

Faithful to God

Snow Quest

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Unit 1
Better Things

Unit Aim
Students will explain how God gave us better things through Jesus.

Unit Memory Verses
Hebrews 8:6–7

Scripture Text
Luke 1:26–38
Hebrews 1

Bible Lesson Verse
Hebrews 1:3

Bible Point
God became flesh to save us.

Life Application
I am thankful God came to save me.

THE BETTER PLAN

God's Better Plan for Mary

CORE SUPPLIES

Excite and Engage

Welcome: Christmas or worship soundtrack, offering container, attendance ski passes (AP) ⬇️, a picture of each student, scissors, glue, markers, attendance star stickers (AP) ⬇️, (Optional: laminate the passes, hole-punch the tops, and attach them to lanyards.)

Opening Activity: Activity papers (page 1), pencils, markers, suitcase, clothing and travel items

Relate and Receive

Bible Lesson: Bibles, rolls of paper towels and toilet tissue, aluminum foil, artificial flowers, ribbon, lace, timer

Apply and Act

Life Application: Cut out the spinner (TRP) and attach the arrow to the center of the circle with a metal brad.
New Birth poster (TRP); individually-wrapped candies, stickers, or small prizes

Prayer and Call to Action: No supplies needed

Home Connection: For each student, copy the unit 1 HC calendar (TRP) ⬇️ and the lesson 1 HC devotion ⬇️. Separate the activity paper covers (AP) to send home. Prepare student information forms ⬇️ for parents to fill out as they drop off or pick up their children.

EXPANDED SUPPLIES

Worship and the Word

Worship: *Suggested songs:* “Revelation Song” by Kari Jobe, “King of the World” by Natalie Grant

Memory Work: If you have not done so already, cut out and hole-punch a memory mitten (AP) ⬇️ for each student. Cut yarn or ribbon into 3-inch lengths for students to tie in one hole on their mittens. Use yarn or fishing line to create a clothesline for the mittens and hang them with mini clothespins.

Unit 1 MV poster (TRP), angel costume (e.g., foil halo, wings, white sheet), Bibles

Reinforce and Review

Activity Paper: Activity papers (page 2), pencils

Option 1: On index cards, write several life plans (e.g., become a nurse, have two children, join a baseball team, receive a degree, become a bank manager, and so on). Hide the cards around the classroom.

Option 2: Each student will need a sheet of cardstock and markers. They may need to see the New Birth poster (TRP) as well.

Option 3: Select and print one set of JBQ Verses ⬇️ for students to take home. Research Junior Bible Quizzing at the website, www.najbq.com.

Teacher Devotional

Read Hebrews 1. Prayerfully consider what this passage says:

About God

As the creator of the universe, the almighty God could have been exempt from facing the pain and suffering that life can bring. Even so, He chose to manifest in the flesh and then subjected Himself to the human experience. His love and desire for our salvation was His motivation.

To You as a Teacher

We should approach each day with a thankful spirit, knowing that the God of all creation came to save each of us individually. Our actions and words should reflect a constant rejoicing in this knowledge. Daily displays of thanksgiving are in order toward the King of kings.

To Your Students

God's presence, manifested in the human body of Jesus Christ, changed our world forever. He brought a better plan, opening the door for us to experience freedom from sin and have a joyful, Spirit-filled life. As you study and prepare, imagine yourself offering students the brightest, most valuable gift of all time. It is their opportunity for blessings today and eternal life forever.

CORE *(designed for a teaching period around 45 minutes)*

EXCITE AND ENGAGE

Welcome

Welcome students with a soundtrack of Christmas carols or worship music and invite them to explore the classroom décor.

Help students cut out and individualize their attendance ski passes (AP) 📄, by adding their names and pictures. Students can mark their first day of attendance on their passes by adding an attendance star (TRP) ⭐ to the back of their passes.

Select a volunteer to collect offering and lead everyone in saying the Bible point: **God became flesh to save us.**

Opening Activity: Planning for a Big Trip

Distribute activity papers, pencils, and markers. **Imagine you are planning a trip anywhere in the world with a group of friends.** Designate a time limit to complete the travel plans.

On the front page, students plan the trip by working individually or in groups. Students should mark locations on the map and complete travel itineraries. **Will you need airplane tickets and rental cars? What type of weather can you expect? What items will you need for the trip?**

As students work, choose one student at a time to come to the front and add an item of clothing or a travel item to the suitcase. To signify the end of the session, close the suitcase.

How would you feel if—after all this hard work—your trip was completely changed by God? What if He said you had to wait thirty years before you could leave? Ask students to write their thoughts in the area provided on the activity papers.

Read I Corinthians 2:7–8 (in both KJV and NLT). **Over hundreds of years, God made plans for the Messiah to come. He wanted things to happen a certain way. He kept His ideas a mystery because He did not want anyone to change the plan.**

I Corinthians 2:7–8 (KJV)

⁷But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: ⁸Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

I Corinthians 2:7–8 (NLT)

⁷No, the wisdom we speak of is the mystery of God—his plan that was previously hidden, even though he made it for our ultimate glory before the world began. ⁸But the rulers of this world have not understood it; if they had, they would not have crucified our glorious Lord.

Bible Lesson Verse

“Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Hebrews 1:3).

Luke 1:26–27

²⁶And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary.

Luke 1:30–31

³⁰And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. ³¹And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

Luke 1:32–33

³²He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: ³³and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

- **Who was this promised Messiah?** *Jesus, God manifest in human flesh*

As the time that led to the New Testament unfolded, people seemed to have forgotten about God’s plan for a Messiah. Maybe they had lost hope during the long years of waiting. In this lesson and the next few lessons, we will explore how God provided a better plan for all the people of the world.

RELATE AND RECEIVE

Access Prior Experience: Ask students to share about a time when plans were changed, and they had to try something new. **Were you afraid? What was the outcome? Were you glad you tried the new plan?**

Bible Lesson: God’s Better Plan for Mary (Luke 1:26–38)

Choose a volunteer to read Luke 1:26–27 (margin). **Mary was planning a very special event. She was engaged to marry Joseph. Planning a wedding involves many details.** While recognizing that planning a wedding in Mary’s day was certainly different, discuss the emotions involved with choosing the dress, flowers, finding a venue, locating a caterer, and so on. Talk about the emotions involved in such a life-changing event.

Form two teams (boys and girls). Have each team select one student to stand in the middle to be “dressed.”

- Have the boy team create angel attire using paper towels and a halo of twisted aluminum foil.
- Have the girl team prepare a bride outfit with toilet tissue, artificial flowers, ribbon, and lace.

Set a timer. When time is up, tell the bride to show off her costume. **Wow, what a beautiful dress! I imagine you are very excited about your wedding day. All of your family will be there to celebrate your special occasion. It will be such a big day for you.**

Have the angel walk over and whisper in your ear. **Really?** Look sad; then say to the bride: **Oh no! I am sorry to tell you, but plans have changed. There will be no wedding. The angel says God has another plan. The bride will have a baby instead. She will carry the Messiah, the Savior of all the world.** Have students remove their costumes and return to their seats.

Read Luke 1:30–31 (margin). Ask students to shout the baby’s name, “Jesus!”

The angel only gave a few details about why Mary had been chosen and what would happen. It was not the normal way of doing things, so it must have been hard to understand why God would ask Mary to have a baby when she was not yet married.

In New Testament times, it was considered shameful for a woman to have a baby before she was married. Mary must have been worried about her life being ruined. What would people think? How would they treat her when they saw her in town? What would Joseph think?

Ask a volunteer to read Luke 1:32–33 (margin). Explain how the angel’s words described the promised Messiah. **This baby would fulfill God’s plan to save the whole world from their sins. His kingdom would never end.**

Mary’s dreams of a beautiful wedding must have faded as she began to imagine the joy of bringing forth the promise and plan God had given many years before.

Ask a volunteer to read Luke 1:36–38 (margin). **The angel assured Mary of God’s plan by sharing the news that her cousin, Elizabeth, was also pregnant. Elizabeth and her husband had never been able to have children. She was way past childbearing years, but God had provided a miracle baby to them as well.**

When Mary traveled to visit Elizabeth, the baby inside Elizabeth leapt for joy. Elizabeth felt the power of the Holy Spirit and blessed Mary with encouragement and God’s promises. This was God’s way of letting Mary know the angel’s message was true and would certainly come to pass. Mary was no longer afraid to fulfill what God had called her to do. She trusted that God would take care of her and protect her.

APPLY AND ACT

Life Application: I am thankful God came to save me.

We all make plans. After church today I plan to _____. Your family is probably making plans for your Christmas celebration.

Discuss how God made the best plan of all when He sent Jesus into the world to save us from sin. Review the New Birth poster (TRP). Our new birth is the first step to every other plan God has for us. He wants us to repent, be baptized in His name, and be filled with His Holy Spirit. He wants us to live a holy life and prepare to live with Him forever.

Gather students around a table with the assembled spinner (TRP) in the middle. **Why are you thankful God came to save you? Give each student a turn to spin.**

- If the spinner lands on a number, the student who spun uses that number to count around the table to the right until she reaches the student at that number. For example, if the spinner lands on three, she will count her neighbor on her right as one, then the person after that as two, finishing at the third person. The third student will then be asked to share a reason he is thankful God came to save him.
- If the spinner lands on a star, the student who spun receives a prize.

Play until all students have a chance to share a reason they are thankful for God’s saving power.

Prayer and Call to Action

When God became flesh to save us, He was fully God and totally human. He experienced the same feelings we feel today. He understands our happiness, our disappointment, our pain, and our temptation. Even though He never sinned, He felt the heaviness of sin. He provided a better plan to save us from sin.

Lead students in a prayer of thanksgiving for God’s faithfulness. Thank Him for providing exactly what we need.

Home Connection

- For each student, send home a copy of the unit 1 HC calendar (TRP) 📅 and the lesson 1 HC devotion 📖, or show parents the URL on the back of the activity paper so they can download it themselves.
- Send home the cover of the activity paper, showing parents how the back contains the MV posters for the entire quarter. Encourage them to post it in a visible place, like the fridge.
- Use the student information form 📄 to get contact information from parents. This will be used to establish a home connection throughout the quarter.

Luke 1:36–38

³⁶And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

³⁷For with God nothing shall be impossible. ³⁸And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.



EXPANDED *(designed for a teaching period over 45 minutes)*

WORSHIP AND THE WORD

Worship

Discuss the importance of surrendering to God’s plan. **He is the King of kings, and He knows the best plans for our lives.** Ask students to worship Him as they listen to the words. Suggested songs include:

- “Revelation Song” by Kari Jobi
- “King of the World” by Natalie Grant


Memory Work: Hebrews 8:6–7

Dress as an angel for this segment. Remind students of the angel delivering news about the birth of Jesus to Mary.

Using the unit 1 MV poster (TRP), dramatically read Hebrews 8:6–7 as if you are announcing good news. For clarification, read the NLT version (margin) and discuss the meaning of the passage.

Explain how the verses relate to the better plan. **Old Testament law provided only a temporary forgiveness of sin. In the New Testament, God set up a better plan, through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. In the New Covenant, a person’s sins can be completely erased.**

Practice the verses several times with different students acting as the angel delivering the message.

Distribute memory mittens (AP) . Students color them and write their names on them. Let them tie their first fringe in the unit 1 section. Collect the mittens so you can hang them on the clothesline.

Unit 1 Memory Verses

“But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second” (Hebrews 8:6–7).

Hebrews 8:6–7 (NLT)

“But now Jesus, our High Priest, has been given a ministry that is far superior to the old priesthood, for he is the one who mediates for us a far better covenant with God, based on better promises. ⁷If the first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no need for a second covenant to replace it.

REINFORCE AND REVIEW

Activity Paper

On the back of the activity papers, students fill in the blanks to complete the statements. Once finished, students write the circled letters in the blanks below to reveal the word that means “God’s plan to come in flesh as the Messiah.”

In addition to the plans they have already made for this week, challenge students to seek to know God’s plan for this week as well.

Option 1: God’s Plans—the Best

Have students search the room for the prepared cards containing different life plans (e.g., become a nurse, have two children, join a baseball team, receive a degree, become a bank manager, and so on).

One at a time, let students share the card they found. Discuss the merits of each plan.

- **How might God have a better plan?** *Instead of just joining a baseball team, God might ask the person to lead a Bible club. God’s plan might include raising foster children instead of having two biological children.*


Ask students to describe the benefits of following God’s plans and the blessings people incur when they stay in God’s will.

Option 2: God’s New Birth Plan

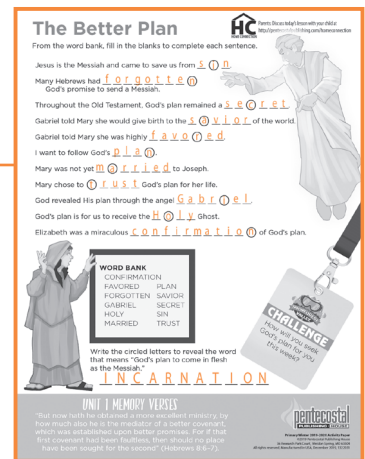
Give each student a sheet of cardstock and markers. Have them draw four pictures (without words) illustrating God’s new-birth plan. Let them refer to the New Birth poster (TRP). Let students share their art and explain their pictures.

Display the pictures around the New Birth poster (TRP).

Option 3: JBQ Introduction

Introduce the concept of Junior Bible Quizzing. Hand out one set of JBQ Verses . Explain that each week, a fun activity will help students review the material.

Option: If you have some JBQ games for the upcoming quarter prepared, show students some activities they will be playing.



The Better Plan

From the word bank, fill in the blanks to complete each sentence.

Jesus is the Messiah and came to save us from sin.

Mary Hebrews had forgotten God's promise to send a Messiah.

Throughout the Old Testament, God's plan remained a secret.

Gabriel told Mary she would give birth to the Savior of the world.

Gabriel told Mary she was highly favored.

I want to follow God's plan.

Mary was not yet married to Joseph.

Mary chose to trust God's plan for her life.

God revealed His plan through the angel Gabriel.

God's plan is for us to receive the Holy Ghost.

Elizabeth was a miraculous confirmation of God's plan.

WORD BANK

CONFIRMATION
FAVORED
PLAN
FORGOTTEN
SAVIOR
GABRIEL
SECRET
HOLY
MARRIED
TRUST

Write the circled letters to reveal the word that means "God's plan to come in flesh as the Messiah."

INCARNATION

CHALLENGE

Write the circled letters to reveal the word that means "God's plan to come in flesh as the Messiah."

UNIT 1 MEMORY VERSES

Did you know that the original plan was to have a better plan? How much better? In the middle of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises, for if the first covenant had been flawless, there would be no place for a "better" one. (Hebrews 8:6-7)

pentecostal

Answers for AP

sin, forgotten, secret, Savior, favored, plan, married, trust, Gabriel, holy, confirmation
Secret word: Incarnation

See page 6 for more information on the JBQ option.