

JESUS

**GOD SAVED
PEOPLE
THROUGH
JESUS**



BAND

JESUS

PLANNING GUIDE

JESUS



CONTENTS

Aims	3
Background notes for teachers	4
BAND C students	6
Goals	8
Menus	
Bible references	10
Introductory activities	12
Development activities	15
Response activities	19
Recommended resources.....	20
Planning pro-forma	23
Model unit for level 1	27
(with teacher resource sheets)	
Model unit for level 2	41
(with teacher resource sheets)	
Model unit for level 3	51
(with teacher resource sheets)	
Students and families	59

This planning guide is a part of LIFE, a Christian Studies curriculum developed for Lutheran schools.

LIFE is a joint project of the Board for Lutheran Schools of the Lutheran Church of Australia and Openbook Publishers.

God saved people through Jesus is one of twelve concepts covered by LIFE curriculum. This BAND C planning guide contains model units for three years covering the transition from primary to secondary school.

Writer: Anne Dohnt

Theological adviser: David Strelan

Editorial adviser: Mary Jo Zwar

Published November 1998

© Board for Lutheran Schools, Lutheran Church of Australia, 197 Archer Street, North Adelaide, SA 5006

Printed and published by Openbook Publishers, 205 Halifax Street, Adelaide, South Australia 5000

GOD SAVED PEOPLE THROUGH JESUS

AIMS

The ultimate aim of LIFE curriculum is that

- students will come to know God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- students will have faith in God as their Father, Saviour, and Helper.

We understand that faith is entirely a gift of the Holy Spirit.

We teach in obedience to Jesus' command to go and teach.

*How can people have faith in the Lord
and ask him to save them,
if they have never heard about him?
And how can they hear,
unless someone tells them?
Romans 10:14 (CEV)*

GOD SAVED PEOPLE THROUGH JESUS

As Christians we believe this and are compelled to tell others.

Our aim in teaching this concept is that students

- hear,
- explore and
- reflect on

these faith statements:

1. God's Son became a human being to save the world
2. Jesus brought God's loving rule into the world
3. Jesus died and rose again to save all people from sin and death

BACKGROUND NOTES FOR TEACHERS

GOD SAVED PEOPLE THROUGH JESUS

(Note: There is naturally some overlap between this concept and the RESCUE concept. The Theological Perspectives for RESCUE [God saves people from sin and evil] should be read as background also for this present concept.)

Jesus and the good news of his saving work are central to every LIFE concept. In this concept, however, we have a special opportunity to tell the story of Jesus. Our aim will surely be to help students meet Jesus — not just as a figure from ancient history, a character in a book or the centre of a set of doctrines, but as a real living person.

The four Gospels give us a portrait of Jesus, each highlighting certain features, but all confronting readers with the questions: Who is this Jesus? What is the point of his story? One of the most important ways for teachers to prepare to teach this concept is to read at least one of the Gospels with these questions in mind.

TRUE GOD Jesus is true God. This is what makes Jesus unique. He is more than a great teacher, wonderful model and inspiring spiritual leader. He is the Son of God ‘from eternity’. That means, there has never been a time when Jesus did not exist as God’s Son (‘the Word’, John 1:1–3).

Jesus is ‘God incarnate’, that is ‘God in the flesh’ (John 1:14). If we want to know what God is like, we look at Jesus (John 14:9). He shows us the power, glory, wisdom of God, and especially the love of God (John 1:17,18).

THE KINGDOM OF GOD When Jesus began his ministry, he announced that the kingdom of God was here. In his person the loving, saving rule of God had come to human beings. Jesus taught people about God’s kingdom. In parables about the kingdom he told people what it is like when God rules with his grace. People were impressed by Jesus’ teaching (eg the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5 – 7); he obviously knew what he was talking about. Jesus’ miracles were ‘signs of the kingdom’. God’s loving rule was in action when Jesus healed the sick, raised the dead, forgave sinners and accepted outcasts.

It is important that we and our students recognise Jesus as truly God. This means that it is no mere mortal but God himself who is our Saviour. The Son of God ‘humbled himself’; he did not always and fully use his divine qualities (power, glory etc). In order to save us, ‘he gave up everything and became a slave, when he became like one of us’ (Phil 2:7). So great was his love for sinful human beings, that the Son of God put himself through all the misery, pain, and suffering of sinful human existence and through hell itself (Matt 27:46) in order to rescue us from sin and its consequences.

A REAL HUMAN BEING Jesus is truly human. We need to be sure of this. The Son of God became a human being **for us**, to take our place — to live the perfect life we are supposed to live but can’t, to take our sins on

himself and pay the penalty we deserved. As a human being he died our death and went through the hell of being forsaken by God.

CONCEIVED AND BORN It was a truly human foetus that spent nine months in Mary’s

womb, and — despite the haloes on the Christmas cards — it was a truly human baby whom lowly Mary gave birth to and nursed. The big difference was that he was born without sin; he did not inherit the sin and guilt of his human parent.

Jesus lived a truly human life. He developed physically and mentally (Luke 2:40). He went through normal human experiences. He got tired, he was hungry and thirsty, happy and sad, pleased and angry. The one difference was that he never thought, did or said anything wrong. His life was perfect; he obeyed his Father in absolutely every respect, even though he knew all the time that this would mean sacrificing his innocent life to pay for the guilt of the whole human race.

SUFFERED AND DIED Jesus’ suffering and death were real. He felt what any of us would feel. In Gethsemane, for example, he was ‘deeply distressed’ and said: ‘I’m so sad that I feel as if I’m dying’ (Mark 14:34). He felt the shame of the soldiers’ mockery and the pain of their scourging, the weight of the cross,

Jesus opened the way to God which had been blocked by sin. That way is now open for all people through him.
Jesus is the Saviour who shows us the loving heart of God.
Theological Foundations of LIFE

the agony of crucifixion and the torture of being forsaken by his Father.

ROSE AGAIN Jesus' resurrection was real. The same human body that suffered, died and was buried became alive again. More than 500 eyewitnesses said they saw the risen Jesus, and they were ready to die for what they claimed. In the forty days after Jesus' resurrection his followers saw how Jesus' body was no longer restricted by the physical laws of time and space. Jesus' self-humbling for us is over. Now he is in an 'exalted' state; he always and fully uses his attributes (power, glory etc) as God.

Jesus' resurrection is central to the Christian faith. It shows that he is truly God, that God has accepted Jesus' perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world, and that death can no longer hurt human beings as the punishment for sin.

AT THE FATHER'S RIGHT HAND

Still today Jesus is God in human flesh. A human being — one of us — is forever at God's right hand, as the advocate who intercedes for us, as the Lord who rules all things for our benefit. We can follow him through suffering, death and resurrection to live forever with bodies that will be glorified like his (Phil 3:20,21; 1 John 3:1–3).

FAITH IN JESUS To believe in Jesus means more than just acknowledging that what the Bible says about Jesus is true. It means **trusting** Jesus as our only hope of being rescued from our guilty condition and from the punishment we deserve. More than that, it means living and dying with the confidence that because of Jesus God is always for us and nothing can separate us from God's love (Romans 8:31–39).

FOR REFLECTION AND/OR DISCUSSION

1. What questions do the *Background Notes* raise for you? What questions do you think your students will have on this topic?
2. Why is this an important topic to teach to your students? What implications might the topic have for the life of your school?
3. Discuss:
 - a) Christians (and Christians schools) can regard the fact that many children have never heard of Jesus, or know very little about him, as a plus rather than a minus.
 - b) How should teachers of younger children handle the difficulty children often have when we talk about Jesus as both God and a human being?
4. Comment on the following:
 - a) The great thing about Jesus' death was that it was **God** who died for us. The great thing about Jesus' resurrection was that it was **a human being** who rose again from the dead.
 - b) We Christians often say 'Christ **died** for us. Christ **rose again** for us.' We sometimes forget also to say: 'Christ **lived** for us'. All the time Jesus spent on earth was important for our salvation.
5. Discuss the appropriateness of using Christian creeds or Luther's explanation of the second part of the Apostles' Creed in worship if there are non-Christians in the class/school.

FOR FURTHER READING

Luther's explanation of the second part of the Apostles' Creed in the Large and Small Catechisms

Augsburg Confession Art II (*Book of Concord* p 29)

(See also the index of the *Book of Concord* pp 657–659)

One in the Gospel, by Friedemann Hebart, Openbook Publishers, chapter 12: *And there's no other God.*






Good Question, ed B Schwarz, Openbook Publishers, p 71: *Was Jesus God?*; p. 76 *Jesus' death; Reality of the resurrection* p 110.

BAND C STUDENTS

This concept provides students with the opportunity to ‘meet’ Jesus and to explore his identity. The students in your class will have varied knowledge about Jesus, about who he is and what he has done. Some students may believe Jesus is nothing more than a fictional character in a book, the Bible, while others may openly express personal faith in him. The teacher greatly influences the way the students imagine and experience Jesus. Challenge students to see Jesus as a real person who can identify with them and their life experiences, rather than presenting a stereotypical image of ‘gentle Jesus meek and mild’ walking around dusty Palestine in a spotless white robe.

At the same time emphasise that Jesus is more than just a person. He is God’s Son who loves them so much that he gave his life for them.

This concept provides the teacher with great opportunities to witness about his/her personal faith in Jesus. The words and actions of the teacher may communicate more about Jesus to the students than any specific curriculum activities.

<i>DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS</i>		<i>IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING</i>
Students are beginning to move towards abstract thought.		Provide opportunities to extend and challenge students’ levels of thinking. Consider deeper meanings to stories. Be careful of presenting too many abstract images. Try to use simple language rather than complicated religious jargon.
Students have a growing capacity to deal with chronology of time or sequential reasoning.		Consider developing a sequence of events in Jesus’ lifetime through the study of one of the gospels.
Students may have developed a concept of God as an authoritarian figure.		Provide learning experiences where the loving concern of Jesus is linked to an understanding of God.
A sense of belonging is vitally important to the students. A lack of success and being left out can cause distress.		Provide students with opportunities to consider who they are and where they belong. Emphasise that Jesus has shown how valuable they are by giving his life to rescue them. Encourage them to find personal meanings in the stories of Jesus. Use Bible stories which have a strong emotional impact.
Students’ imagination can often be captured by heroic or historical figures.		Explore the radical nature of Jesus’ ministry in speaking against practices and teachings of his time and culture.

Students have a greater awareness of real-life issues.



Explore the meaning of Jesus' teaching for people today.

Use real-life issues to stimulate discussion and explore what Jesus said and did when dealing with similar issues.

Students have increasing awareness that the choices they make require responsibility and have consequences.



Provide time for students to reflect on a personal response to Jesus.

Emphasise the gospel message that God loves and forgives them, even when they make unwise choices.