

WELCOME TO THE YOUNG TEEN *TEACHING GUIDE*

A WORD TO OUR TEACHERS

Wow, summer has flown by and it's time to start another new school year. If your church promotes your students to the next age level at the beginning of the school year, welcome your new students with open arms. Spend some time getting to know them. Make sure they feel a part of your class. Encourage your returning students to include the newcomers in their discussions.

This is going to be an exciting quarter, so get ready. Ask God to keep your heart sensitive to those students who need to make the decision to follow Christ. Also, ask Him to help you see any student that may need extra prayer. Let your students know that you pray for them and that you are available if they need to talk.

Below is a list of the themes and aims you will be teaching your students this fall.

THEMES

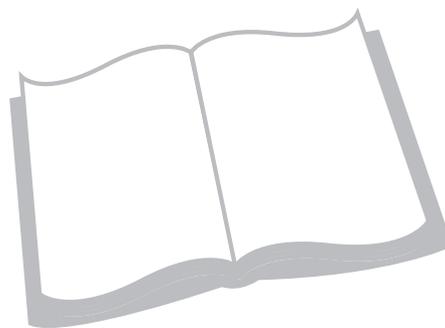
- Knowing Jesus as Son of Man
- Trusting God No Matter What

AIMS

- To realize that Jesus knows and understands us completely
- To know that God cares for us and will see us through our suffering

What are you waiting for? Dig in and share God's wonderful Word with your students.

The Editorial Staff
September



INSIDE THIS *TEACHING GUIDE*

This *Teaching Guide* has been designed to help you get the most out of your preparation and classtime. We share your desire to see lives changed because of the impact of God's Word. Here you'll find the tools you need to teach the timeless truths of God's Word to your students.

For specific information on how best to teach this material, see "Making These Lessons Work for You" on the next page.

In addition to the individual lessons, the "Teacher-to-Teacher Counsel" (after the Unit 1 lessons) offers articles written by Christian educators to help you plan your quarter and become more effective in your ministry.

OUR PROMISE TO YOU:

Every lesson in this *Teaching Guide* is Bible-based. We believe the infallible, inspired Word of God has the power to change lives. Helping students understand and apply the Bible to their lives is the ministry we share with you. It's what Sunday School is all about.

MAKING THESE LESSONS WORK FOR YOU

Scheduling Your Classtime

All of these Sunday School lessons are built on the Focus, Discover, Respond model of teaching. We suggest a class schedule somewhat like this:

FOCUS (10-20 minutes)

Focus on your students' personal needs and interests to prepare their hearts to turn to God's Word for the answers to their questions.



DISCOVER (20-30 minutes)

Lead students in fun-filled, inductive Bible study, discovering God's truth and its implications for them.



RESPOND (10-20 minutes)

Help each teen respond individually to God's Word as the Holy Spirit leads him or her to a specific life application.



TEACHER HELPS

Our curriculum is designed to be as easy to teach as possible. We've included the following teacher helps to make your preparation and teaching time quick and effective.

• In one concise box, the *"Overview"* lists the Scriptures to be studied; the Bible Truth; the Life Response Aim; the Key Verses; and the Focus, Discover, and Respond for the week's lesson.

• The *"Materials"* box lists every item you'll need to prepare and bring to class in addition to the Young Teen Teaching Guide.

• *"Preparing Your Heart to Teach"* is a brief devotional to help you apply the truths you'll be teaching to your own life before you present them to your students.

• The *"Enrichment Ideas"* in each lesson are special activities and projects that require extra preparation. These options allow you to customize the lesson for your particular group.

IT'S YOUR CLASS

In each lesson, we suggest a variety of methods for communicating God's truth to your students. Choose the ideas that are most effective for your unique group of young teens, and feel free to adapt the methods for the size of your class and the resources available to you and your students.

Teens need opportunities to talk together about their concerns and interests. Make the best use of limited class time, but consider time spent in discussion and learning activities as a valuable part of your students' spiritual growth.

Through active involvement in the learning process, your students will develop skills in studying God's Word, identifying and using spiritual gifts, spending time with God, and sharing their thoughts, feelings, and faith with others.

USING THE ICONS:

The icons found along the bottom of this page are designed to be a quick visual cue about what's coming next in the lesson. Using the icons will both help you prepare for class and quickly find your place in the lesson.

ICON KEY:



TEACHER SUPPLIED
RESOURCE



STUDENT
ACTIVITY



VISUAL
TEACHING AID



MEMORY
VERSE



DISCUSSION



PRAYER

LEADING A TEEN TO CHRIST

Though many class sessions give natural opportunities to explain salvation, you may find it easier to talk with interested students individually, outside class. When you do so, have the teen read the following Bible verses as you share these key points.

- 1. God loves us whether we love Him or not. He loves us so much that He sent His Son to earth to rescue us from sin (1 John 4:10).**
- 2. All of us bring misery on ourselves and others by breaking God's laws. This is also known as committing sins (Rom. 3:9-11).**
- 3. Our sins separate us from God (Rom. 8:6-8) and can even keep us from God after death (Rom. 2:8-9).**
- 4. But Jesus died on the cross for our sins. When we accept this in faith, repent of our sins, and trust in Christ as Saviour, our sins are forgiven and the separation from God is eliminated (Rom. 5:6-10; 10:9).**

- 5. Once we receive Jesus, God's Holy Spirit lives in our hearts, helping us to live in a way that is pleasing to God (John 14:16-17). And when we die, we'll go live with Him in heaven (John 14:2-3)!**

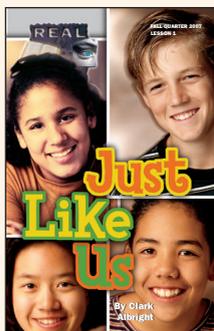
Answer any questions a student may have. If a teen understands these points and wants to receive Christ, encourage the student to pray. Though you may need to lead in prayer, avoid having the student simply recite phrases after you. In the prayer, the teen can repent of sins, ask for forgiveness, and trust in Jesus as Saviour. This time of prayer should include praise and thanksgiving for the gift of salvation the student has personally received.

Follow up each decision by helping the teen be sure of conversion. Encourage communicating with God through prayer and Bible study, sharing his or her faith with others, and finding support in fellow believers.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

There are three other resources for Young Teens, which will be valuable for teaching your students the lessons in this *Teaching Guide*. All are available from your regular supplier.

REAL TIME TAKE-HOME PAPERS



Our relationships with God are happening right now. Young teens don't need to wait to finish "processing" to spend time with Him. That's why we called our paper *Real Time*. Each issue includes exciting, practical stories designed to teach about or model a Biblical, right-now relationship with God.

In addition, the "POWER LINK" daily devotions (correlated to the lessons in this *Teaching Guide*) include a suggested reading from Scripture, a brief commentary, and a directed prayer in response to the Scripture.

Students are challenged to discuss issues of interest via TEEN TALK. Additional puzzles, articles, and cartoons round out *Real Time*, making it a valuable tool in the lives of your young teens.

YOUNG TEEN SCENE STUDENT GUIDE

The removable *Young Teen Scene* Student Sheets provide one or two colorful, in-class learning activities per lesson. The lessons in this *Teaching Guide* clearly indicate when and how to use each interactive activity.

The ON TARGET cards (pp. 31-34) combine life application with Bible memorization and are sent home with the students. "Behind the Scenes," on pages 3 and 4, offers fun trivia and bits of information. It's also removable for distribution to your class on the first Sunday of the quarter.

YOUNG TEEN TEACHING RESOURCES

Your resource packet makes lesson preparation less time-consuming by providing the colorful charts, posters, group assignments, and transparency masters you need to communicate the important truths presented in the lessons of this *Teaching Guide*.

BECOMING LIKE US

OVERVIEW

Scripture

Luke 2; selected Scriptures

Bible Truth

Jesus, the Son of God, became a real human being.

Life Response Aim

To entrust our innermost secrets to Jesus Christ, knowing that He cares for us.

Memory Verse

“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.”

Hebrews 2:17, KJV

“For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.”

Hebrews 2:17, NIV

FOCUS

“I’ve Got No One to Talk To”

DISCOVER

Fully God, Yet Fully Man

RESPOND

Someone to Talk To

MATERIALS

- Bibles, pencils

FOCUS

- Young Teen Scene*, Student Sheet 1a

DISCOVER

- Construction paper, rubber stamps, ink pad, colored felt-tip pens, scissors, glue
- Young Teen Scene*, Student Sheet 1b

RESPOND

- Teaching Resources*, Sheet 1
- Young Teen Scene*, ON TARGET 1
- Real Time* take-home papers

PREPARING YOUR HEART TO TEACH

Isn't Jesus' being fully human, while being the all-powerful and all-knowing God, kind of cheating? Can He really relate to us? Yet this week's Memory Verse says that Jesus became fully human—that includes His humbling Himself even to the point of having limitations. This is the wonder of incarnation: the infinite God becoming a finite man! For instance, though always sinless, Jesus was once a boy who increased both in stature and “in wisdom” (Luke 2:52)—He had to grow and learn. When He spoke of His coming kingdom, even He didn't know when that would happen (Mark 13:32). And in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was not looking forward to taking upon Himself humanity's sin. Yet He submitted to the Father's will (Matt. 26:39), though He could have had 12 legions of angels at His beck and call (v. 53). Jesus chose to live with human frailty and with limited knowledge on earth. He knows firsthand, therefore, what it's like to be tempted, to weep, to be a political pawn . . . and to have faith. Far from cheating, Jesus has been a human “brother” through and through.



"I'VE GOT NO ONE TO TALK TO"



Begin your lesson by relating this true story to your students.

"If God loves me so much, why did He take Henry away from me?" Jeremy had waited until all the other students left so we could be alone, just the two of us in the big chapel.

His question caught me off guard, so I had him repeat it. "Before I try to answer your question," I responded, "tell me about Henry. Was he a friend or brother or something?" I was trying to buy myself some time so that I could come up with an answer to his difficult but important question.

Jeremy related to me that Henry was his dog. *Oh, brother, I thought to myself. It was late, and I was tired. I had just finished talking to a girl about her aborted baby, and then to a young man who had killed someone during a bad drug deal and now wanted out of the gang. Did I really have to sit here and listen to some kid talk about his mangy mutt?*

How wrong I was to feel that way! The longer Jeremy talked, the more I realized how much this dog meant to him.

Jeremy was an only child. From the day he was born, his parents argued non-stop. He was sure they blamed him for their troubles. Neither of them wanted a child. Why did they have to be stuck with him? But they were, so they tried to make the best of a bad situation.

When he was five, his parents gave him a puppy for his birthday. Since they were always so busy fighting, Jeremy's dog became the focus of his affection. His parents never had any time for him, but Henry was always there. He would jump into Jeremy's lap, play tag with him, lick him, snuggle up next to him on cold winter nights. And most importantly, Henry always had time to listen. Whenever Jeremy needed to talk, Henry was there. Over the years, their friendship deepened. Henry knew Jeremy better than anybody. And Henry loved Jeremy just the way he was. He never scolded Jeremy or tried to change him in any way.

One day, Jeremy came home from school. He had just gotten an A in math class and couldn't wait to show it to Henry. Each day when

Jeremy got home from school, Henry would come running and jump up on Jeremy, barking and licking him on the cheek. But on this day, Henry didn't come. Jeremy ran into his room and called for Henry, but Henry wasn't there. A sinking feeling filled Jeremy's stomach.

Just then, Jeremy's mom came in to the room. "Jeremy, there's something—"

"Where's Henry?" Jeremy demanded.

"I'm sorry," she said. "Henry's dead. He got hit by a car this afternoon."

Jeremy had never said a word to anyone about Henry's death until he approached me with his question: "If God loves me so much, why did He take Henry away from me?"



Following this story, lead your teens in a discussion by using this series of questions.

- How would you have answered Jeremy?
- If you had been the youth leader whom Jeremy approached with this question, how would you have answered it?
- Why do some relationships end?
- Could God really care about Jeremy's dog?
- If you were Jeremy, what would you do?
- Who do you talk to about the most personal issues in your life?



Hand out pencils and Student Sheet 1a. Have teens complete the activity, then discuss their answers.

TRANSITION → I suppose there are times in all our lives when we feel lonely or all alone. Maybe some of you have found a listening ear and loyal companion. People so desperately want someone to listen. It's easy for us to think that no one really understands what we think or how we feel.

If you have ever felt that way, then this lesson is for you. I have some great news. You are about to learn a life-changing principle that you may never have heard before. Open your Bibles to Luke 2 and I'll show you what I mean.

ICON KEY:



PRAYER



STUDENT ACTIVITY



RESPONSE



BIBLE REFERENCE



DISCUSSION



STORY

FULLY GOD, YET FULLY MAN

JESUS' HUMAN BIRTH (Luke 2:1-20)

 Have your students read together Luke 2:1-20. This passage describes the awesome events surrounding the birth of Jesus Christ. The central truth contained in these verses is this: the Son of God became the Son of Man. Jesus became a fully human being.

Celebrate this reality by having your teens create their own unique Christmas cards. Depending upon your class size, students may work individually, in pairs, or in small groups. Supply construction paper, rubber stamps, ink pads, markers, and other art materials. The fronts of the cards should picture the students' understanding of the scene of Jesus' birth. Many books about Israel contain pictures of Shepherd's Field in Bethlehem. If possible, show a photograph of Shepherd's Field to your teens. This will help them depict the scene in their minds, as well as cement the credibility of this story in their thinking.

On the fronts of the cards, students should write the words, "Since Jesus Christ was born for me . . ." Have them complete this statement with a verse or inscription on the inside of the cards. The idea here is for teens to convey through the cards what Jesus' birth means to them.

After your students have completed their cards, have two or three volunteers show theirs to the class. Then express to them what Jesus' birth means to you.

Christians often talk about the fact that Jesus Christ is fully God. It's great to know that He is firmly in control of everything that happens. Jesus Christ rules the world. He also rules our lives. But in addition to this, Jesus Christ was fully human.

What do the words fully human mean to you? What makes someone human? As a human, what characteristics did Jesus have?

JESUS' HUMAN QUALITIES

 Have your students do the matching activity on Student Sheet 1b. Be ready to help any students who may have difficulty locating the verses. You can save some time by having your teens work together as a class on this project. The answers are as follows:

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1. i | 4. j | 7. m | 10. f | 13. k |
| 2. e | 5. l | 8. h | 11. c | |
| 3. d | 6. b | 9. a | 12. g | |

 Use the following commentary to aid in your discussion.

John 1:1, 14 Somewhere in a manger in Bethlehem, God did the ultimate—He became one of us. He entered this physical universe as a human being, accepting all the limitations, feeling all the emotions, and experiencing all the situations that each of us face. If your teens are ever tempted to conclude that no one understands, remind them that Jesus certainly does.

Philippians 2:6-7 Jesus did not have to do what He did. He is God. Yet He willingly became a man. Such an act of selfless humility is the crowning demonstration of just how much He loves us.

Luke 2:6-7 When we use the term Virgin Birth, we are referring to Christ's conception by the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary, who was a virgin at the time. The conception of Jesus was miraculous, but Mary gave birth through the same natural process every human mother has experienced.

Luke 2:21-23 According to Jewish custom and law, Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day and dedicated to God by His parents.

Luke 2:52 Jesus grew physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually during the years of His childhood. We can conclude, through the silence of Scripture, that Jesus' childhood was probably just like any other. He may have played with His friends in the dusty streets of Nazareth. Imagine Him chasing a ball or petting a cat, just as children do today.

Luke 4:2b There are many places in the Gospels where Jesus' humanity is depicted, not as a theological statement, but as a part of the narrative of His everyday life. This passage is but one of these. Jesus experienced intense hunger in this instance.

Luke 8:22-23 Jesus felt fatigue. He knows what it's like to be tired.

Hebrews 5:7 Jesus prayed often. Here, we read something of the emotions that accompanied His prayers. This verse is no doubt a reference to Jesus' prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane just prior to His crucifixion.

Isaiah 53:2 There was nothing striking or unique about Jesus' appearance. He was apparently ordinary in His looks. Do you think physical appearance was as much an issue to Christ as it is to your students today?

Isaiah 53:3 More to the point, Jesus knew the pain of rejection. This is perhaps the single most painful emotion students experience. Jesus understands exactly how it feels. He was rejected by many of the very individuals He came to save.

Hebrews 2:18 Jesus was tempted. In Hebrews 4:15, the writer states that He was tempted in every way just as we are. There is not a temptation that we face that He didn't face first. He was tempted to lie, cheat, lust, steal, gossip, and disobey. Help your students imagine what it must have been like to face a thousand tempting assaults every day of His life, and yet never sin once. Jesus felt the full force of every temptation, since He never took the easy way out by giving in to sinful desires.

Hebrews 2:11 We are considered by Jesus to be His brothers and sisters, literally—in that we have been born into His family and God is our Father, and figuratively—in that He can relate to us fully as a human being.

Luke 23:46 Jesus died a very painful, physical death. One of the greatest fears people have is the fear of death. Jesus faced it. He shuddered from the root cause of it, which He would take upon Himself—sin. He knew that He was going to die on a cross. Because He faced death triumphantly, we can too.

 **The Memory Verse for today's lesson contains two extremely important words. Jesus was a human being just like us and, since He faced everything we face and felt everything we feel, He is both merciful and faithful. Let's look at these two words.**

MERCIFUL

Jesus understands everything you are going through right now. Unlike Jeremy, you don't ever have to feel that nobody understands or cares about you. Jesus does, and He always will. Whenever you come to Him and pour your heart out to Him, He will

wrap His merciful arms around you. It's great to have a friend or pet that you can relate to. But how much better it is to have Jesus to talk to any time you want.

FAITHFUL

Jesus will respond to you and me in love and mercy every single time. He will never let you down. He will always be your constant companion. You can walk with Him and talk with Him every day. He will never leave you or turn His back on you. He's never too busy to listen or to help.

TRANSITION → Do you believe that? One reason so many people feel so alone is that they fail to fully enjoy the privilege of sharing life with Jesus Christ. Could it be that this has happened to some of you? Let's find out.

ENRICHMENT IDEAS

TRIVIA-MATCHING

For Focus, distribute note cards and have students each write a piece of trivia about themselves that no one else in the group knows. Collect the cards and read them one at a time. Ask the group to try to match the trivia with the correct student until all your teens have had something about themselves revealed to the rest of the class.

Point out that, while it may be relatively safe to reveal a harmless piece of trivia to others, we all have deep needs and emotions that are not so easy to reveal. Then move into Student Sheet 1a as your teens consider the question, "With whom do you feel free to share your most intimate needs and feelings?"

This is a highly personal question, but it's one I need to ask and one you need to consider. What difference does it make to you that Jesus became a human being, that He knows and understands you and can relate to you completely? Be honest now. Does it make any difference at all? If the Bible taught that Jesus was fully God, but was not a man, would it make any difference to you?

Think about the Christmas card you made a few minutes ago. The statement on the card began with the words "Since Jesus Christ was born for me . . ." How did you complete it? Is your life any different today because He was born as a fully human being?

Give your teens a few seconds to think about their answers. Silence is golden; in this case it might be most necessary. As they sit in silence, thinking through their responses, hand out Sheet 1, *Teaching Resources*. (You can make extra copies if you need them.)

Encourage students to respond honestly to the statements on this sheet. Emphasize that they can trust you with their honest responses; however, they are welcome to return it anonymously so that you can still pray for them. Use these responses as a tool to know how to pray for and minister to each person in your class.

Explain that in the weeks to come you will be studying together just what Jesus' humanity means in a practical way to each one of them. Encourage them to set personal goals of deepening their relationships with Jesus Christ throughout this unit.

Jesus can be trusted with your deepest, darkest secrets—even with a temptation or sin that you are always having trouble with. He will never gossip to someone else about you. He will never put you down or reject you in any way. Remember, He faced that very same temptation, just as you do. You can tell Him your secrets and ask Him to help you. Because Jesus was human, He knows your weaknesses and will mercifully and faithfully help you overcome them.

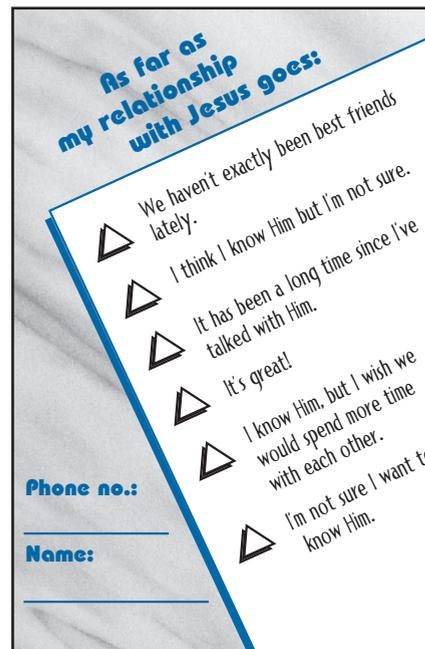
SOMEONE TO TALK TO

Thank God together that Jesus became human and that, as a human, He understands each one of us. Thank Him as well for being merciful and faithful in His responses to us.

ON THEIR OWN

Hand out ON TARGET 1, cut from page 31 of *Young Teen Scene*. Encourage your students to follow the instructions on the ON TARGET cards this week.

Jesus was sinless, but apart from that He was like us in so many ways. Encourage your students to read how Jesus was "Just Like Us" in this week's Real Time. Also remind them to use POWER LINK for their regular devotions.



Sheet 1, *Teaching Resources*