

HOW TO NAVIGATE THE NEW TESTAMENT

Lesson Guide Sample (Lesson 1)

DiscipleTown is the Kids Church curriculum from **DiscipleLand** and Karl Bastian, the Kidologist! This customizable, teacher-driven curriculum provides everything you need to essential skills for victorious Christian living!

This sample includes the first thirteen pages of Lesson 1. The full *How to Navigate the New Testament* download includes additional pages and higher image resolution, plus three more lessons of material. Find a complete list of product components at DiscipleLand.com.





How to Navigate the New Testament

Lesson 1—Live Like Jesus

Unit Summary

For many kids, the Bible seems so big and complex that they feel overwhelmed. They don't know how to start mining the riches in the New Testament. In this unit, you will take children on a tour that will unlock the mysteries of God's Word and give them confidence to navigate through the New Testament.

Your kids will learn how the New Testament fits together. You will show that the 27 New Testament books fall into three groups: History, Living Letters, and Prophecy. In addition, they will "meet" some key authors of the New Testament. Finally, you will guide children to apply Bible truths to their lives.

Lesson Summary

Our New Testament tour begins with the Gospels, which record key moments of Jesus' life and ministry. Kids need to understand that the Gospels are important because Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise of the Old Testament, forgiveness of sins and salvation come through a relationship with Jesus, and because Christ's example and messages show us how God wants us to live. Today's lesson also includes the book of Acts, the history of the early Church after Jesus' resurrection.

Paul's Power Principle: The New Testament is God's road map to living victoriously!



DISCIPLE TARGETS

In this lesson, your children will...

KNOW

- Five History books tell about Jesus and the early Church

FEEL

- Excited to be part of God's marvelous plan

DO

- Memorize the names of all 27 New Testament books

SUPPLIES ✓

General Supplies

Bibles, puppets, video projection (optional)
Pencils, pens, paper

Spark Interest

WELCOME!: smiley-face stickers
LET'S PLAY!: baseball items (optional)
CONNECT WITH YOUR KIDS: none

Explore Scripture

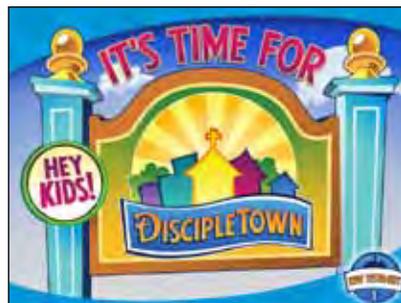
KEYVERSE: none

Inspire Action

DRAMATIZE THE POINT: Bible-times clothes, pen
and ink, parchment

PowerPoint Presentation

As you plan your lesson, select PowerPoint slides that correspond to the lesson elements you choose. In the "Slide Sorter" View, you can rearrange and/or delete the slides as necessary. For descriptions of the included slides and tips on their use, see the notes accompanying each slide.



SPARK INTEREST

Choose from the following activities and ideas to engage kids and grab their attention.



Welcome!—Find the Good News

Find some smiley-face stickers (or just make some from images printed on paper) and hide as many as you would like around the room—the more the better! As children arrive, encourage them to find the "Good News" by finding as many smileys as possible before the service begins. When the service starts, ask the kids to share how many they found. It is best to hide up to 100 smileys throughout the room. Hide some really well so that you will have a great variety of numbers that the kids share. Explain that the word gospel means "good news."



Let's Meet-n-Greet!

Invite the kids to turn and share something good that happened this week. Leaders, be sure to stop whatever you are doing to move through the audience and greet the children, especially those you do not recognize. Announce any birthdays for the week. (See the **How to Use Disciple-Town** guide for quick and easy ways to acknowledge visitors and birthdays.)



Let's Worship!

Recommended Song: *The Word*, from *God Rocks, Cry Out!*, available on Kidology.org

This song talks about the Word that was, is, and always will be, which refers to Jesus. But it is also about the Word of God that will always remain! Both Jesus and God's Word will exist forever! Jesus' friends wrote about Him so that He would never be forgotten.



Puppet Intro

Leader & puppet introduce today's lesson. You will find a scripted version of this intro at the end of the lesson.

Puppet* comes out carrying a diary/journal. Leader asks why he has a diary. Puppet says that he doesn't want to forget all his great experiences and memories, so he writes about them in his journal/diary. Later, he rereads what he wrote and relives the experiences; he enjoys remembering the things that happened in the past. Puppet explains that by writing about experiences, he knows he'll never forget them, even years from now. Leader says that is a great idea and then explains that Jesus had some friends who did the same thing! After Jesus died and rose again and went to heaven, several of His friends wrote down their memories of Jesus' life, and those books are called the Gospels and the book of Acts.

***PUPPET:** Develop a puppet character to use regularly. The children will get to know the personality and enjoy these regular visits. Dee, Cy, and Paul puppets are available at DiscipleLand.com



Let's Play!—Bible Book Baseball: History Series!

Note: Use the New Testament Tour found in the Additional Resources download to motivate kids to learn more about the New Testament. Use questions from the tour as you lead the children in a Bible Baseball game.



Set up: Create a baseball infield around the outer edge of your room. The "bases" can be made of poster board, or you may simply mark out areas on the floor with tape. Contestants begin on the stage, which is home plate. Label first base "History," second base "Living Letters," and third base "Prophecy."

Two Options: You can divide into two teams (such as sides of the room or boys vs. girls) or simply have children compete as individuals. (Individual play is more likely to encourage personal study during the week.) You may be able to combine the two so that you have fun competition during the service for team points, but reward those who make it around the bases as well.

Rules of Play: The leader calls out questions from the New Testament Tour Guide. (See sample questions below.) Use only questions from the History books (Gospels and Acts) for today's game. Children race to raise their hands and provide the correct answer. The first child to answer correctly gets to come to home plate to begin working his or her way around the bases. Once a child has made it around all four bases, he or she returns to the audience; the child still can compete to do the bases again if time allows.

Sample Questions:

1. I'm thinking of a book whose theme is Jesus the Servant
2. What is the action step for the Gospel of John?
3. Who is the author of the book of Acts?
4. Jesus is the Mighty God is the theme of which Gospel?

Multi-play Option: The purpose of this game is less about the game and more about the repetition of the content and the children learning the biblical content of the books. Therefore, the more who are participating the better. In order to speed the game play and allow more children to advance, though only one leader may be reading the questions, you can have multiple leaders choosing children to compete. You can have as many children chosen to answer and advance as you have leaders to pick and listen to answers! In other words, if you have six leaders, after the question is read, it can be the first six kids to raise their hands and give the correct answer to the nearest leader who advance. Each of those six leaders will look for the nearest child who raises a hand first, walk over to the child, and listen to the answer. You can post a leader at each base to determine who on the base was the first to raise a hand to advance off that base and move forward to the next base.

Continue the game week to week if you wish. Keep track of what base kids were on, and let them pick up where they left off the week before. This way you can set a time limit for the game, such as ten minutes, and even use a timer and play until time is up. The leaders at each base can write down who was on that base before the kids sit down.

This week, ask questions only from the Gospels and Acts. After each question, reinforce the information by repeating briefly the question and emphasizing that it came from the History books.



Connect with Your Kids

There is a danger in discussing the Bible or even the Gospels and failing to connect it with the gospel message of salvation. Therefore, as you enter into a series on the New Testament, and specifically beginning with a lesson on the Gospels, it is important that you make the connection personally between the content of the Bible and purpose of the Bible—to bring people into a relationship with God. The best way to do this as you begin a lesson about the Gospels is to share your testimony about how *you* came to faith in the Jesus of the Gospels.

Tell the children how Jesus became more than just a historical figure to you. When you share this, try to change your posture to something more informal and personal in nature, either by going out among the kids and sitting on a stool or sitting on the edge of the stage—something that communicates that you want to have a heart-to-heart talk with them. Share that while the Gospels may be the “History” section of the New Testament, the Jesus of the Gospels is alive and real, and He is your best friend.



DiscipleTown Visitor

[Your State] Jones* (Indiana-Jones-type character—for example, “Colorado Jones” or “Wisconsin Ted” or “Virginia Virginia.”) Dressed as an adventurer and with scrolls, magnifying glass, etc., Jones enters studying scrolls carefully, and is very confused—as if he is checking and double-checking information from different scrolls, cross-referencing materials that don’t seem to make sense.

Jones: Excuse me ... Can I use your table here for just a moment? I need to check something. This just doesn’t make sense.

Leader: Uh ... sure ... here you go! What are you studying?

Jones: Well, I found this old scroll. It goes back nearly 2,000 years. It seems to be a genealogy report of sorts. It records history, births, deaths, and other information about famous people, but there seems to be an error on this one guy who seemed to create quite a stir! It says here he was born, then it records his death about 33 years later by execution, but then here are several references after this to people seeing him in and around the city of Jerusalem. That must be a mistake somehow!

Leader: *[Looks at kids and winks.]* Really? You say there was a man who lived about 2,000 years ago who died and then appeared again after he was dead?

Jones: I know it sounds ridiculous, but there are too many reports dated after his death to be inaccurate, and these records over here are official records from the Roman offices, so they have to be correct!

Leader: What was the man’s name?

Jones: Hmm, it says here ... Jesus. He was from Nazareth. It says here he was crucified!

Leader: Interesting, because we have a history book called the Bible, and in the New Testament there are a lot of stories about Jesus. Boys and girls, can we help *[Your State Jones]* find the New Testament books about Jesus? There are four books of the Bible dedicated exclusively to telling stories about Him. *[Takes answers from kids about where in the Bible it could be.]*

Jones: Really? I can learn about this guy?

Leader: Absolutely—in the New Testament of the Bible, specifically the Gospel books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—you can find a lot of stories about Jesus.

Jones: Wow, that is really amazing—what a great book! May I borrow one of these for my research?

Leader: Absolutely, here you go!

[Jones exits with scrolls and Bible.]

Leader: *[To audience:]* You see, boys and girls, the first four books of the New Testament are called the Gospels, because they teach about Jesus’ life—how He was born, died, and was resurrected on the third day. We can learn all about His life by reading these New Testament books.

***CHARACTERS:** These are suggested characters and names. Please feel free to change or adjust according to the actors and props you have available.



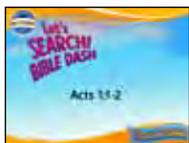
EXPLORE SCRIPTURE

Seize on the children's interest and direct them into God's Word.



Let's Search!—Bible Dash

Supplies: Bibles



Ask all kids with Bibles to participate, or invite a few volunteers to come to the front. As children hold Bibles closed with hands on covers, state the Bible reference twice, then on the command "SEARCH!" have the students race to locate the verse. Once they have a finger on the verse, they can stand and call out, "FOUND IT!" Have the first child read the verse aloud while you project the verse on a screen via PowerPoint. See suggestions below for comments on each verse. Keep your comments brief and to the point of the lesson.

- Acts 1:1-2
- 1 John 4:17
- 3 John 1:11
- 1 Corinthians 11:1
- Romans 13:14
- Ephesians 3:16-17a
- Philippians 2:5
- Colossians 3:2

Luke explains why he wrote his books.
In this world, we are to be like Jesus.
Be imitators of what is good. (Jesus is good!)
Follow Christ's example.
Putting on Christ means to be like Him.
Christ lives in you so that you'll be like Him.
Having Christ's mindset means we are like Him in our attitudes.
Focus on things above.



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Suggested Bible Narrative

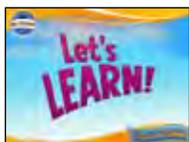
Answering the Call—Matthew 4:12–25

Jesus calls His first disciples. The key phrase to emphasize is that when He called them, "at once they left their nets and followed Him." (verse 20)



Let's Learn!—Live Like Jesus

Read Acts 1:1-2 **In the introduction of his second book, Luke talks about his first book and explains why he wrote it, "to tell about all the things that Jesus did and taught." He was referring to the Gospel of Luke.**



Show some autobiographies of different famous people and ask, **Wouldn't it be awesome if we had an autobiography of God?** Allow kids to respond. **Do you know what a book is called that is about someone, but not written by them?** Allow for responses. If no one knows, say, **That is called a biography. Did you know that four of Jesus' friends wrote biographies about Jesus after He died and rose and then went to heaven? These biographies are called the Gospels.**

Four Witnesses: Choose four children from the audience. Have them come up and sit in four chairs on the stage and just ask them to watch. Then for the next five minutes you need to do a variety of things—such as bringing out props to show the kids, interacting with the children in the audience, telling some prepared jokes, and asking the kids on stage some questions. The more you do and the more quickly you do a bunch of random things the better. When the five minutes are up, give all four kids a piece of paper and a pencil and ask them ten prepared questions about the things you did; then ask several tricky oral questions to see if they agree on everything. Most likely, though the children saw the same things, they experienced it differently, and will record it slightly differently. Why did you do this? Because some people try to disprove the Bible because different writers describe the same things a little differently. But the truth is, the Bible always agrees on important things, and the little things can be explained by the fact that people experienced events and remembered them a little differently—which is normal.



BONUS POWERPOINT: For those wanting to “dig deeper,” the Supplemental Resources download folder contains a bonus PowerPoint with slides outlining the New Testament books and highlighting each book’s theme, theme verse, and action step. Customize a presentation to teach kids the five History books.



Dee's Disciple Tip: “MMLJ+Y = Jesus’ Four Friends + YOU” **The first four books of the Bible were written by four of Christ’s friends: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John because they wanted to tell others about their friend Jesus. You need to do the same—tell your story of how Jesus has changed you so the people you know can be changed too. How would you tell the story?**



KeyVerse

Topic: The New Testament’s Purpose

Reference: *John 20:30-31*



Memorization Activity: This is a long key verse, but an important one. This first week, start by going over the entire verse several times. Work on the first sentence with the kids and then have them guess what kinds of miracles Jesus might have done that weren’t recorded. We’ll never know until we get to heaven and get to ask Him, but it’s fun to imagine!



INSPIRE ACTION

Encourage kids to apply the Bible truth to their lives.



Dramatize the Point—Meet the Author



Every week during this unit a different biblical author will visit DiscipleTown to talk about the book (or books) of the Bible he wrote and why and how he wrote them. The author will read one of his favorite passages and then do a book signing at the end of the service. (If you have a time machine, that would be a fun addition to this activity!)

This week Luke is here to talk to the children about his Gospel (the book of Luke) and the book of Acts. A basic summary of the dialogue appears below—however, the actor is encouraged to build on this and ad-lib. This is only a suggested text. It is not intended to be memorized.

Luke is dressed in Bible-times clothes with pen, ink, and rolled-up parchment. **Hello, boys and girls! Uh ... why are you wearing such funny clothes? My name is Luke. I am a doctor and I am a friend of Jesus of Nazareth. Do you know who He is?** Allow kids to respond. **Oh, good. Your teacher asked me to tell you why I wrote my Gospel and the book of Acts after Jesus left. I'm a doctor, so for me detail is very important. I wanted Theophilus (my young apprentice) to know exactly who Jesus was, what He did and how He lived while He was with us. I hoped that Theophilus would know that Jesus was God, and that He was the best model we've had for how to serve God in our everyday life. In fact, my dear friends Matthew, Mark, and John all wrote Gospels of their own. There were just so many things that happened, there was no way to write them all! I hope through my writings you get to know Jesus the way I did. Thanks for letting me visit ... and you really should fix those funny clothes! This** (pointing at his robe) **is the style of the day, kids!** Luke exits.



Object Talks—iNavigate the New Testament—HISTORY

Supplies: video projection

The videos in this unit feature a fun character named “iReed Dabook” who helps kids learn how to navigate the New Testament by using his GPS device (God’s Powerful Scripture device). He explain the sections of the Bible and gives a brief overview of the books of the Bible in each featured section covered in this video.

Featured NT books: History Books



Let's Talk!—Small Group Discussion

Small Group Activity: Have the children trace around their hands onto a piece of paper. They should work together to find five things about Jesus they can model in their own lives—by looking for their answers in the Gospels. Have them write one thing on each finger of the hand they traced.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Why is having a role model important?
- 2) Why is Jesus a good role model for us?
- 3) What else can we learn from the Gospels that will help us in our faith?
- 4) What are you going to do this week that will help you to apply what you've learned?
- 5) Which Gospel are you going to read this week?



DiscipleTown Super Citizen

Award a Super Citizen certificate to someone who was a good role model today. Acknowledge the ways this child imitated Christ.



Let's Pray!

Dear Jesus, thank You for living Your life as a role model for each of us. Thank You for inspiring the Gospel writers to share Your story and helping us to know You better. We pray that You will help us to read the Gospels carefully so that we can know Your heart and follow Your ways. Help us to be hungry for Your words. In Your holy name, amen.



Cy's Challenge: Commit to work on one aspect of your life that isn't yet like Jesus.



Let's Review!

If you have extra time, use these review questions to keep the kids focused on the lesson until time to dismiss. A handful of candy will help you keep their attention. After each question, take a minute to reiterate the lesson point related to the question.

- 1) How many Gospel books are there?
- 2) Who wrote the book of Acts?
- 3) T/F—Acts and one of the Gospels were written by the same person.
- 4) What is a "testimony"?
- 5) What does MMLJ+Y mean?
- 6) What is a "disciple"?
- 7) Why did Jesus' disciples write the Gospels?
- 8) The first five books of the New Testament are called what?



For the Home

DiscipleTown Table Talker: Give each child a copy of this week's *DiscipleTown Table Talker*. Be sure to show the kids how to put it together and encourage them to ask their parents to lead family devotions three times this week.

Parent Email: Copy and send the email below to help your parents connect with their kids during the week. Send them early in the week, but not on Sunday. As a courtesy, be sure parents have opted to receive these emails. Review and edit as necessary to reflect the lesson elements you have used. You can also find this email as a Microsoft Word document in your download bundle.

Dear Mom and Dad,

Over the next four lessons we are taking on the important task of helping your child(ren) navigate the books of the New Testament. We know that for their own personal faith to grow, they need to know how to read the Bible, and where to find answers to their questions.

Many times as parents it becomes easy to allow our kids just to be familiar with the stories of the Bible, but as we will learn this month, the Bible is full of stories, theology, lessons of conduct, as well as information about what is to come. This week we focused on the Gospels and learned that the stories told in the Gospels are to help us see how Jesus lived so that we can live like Him, too.

As we go through this series, we want to encourage you to ask your children what they are learning. Ask them questions and share the exploration with them. At dinner, use the DiscipleTown Table Talkers to start conversations about the New Testament. You may even find that your own knowledge and understanding of the New Testament deepens as you share these explorations with your children.

As always, our primary goal is to partner with you as you disciple your children in the faith. Let us know if you have any questions, or how we can provide resources so you can invest more deeply into your kids!

Building young disciples,

[Your Name]



BONUS MATERIALS

Use these options to extend your time or as substitutes for the ideas above.



Chip's Snack Time!

Supplies: gingerbread cookies, icing, little candies, chocolate chips, or marshmallows to decorate

Give the children cookies to decorate as they see fit and enjoy. **Just as we follow the pattern of the cookie to know where to put the icing, Jesus gives us a pattern to follow for our lives. This pattern is described by the Gospel writers—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.**

Additional Ideas

Road Map—Supplies: road map (old, that you can write on), black marker, red marker, green marker (or any 3 colors)

Spread the road map out on the ground and select two to four students to assist you in this part of the lesson. Ask each child to pick a city or town on the map. Draw a red circle around each one. Now explain to the children that you will draw with green marker the best roads to take to get from one city to the next. Proceed to draw a random line going way out of the way, doubling back, making loops all around before eventually getting to the circled cities. Try not to cover too much of the actual map, as it will become difficult for the next step. Silliness is what is fun here—you could even incorporate little doodles or drawings in your “map.”

The children will of course argue with you and tell you that you are doing it all wrong. Ask the children to help you, and instruct them to use the black marker this time to map out the best roads to use to get from one city to the other. (Choose an older student who has some understanding of maps.) This student will follow the map and make a clean, direct link between cities.

The life of Jesus as outlined in the Gospels gives each of us a road map for how to live our lives. Without Jesus, we may think we know where we are going, but we will wander all over, making lots of mistakes, repeating paths and missing paths. When we think about what Jesus would have done in our situation, He helps us to walk clear, straight paths and make good choices.

Through the Bible Tour—Obtain copies of **DiscipleLand's Bible Water Slide Chart** to give to each child (available at *DiscipleLand.com*). This remarkable tool is a fun way to teach kids the names, authors, themes, and key verses of the books of the Bible. Play a “Bible Dash” style game where individuals or groups use their Bible Water Slide Charts to look up the theme of Luke or the key verse of 1 Corinthians. A quick game can be launched any time during any week of this unit.