone who believes in Jesus will live with Him forever and will have the joy of growing to know Him more and more.”

Form kids into three groups and provide each group with scissors and a cardstock puzzle. Lead groups to cut out the puzzle pieces, mix them up, and place them in correct order of the key passage. Swap puzzles between the groups and repeat the activity. (Tip: For an added challenge, direct groups to race against each other to see who can assemble the puzzle the quickest.)

Lead kids to sing “This Is Eternal Life (John 17:3).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

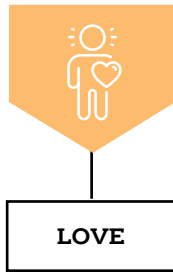
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “God, thank You for sending us Your Son, Jesus. We praise You for sending Jesus so we can know You. Help us share about Jesus with everyone all year long. Amen.”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Matthew 28. Remind kids that the Gospel of Matthew began with the birth of Jesus. Tell kids that God sent Jesus so we can know Him and have eternal life. Explain that the Gospel of Matthew ends with Jesus commanding His disciples to share the gospel so people all throughout the world can know Him too.

Choose a volunteer to read aloud Matthew 28:19-20 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud. Consider pointing out the location of Galilee (C5), where Jesus taught the Great Commission from a mountain, on the New Testament Israel Map.

SAY “ Jesus commanded that disciples be made in all nations. This means that every person from every place around the world needs to hear the good news of Jesus. God wants all people to know Him. No matter their age or where they live or how much money they have or what they look like. God loves all people and made every person to know Him through faith in Jesus. We can obey Jesus’ command and tell people how they can be saved from sin and given eternal life. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ Do we obey Jesus’ commands because we have to earn His love or because it’s how we show we love Him? Why? ”

Discuss how Jesus commands His disciples to teach others His words and obey His commands. Remind kids that we do not obey because we have to earn His love. Explain how we obey Jesus’ commands because we love Him and have changed hearts that want to do what He says.

SAY “ Why do you think Jesus said He will always be with His disciples? ”

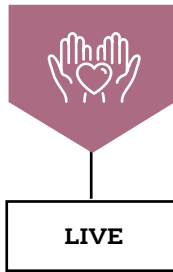
Prompt kids to think about how being a disciple of Jesus is not always easy. Discuss how the world is against God and His followers. Tell kids that it can also be hard to always obey God. Encourage kids to remember that Jesus gave us His Spirit to guide us in truth, strengthen us, and help us when we face hard times. Remind kids that we were made to always live in the presence of God and that through Jesus we can.

SAY “ Do you think it is important that we tell other people about Jesus? Why? ”

Remind kids that we are made to know God and that He wants us to know Him. Tell kids that when we share the truth about Jesus with others, we are helping them know God. Discuss how faith in Jesus is the only way to have our sins forgiven and live with God forever. Encourage kids to think about people in their lives who need to hear about Jesus.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ **OPTION 1: MAP IT**



Provide each kid with a copy of the “Map It” printable and blue, orange, purple, and yellow markers. Tell kids that the world map displays the places the Dubale family has planted churches. Tell kids that since 1996, the Dubale family has planted churches in Ethiopia, South Sudan, Uganda, and Denver, Colorado.

Direct kids to follow the instructions on the “Map It” printable to color in these countries. Assist kids in finding the country or state they live in and direct them to mark it with an X. Discuss how kids can participate in the Great Commission right where they live.

SAY “ The Dubale family has been obedient to go to many places in the world to tell others about Jesus. God has used their faithful obedience to help others trust in Jesus and start churches. Like the Dubale family, we can be faithful to follow Jesus’ commands and tell others about Him no matter where we live in the world. ”

☐ **OPTION 2: WHAT CAN I SHARE?**



Remind kids that God wants all people to know Him. Discuss how we can know God through His Word, the Bible, and through His Son, Jesus. Prompt kids to think about what they know about the Bible and Jesus.

Form kids into pairs. Lead kids to share a favorite Bible story or a truth about Jesus with their partner. Provide an example such as the Bible teaches us that God created the world or Jesus saves us from sin. Allow a couple of minutes for kids to share with their partner. Then switch partners and repeat. Continue as time allows.

SAY “ Sometimes we can feel scared or confused about how to share God’s truth with others. We don’t have to know all the right answers or be worried what people will think. We can be faithful to share what we know and trust God to do the work of helping people believe in Jesus. Anytime we share truth from the Bible and about Jesus, we are being faithful to help others know God. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.