

Resource: Translation Guide (FIA)

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Translation Guide (FIA)

JHN

John 1:1-5

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 1:1-5 and put it in your heart.

Listen to an audio version of John 1:1-5 three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God, and about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 1:1-5 in the easiest to understand version.

All the Gospels begin telling the story of Jesus from a certain point in time. Mark begins by telling about John the baptizer's work; Luke begins by telling about John the baptizer's birth, and Matthew begins by talking about Abraham, who lived thousands of years earlier. But John begins his gospel at the earliest possible point-even before creation!

"In the beginning" was "the Word." John is using this word to introduce a person. He is talking about a person named "Word." This "word person" already existed in the beginning of all things, says John. Even before God created everything, this person was with God. Not only that, this person *was* God!

Then, John says that this person was involved in making the creation. God used this "word person" to create everything. He did not create anything without using this "word person."

This "word person" gave life to people. This life gave people light. This light was shining so that it would no longer be dark. John now makes "light" seem like a person, or a power. And there is another power that is "darkness." This darkness tried to stop the light, but is not able to do so.

Who is this "word person"?

We know that John is talking about Jesus, even though he does not yet tell us his name. John is telling his listeners that Jesus was God. But he was also "with God." So there was another person *with* Jesus, who was also God. They are not two different gods, but two different persons who together are God. This other person we often call "God the father." God the father and Jesus together are God, and later we will also learn about the Holy Spirit, who is also God. Together, the church calls these three persons who are God "the Trinity."

John's listeners who heard John say "the word" would immediately get certain thoughts in their mind. In the Old Testament "the word" has to do with the power of God-because God created the world just by speaking.

God speaks, and things happen. The word of God has power. And God also speaks when he gives his messages to the people through his prophets. People get to know God because God speaks. So by calling Jesus "the word" John is telling the people that God is speaking and acting through Jesus.

So, what is John telling us in this passage about Jesus?

- Jesus is both with God and God himself
- Jesus existed always, even before the creation
- God created everything through Jesus-meaning, Jesus created everything on behalf of God
- In Jesus is life, which means that Jesus is the one who gives life
- This life gives light, which means that when people receive the life that Jesus gives, they can see the light. "Seeing the light" is picture language for "knowing God." So, when people receive the life that Jesus gives, they can know God.

The opposite of light is darkness. The opposite of knowing God is not knowing God, and not knowing God leads to evil.

Then John says that the light *is* shining. Meaning, it has always been shining, and is still shining. Then he says something that in his language can have two meanings. He says that the darkness has not *taken hold* of the light. In his language this can mean that darkness *tried to defeat* the light but was not able to, or it can mean that the darkness has not *understood* the light. John might have had both meanings in mind, but probably especially the first one.

John is going to use the picture language of light and darkness a lot more in the rest of his book.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. In your community, how important is light? Can you tell a story about something that happened in the dark, that would not have happened if it had been light?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 1:1-5 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This story has 1 scene.

In the first scene, John tells the people about the "Word."

The characters in this passage are:

- John, the writer of the book. He is not in the story, but he is telling the story and for this passage it can be helpful to include him as a character.
- The Word
- God
- People
- Light
- Darkness. Light and darkness are not really people, but John is talking about them as if they are persons and it will help you to see them as characters.

John says that God created everything through this "Word." He says this twice. First he says that God created all things through this "Word," and then he says that there is nothing that exists that was not created through him. This means the same thing. By saying it twice John is making absolutely sure that people understand that this "Word" is responsible for *all* of creation. Saying it twice also makes it sound like a poem or a song.

The "Word" gave life to people. Maybe you can have something that represents life for you-go outside if you need to find something! Maybe a tree with fresh leaves, or a flower?

Find an object that represents light. Maybe a torch, or a lamp. When the "Word" gives "life" to people, turn on the light.

Find an object that represents darkness. Maybe some dark cloth that someone tries to put over the light to make it stop.

Pause the audio and collect the objects that you need.

Now, tell the passage with the help of these objects. You can also make a storyboard of the passage and then tell the passage again.

Pause the audio and do this activity.

This passage is almost like a song, or poem.

It may help you to tell the first sentence while you're taking some steps: "In the beginning was *the Word* (first step), the word was *with God* (second step), the Word *was God* (third step). Or, you can clap your hands every time you say the word "Word."

Pause the audio and do this activity.

John then repeats what he just said by saying, "He was in the beginning with God." "He" means the "Word." The "Word" was in the beginning with God. This repetition is what is making it sound so beautiful and like a song or a poem.

Try to find the rhythm in the passage. Can you try to tell the story by clapping your hands at certain words that are repeated several times?

"Word, Word, God, Word, God, God" gives a nice rhythm in the beginning. Then we have "life, life, light, light, darkness, darkness" in the second half. Maybe this gives you inspiration for a song!

Maybe you can tell the story through a dance! If people in your culture like dancing, you may want to tell this story with steps and movements.

Pause the audio and do this activity.

Maybe you can even think of another way to visualize the passage!

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 1:1-5 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 1 scene.

The characters in this passage include:

- John, the writer of the book. He is not in the story, but he is telling the story and for this passage it can be helpful to include him as a character.
- The Word: the same person should be "the Light."
- God
- People
- Light: this should be acted by the same person who acts out the "Word."
- Darkness: light and darkness are not really people, but John is talking about them as if they are persons and it will help you to see them as characters.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The character John is telling this part. As he is telling it, other people can act it out.

The person who is "Word" can be holding a Bible.

Find a way to act out that the "Word" was there from the beginning-before there even was creation. After that, the person who is "the Word" can maybe stand next to God to show that "the Word" was with God, and then "the Word" and God could embrace, to show that "the Word" was God.

Act out that God is creating everything through "the Word." Maybe they can stand hand-in-hand, while "the Word" acts out creating the world, just by speaking. Or, God can be talking with "the Word," and then "the Word" does what God has said.

Pause the drama.

- We are so happy to be creating the world;
- We are so happy with each other. [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out that the "Word" gives people life.

Pause the drama.

- I'm so glad that I can give people life;
- I want them to live;
- I want them to be able to get to know God. [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out that when the people have received life, they get light. The person who played the Word can turn on a real light.

It would be great if you can act out the story, or this part of it, in a dark place, so that there is a big difference when the light goes on. The Word and God are in the room with the people, but the people cannot see them as long as the light is off. But when the light goes on, people can see God!

If you cannot make it dark, maybe you can put something in between the people and God, so that God is not visible, and remove this when the light comes on.

Pause the drama.

- I am so glad that I now can see God!
- I'm glad that I can know God;
- I'm happy with the light. [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out the darkness trying to turn off the light! Maybe the people playing the characters of "darkness" and "light" can have a pretend fight, but the "darkness" will lose the fight!

If you want, you can act out the drama again.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 1:1-5 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

John begins his story about Jesus with the same words that the book of Genesis begins to tell about creation: "in the beginning." If you already translated the book of Genesis, you should use the same words as you did there.

The Word is not a difficult word to translate, but John is using it in an unusual way. Remember that John is using this word as a way to talk about Jesus. He calls Jesus "the Word," which means that God is talking to the people through Jesus and that people can get to know God through Jesus.

When you are telling the passage you may want to pause a little bit before you pronounce "Word," or speak it with more force, so that it stands apart from the rest of the sentence. Your listeners will need to understand that this word has special meaning here, and that John means it as a person.

Use the same word for "Word" that you used in phrases like "the word of God."

The "word of God" means the messages that God has given to the people. God speaks to his people through his actions and through his words. Therefore people often call the Bible the "word of God," because through the Bible we can know what God has done and said. Jesus is called "the Word" because God speaks to us through Jesus. Jesus is the most important message that God has given to us.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for "Word." Look up word of God in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of John 1:1-5 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 1:1–5

Audio Content

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John 1:6–18

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 1:6–18 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 1:6–18 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God, and about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 1:6–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous story, John, the writer of the book, told the people about a person named "Word" who was *with* God, and who *was* God. He did not yet tell his listeners who this person was.

Now the writer begins to tell us about a special person named John. This is not the same person as the writer of the book, but another person with the same name. God had sent this man. Later we will find out that this is John the baptizer, whom we know from other books in the Bible as well.

People might think that this John is the "Word," but the writer tells us right away that this is not so. He says that John was not the light. This means that John is not the person who will give light to people so that they can know God. John only *told* the people about that person.

The writer says that John was testifying about the light. To testify means that you are telling about something that you have seen yourself, and that you know is really true.

John told the people about a person, and *that person* is the one who gives light. That person is the real, or the true light. People can use lamps and candles to make some light, but that person is the only one who can remove the darkness so that the people can know God. He is the real light. He came into the world so that everybody could see his light.

The person that John the baptizer was talking about was Jesus, but the writer of the book still does not give us his name. He continues talking about the light as if it was a person. The writer says that this "Light person" was in the world. The world means the place where people live, in contrast with heaven, where God lives. So the writer means that this "Light person" came to earth.

This "Light person" had made the whole world. Earlier the writer had told us that the "Word person" had made the world. Therefore we know that the "Light person" and the "Word person" are the same person.

Because the "Light person" made the whole world, you would expect that the people that he had created would recognize him. But the people did not! The people did not recognize that this "Light person" was God.

It can also mean that the people did not accept the "Light person"; that they did not want to obey him.

This "Light person" even went to his own place, or country. This means he went to the people of Israel. The Israelites, or Jews as they are also called, were God's special people. But even these people did not accept that this "Light person" was God.

John, the writer of the book, is giving here a summary of what he is going to tell in his book. In his book is going to tell the story of Jesus who is this "Light person," and who is the "Word person." And he is already telling his listeners that most people would not believe in Jesus.

But some people would accept this "Light person," tells John the writer. They will believe in his name. To believe in someone's name was a Jewish way of saying that you trust that person. These people who trusted the "Light person" have become children of God. God allowed them, or made them, his children. It was as if these people were born all over again. But not in the same natural way as every human person is born. This was a different type of birth, a spiritual birth.

After this, John the writer goes back to talking about the Word. He tells his listeners that the word became a human person. We had already learned that the Word was God. Now we learn that the Word also became a human. And this Word person, who was both God and human, lived among the people of Israel. The Word came from the Father, meaning from God. This Word was the one and only son of the father.

This Word person loved the people very much, even though they did not deserve this.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Can you tell a story about a bad person who received a good gift that he did not deserve? Pause this audio here.

Everything this Word person said or did was true. John the writer says that he, and the other people who were living at his time, have seen the glory of this Word person. They saw how great and powerful this Word was!

Then John the writer tells us a little bit more about the other John, John the baptizer. He says it only very briefly; later he will give us more details. Now, he only says that one time John the baptizer was pointing to someone and shouted to the people: "This is the person that I was talking about! This is the person that I said would come after me." It seems that John the baptizer had told the people earlier: "Someone is coming who is much more important than I am. He existed long before I did!" And now John the baptizer tells the people that "this

person" is the one! We know that John the baptizer was pointing to Jesus when he said that, but John the writer is still not giving us the name of Jesus.

John the writer then goes on talking to his listeners. He says that the Word gave all of us very many loving blessings, or gifts. We do not deserve these gifts, but he gave them because he is so generous. First, God had given the people his commandments through Moses. Moses was a man who lived a long time ago. Moses told the Israelite people very many things that God wanted them to do. The Israelites had to obey these commandments so that they could be God's special people and have friendship with God. This was a gift from God. But now God has given even more gifts!

Now God has given the gifts of grace and truth. Here, finally, the writer gives us the name of Jesus! And right away he gives Jesus the title of Christ, or Messiah: the special king and Savior that the Israelites were waiting for. Jesus the Messiah showed the people how good and kind God was to people who did not deserve it. He showed the people that everything that God said and did was true.

And Jesus showed the people what God is like. It is not possible for any human person to see God. But Jesus is different from other humans, because he himself is also God! He has seen God! He is as close to God as a son is to his father. A father puts his arms around his son to hug him. This is as close as Jesus is to God. And because Jesus has seen God, he is able to tell us all about God!

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Please tell a story about a father and son who loved each other very much. Pause this audio here.

John the writer has now introduced Jesus to his listeners as the special king and Savior, the son of God, the Word, and the light for the people so that people can know God. Now he is almost ready to begin telling the story about Jesus. We will look at that in the next passage.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 1:6-18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This story has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: God sends a messenger, John the baptizer, to tell about the light.

In the second scene: John the writer tells us more about the "Word." He tells about something that happened in the past. This is a summary of things that John is going to talk about in the rest of his book.

In the third scene: John the baptizer points out who he was talking about.

In the fourth scene: John the writer tells us about Jesus the Messiah.

The characters in this story include:

- John, the writer of the book. He is not in the story, but he is telling the story and for this passage it can be helpful to include him as a character.
- John the baptizer
- God
- The Word
- The Light person
- Jesus
- People who did not accept Jesus
- People who accepted Jesus and who became the children of God
- Moses

Just like in the previous story, you may want to have a torch or a lamp with you. It might be helpful to have one very bright lamp, and several very small lights-like matches or a torch that is almost dead. You can also go outside and look at the sun to represent the real light, and use a small torch to represent the lights that are not the real light.

Pause the audio and collect the objects that you need.

In this passage, sometimes John the baptizer is speaking, and sometimes John the writer. John the writer is not trying very hard to make his own words separate from the words of John the baptizer. It's not so important who is speaking: *what* they are saying is more important! But you may want to separate who is speaking by keeping a brief pause in between.

Remember that the "light," the "Word," and "Jesus Messiah" are all referring to the same person.

Because this passage is very closely connected to the previous one, you may want to tell the previous one again at the beginning. If you made a song or a dance, perform it again!

In the first scene of this new passage, we hear the word "light" very often. Maybe you can clap or stamp your feet every time you hear the word "light."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 1:6-18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the story.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- John, the writer of the book. He is not in the story, but he is telling the story and for this passage it can be helpful to include him as a character.
- John the baptizer
- God
- The Word
- The Light person
- Jesus
- People who did not accept Jesus
- People who accepted Jesus and who became the children of God
- Moses

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Because this passage is very closely connected to the previous one, you may want to first act out that one again, before you act out this new story.

John the writer is telling this story to his listeners. He should be visible while you are acting out the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out God sending John the baptizer. Act out John the baptizer telling the people about the light. Because John the baptizer is not speaking yet in this scene, maybe he can use gestures without words.

Act out that the light that John the baptizer tells about is coming into the world and shining on everyone.

Pause the drama.

- I am so glad that the light has come;
- I am glad that I can tell people about the light;
- I am glad that we will have light so that we can know God. [!end] Continue with the drama.

Act out briefly that the "Light person," who is Jesus, is creating the world, then that he steps into his own creation.

Act out the people not recognizing him.

Act out Jesus coming to the people of Israel.

Act out most of these people rejecting Jesus.

Pause the drama.

- I am so sad that the people do not see who I am.
- I'm sad that they do not believe that I love them. [!end] Continue with the drama.

Act out some people accepting him. Act out that God is making them his children.

Pause the drama.

- I am so happy!
- I'm happy that I can be God's child.
- I'm glad that God sent Jesus.

Ask the actor playing Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like:

- I am so glad that these people trust me, and that they could become children of God! [!end] Continue with the drama.

Act out that the "Word person," who is also Jesus, becomes a human. Jesus had become a human when he came into the world, so this had already happened; but John the writer is telling it again, with different words.

Act out Jesus living among the people. Again, this is not a different time from when you acted this out before, but John the writer is telling the same thing again with different words.

Act out Jesus loving the people very much and speaking true things about God.

Act out John (the writer of the book) and some other people seeing how great, wonderful, and majestic Jesus is! It will help to have God the father standing behind Jesus, to remind you that John the writer calls him the Father's one and only son here.

Pause the drama.

- I was so overwhelmed!
- I was so amazed!
- I want to worship Jesus and honor him.
- I want all people to know about Jesus. [!end] Continue with the drama.

Act out John the baptizer calling out to the people. This time, you can have him speak. He will point to Jesus as he is speaking.

You can act out Jesus stepping *in front* of John the baptizer to show that he is beginning his work on earth *after* John the baptizer started his work, but then have Jesus step far *behind* John to show that Jesus already existed a long time before John was born.

Act out Jesus generously giving gifts to people.

Act out God using Moses to give God's laws to the people. This had happened a long time ago, so you can act this out a little bit away from the other action.

Act out God using Jesus to show the people how much God loves them, and God using Jesus to teach people the truth about God.

Act out that no one has ever seen God. Maybe God can stand behind a screen, or outside the door. Then act out that Jesus is standing next to God. Maybe they can hug each other. Then act out that Jesus comes to the people and tells the people about God.

Pause the drama.

- I am so glad with God's love and his gifts.
- I am so glad that we can know God because of Jesus.
- I want to tell all the people about him.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 1:6-18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

John uses the word **Word** to talk about Jesus who is also God. When you are telling the story you may want to pause a little bit each time you say "word," or speak it with more force, so that it stands apart from the rest of the sentence. Your listeners will need to understand that this word has special meaning here, and that John means it as a person. Use the same word as you have used in the previous passage.

John uses the word **Light** in the same way as he uses "Word," as if it is a person. Here also, it will be helpful for your listeners if you pause before you say the word "light."

John the baptizer came as a witness to testify about the "light." To **testify** means that you are telling about something that you have seen yourself, and that you know is really true. A **witness** is someone who is testifying.

Stop here and discuss how you will say this sentence. Pause this audio here.

John the baptizer came to testify about the light so that he could help all people to believe. To **believe** means that you trust that something is true. John wanted the people to trust that it was true that Jesus was the light. To believe means to have faith.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use here. Look up faith in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The writer tells us that the "Word" became a human being and was "full of grace and truth." **Grace** means that God shows love and forgiveness to people who do not deserve it.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **grace**. Look up grace in the Master Glossary. Use the same word that you have used in other Bible books. Pause the audio here.*

That the word was *full of grace* meant that the "Word" loved the people *very much*.

The "Word" was also full of **truth**. This means that what the "Word" is saying about God is completely true.

Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. The word **Christ** is the same as the word **Messiah**. Messiah is a word from the Hebrew language, which is the language that the Old Testament was written in. Christ is the Greek translation of the same word. Greek is the language that the New Testament is written in.

The word Messiah literally means someone who has been anointed. Anointing means to pour sweet smelling oil over someone's head. In the Old Testament, before someone got to do a special task, another person would pour oil over this person's head. This made clear that God had set this person apart for a special purpose. It also made clear that God was giving this person special authority. Later, the word anointed became used for people who were appointed for a special task, even if there had not been a ritual that involved the pouring of oil.

The word especially came to mean king-someone who was appointed by God for the special task of being a king.

Because the Israelites time and again disobeyed God, they often were in trouble. But even so, God had promised the Israelites that he would send them a king who would save the people from the trouble that they were in.

When in the New Testament Jesus is called the Christ, or Messiah, it means that Jesus is a king. It especially means that Jesus is the king that God had promised to send in order to save his people.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for Christ. Use the same word as you have used in other books you have translated. Look up the word in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

John the writer tells us that he has seen the glory of the "Word." The word **glory** means power and greatness.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **glory**. Look up glory in the Master Glossary. Use the same word that you have used in other Bible books. Pause this audio here.*

God has given us many loving gifts. He gave these gifts from **his abundance**: this means he gave these gifts very generously.

God gave the law to the people through Moses. **The law** means all the instructions that God had given the Israelites about how they should live in order to be his people.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **law**. Look up law in the Master Glossary. Use the same word that you have used in other Bible books. Pause this audio here.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of John 1:6–18 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 1:6–18

Audio Content

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John 1:19–28

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 1:19–28 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 1:19–28 three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God, and about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 1:19–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The writer of this book is almost ready to begin telling his story about Jesus, but first he is telling us a story about John the baptizer.

The writer is expecting his listeners to know who John the baptizer was, so he never gives a clear explanation about what John was doing. Only at the end of this passage does he say that John was baptizing, and where this was.

The writer just calls him John. In this recording, we call him "John the baptizer," to help us keep him apart from John the writer of this book.

Stop here and as a group look at the map. Look on the map where the Jordan river is. See where Jerusalem is. Pause this audio here.

John was baptizing on the east side of the river. We don't know where the place Bethany is. There is a village named Bethany close to Jerusalem, but that village is not near the Jordan River. So this must be another place with the same name that is somewhere within the highlighted area on this map.

John the baptizer must have become well known, so the Jewish religious leaders are sending out some people to question him. The Jewish leaders are living in Jerusalem. The Jewish leaders send priests and Levites to John. Priests and Levites were two groups of people who worked in the temple in Jerusalem. The temple was the place where people worshiped God. Priests were responsible for offering sacrifices to God on behalf of the people. Levites helped the priests.

Later in this story the writer gives some extra information and says that some of the people who came were Pharisees. Some translations may say this a little differently, and say that Pharisees had *sent* the priests and the

Levites. Both options are possible. You can follow the interpretation that the Bible translation that you are listening to is using.

Pharisees were one of the two most important groups of religious leaders. The Pharisees were very careful to obey everything that God had commanded. For hundreds of years, people belonging to this group had been discussing the laws of God that God had given to the Israelites through Moses. Because they were afraid that they might somehow disobey God, they had added more and more rules themselves. These rules became part of their tradition, and were just as important for them as the rules that God had given himself. There were by now so many rules that it was very, very difficult for people to follow them all!

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Who are the most important religious leaders in your community? Are there different groups of leaders? Tell a story that shows the importance of some religious leaders. Pause this audio here.

The priests and the Levites ask John the baptizer who he is. They of course know that his name is John, but they want to know what function, or role, he is fulfilling. Though the writer does not tell us, it seems that the religious leaders were wondering whether John thought that he was the Messiah-the special king and Savior that God had promised to send. But John tells them very clearly that he is not the Messiah.

Then the religious leaders ask if John is "Elijah," or "the prophet." Elijah was a man who lived about 800 years before Jesus' birth. He was a prophet, meaning that he gave messages from God to the people. At the end of his life, Elijah did not die but God took Elijah up to heaven. The Jews believed that Elijah would come back to earth one day. That would happen just before God would come to judge the whole world. The religious leaders ask John if he maybe is Elijah who has come back. Then they ask if John is "the prophet." Even longer ago than Elijah, Moses was a spokesman for God. God gave the people of Israel his commandments through Moses. We heard about him in the previous story as well. Just before he died, Moses told the people that God would send another spokesman, a prophet, like him and that the people should listen to him. The religious leaders ask John if he is that prophet that Moses was talking about.

But John the baptizer is not! He is not the Messiah, he is not Elijah, and he is not "the prophet." He does not even pretend to be them. So, the religious leaders are asking, "Then who *are* you?"

Then John quotes something that the prophet Isaiah had said. Isaiah lived about 700 years before Jesus. Isaiah preached to Israel to warn them that they would be punished, but he also gave them messages of hope. In one of his messages, Isaiah had said that soon the people of Israel would be forgiven, and their punishment completed. Isaiah said that there was good news because God was coming to rule, and God would take care of his people. Before God would come, there would be a person who would shout in the wilderness to tell the people to get ready to receive God. This person would say that the people should make a straight road so that God could come easily, because God would be coming soon.

John the baptizer is telling the religious leader that he is the person who is shouting in the wilderness, and is telling the people to get ready to receive God! People will get ready to receive God if they stop doing wrong things and ask God for forgiveness for all the things that they have done wrong.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Can you tell a story about people preparing for a visit from a very important person? What kind of things do the people do to prepare and to make the visitor feel welcome and honored? Pause this audio here.

The religious leaders then ask John why he is baptizing.

Baptism was a Jewish ceremony that showed that people were turning away from their old way of life and starting a new way of life. If you are baptizing someone, you are making that person take a dip in water. The person who went under water was the one taking baptism. A person who took baptism was saying: "I am sorry for the bad things that I have done and I want to change." Before this time, usually only people who were not Jews but wanted to become a Jew took baptism. John is doing something new by giving baptism to Jews. The religious leaders do not understand why he is doing this, and think it is wrong. *Now* we understand why the writer is giving us the information that the religious leaders were sent by the Pharisees. The Pharisees were very careful in trying to obey everything that God had commanded. They must have felt that what John was doing was against the law of God.

John does not really answer their question. Instead, he tells them something about another person-someone who may even be somewhere in the crowd right then. Of course John is talking about Jesus, though he does not make that clear yet. John says that that person will begin his work after John has prepared the people. John says that that person is so much more important than John is, that John is not even worthy to do the very humble job of untying that person's sandal!

If needed, stop the audio here and show a picture of a sandal with straps. Pause this audio if needed.

John says he baptizes people by dipping them in water. John is giving a hint that the person who will come after him will give a different type of baptism, but he does not explain this further yet. He will do that the next day, in our next story.

So the writer has told us now who John the baptizer is-someone who prepares the people to receive the Messiah.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 1:19–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene, the Jewish religious leaders in Jerusalem are sending priests and Levites to meet John the baptizer.

In the second scene, the priests and Levites are talking with John the baptizer.

The characters in this passage are:

- John the baptizer
- Jewish religious leaders in Jerusalem
- The Pharisees (they are either among the people who came to question John, or they are back in Jerusalem, sending the others)
- Priests and Levites, as representatives of the Jewish religious leaders
- The Messiah
- Elijah
- "The prophet"
- Isaiah
- A person who is shouting in the wilderness
- The people who have come to John to be baptized
- Jesus (He is not doing anything in the story yet, but he is standing in the crowd)

Some translations begin the passage by saying "this was John's testimony." Other translations begin by saying that the religious leaders in Jerusalem were sending some people to John. You can begin the passage in the way that seems most natural to you.

The writer tells us only half way through the passage that some of the people who were sent were Pharisees, or were sent by Pharisees.

Think about what the best place would be to give that information. You can consider saying this in the beginning of the passage.

When the religious leaders first ask John who he is, he "confesses and does not deny" that he is *not* the Messiah. This means he is very openly saying that he is not the Messiah. He is not trying to pretend that he is the Messiah.

Don't forget to include the information at the end about where John was baptizing.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 1:19–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage include:

- John the baptizer
- Jewish religious leaders in Jerusalem
- The Pharisees (they are either among the people who came to question John, or they are back in Jerusalem, sending the others)
- Priests and Levites, as representatives of the Jewish religious leaders
- The Messiah
- Elijah
- "The prophet"
- Isaiah
- A person who is shouting in the wilderness
- The people who have come to John to be baptized
- Jesus (He is not doing anything in the story yet, but he is standing in the crowd)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out the religious leaders sending some priests and Levites from Jerusalem to meet John. Decide whether the Pharisees will be among the people in Jerusalem sending the others, or among the people coming to John.

Stop the action.

- We are worried about this person John.
- We don't like it that he is baptizing people.
- We think this might be against God's law.
- We wonder who he thinks he is! [!end] Restart the action.

Act out the priests and Levites arriving at the place where John is baptizing people. There would be a crowd of people around John. You can imagine the people maybe politely making way for these religious leaders, but also crowding around them to listen to the conversation!

Act out these religious leaders asking John who he is.

Act out John saying that he is not the Messiah. He says this very strongly.

Act out the religious leaders asking John whether he is Elijah, or the prophet. Act out John denying this both.

Act out the religious leaders asking John to tell them who he is.

Stop the action.

- We are feeling quite frustrated. Who is this person?
- Why does he think he has the right to baptize people?
- We have to give an answer to our leaders in Jerusalem. [!end] Restart the action.

Act out John saying that he is like a person calling out in the wilderness, preparing the way for the Lord to come. John says he is fulfilling something that the prophet Isaiah had said. In the background, you can have the prophet Isaiah standing.

Act out the religious leaders asking why John is baptizing.

Act out John's response. There should be other people besides the religious leaders standing around John. Jesus can stand among them!

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 1:19–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Some translations begin the passage by saying "this was John's **testimony**." Someone who gives a testimony is telling about something that he has seen himself, and that he knows is really true. If you are including this word, use the same word that you have used in the previous passage.

The **Jews** are sending priests and Levites to John.

The word **Jews** in the Bible can refer to different people. The word is somewhat similar to the word Israelite. Israelites are descendants of Abraham. Israelites were God's special people, and God had made a covenant with them—a special agreement. The agreement was that the Israelites would obey all God's commandments, and God would bless them and make them a blessing for all the people on the earth. At some point in their history, the nation of Israel split in two parts. The northern part was still called Israel, and the southern part was called Judah. The northern part, Israel, was defeated by enemies about 700 years before the birth of Jesus. This happened because the people were continuously disobeying God, and breaking the covenant. The nation of Israel stopped to exist. Later, all remaining descendants of Abraham were known as Jews, which means "people from Judah." They were called Jews even if they lived outside Judah. Later, the kingdom of Judah also stopped to exist, because they also kept breaking God's covenant.

In the time of the New Testament, the area that used to be the kingdom of Judah was now roughly the area of the province of Judea, and the area that used to be the kingdom of Israel was now roughly the provinces of Samaria and Galilee. These provinces were part of the Roman empire, and were ruled by Romans.

So, in general, "Jews" means descendants of Abraham, people who belong to God's special people; people who are part of God's covenant.

In the Gospels, almost all the people we meet are Jews: Jesus, his disciples, and most of the people who listen to him. Even though all the characters in these passages are Jews, in the book of John the word Jew is used in a special way. When the writer of the gospel of John talks about Jews, he particularly means the *religious leaders* of the Jews.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what words you will use for Jews, or **Jewish religious leaders** in this passage. For more information, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.*

The Jewish religious leaders sent **priests** and **Levites** to John the baptizer. The Israelites were divided in 12 tribes. One of the 12 tribes was the tribe of Levi, and the members of this tribe were called **Levites**. The Levites had a special task. They had to take care of everything in God's temple in Jerusalem. **Priests** were a special group among the Levites who were in charge of offering sacrifices to God on behalf of the people. When the Bible talks about Levites, it means those Levites who are not priests.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for Levites, and what word you will use for priests. Look up these words in the Master Glossary. Use the same words as you have used in other books that you have already translated. Pause this audio here.

There were 2 important groups of religious leaders. One group was the Pharisees. The other group were the Sadducees. We will talk about the Sadducees another time. The Pharisees were very careful to obey everything that God had commanded. For hundreds of years, people belonging to this group had been discussing the laws of God that God had given to the Israelites through Moses. Because they were afraid that they might somehow disobey God, they had added more and more rules themselves. These rules became part of their tradition, and were just as important for them as the rules that God had given himself. There were by now so many rules, that it was very, very difficult for people to follow them all! The Pharisees were very proud thinking that only they were able to obey all God's rules. They looked down on people who were not able to follow these rules.

The name Pharisee literally means "to be separated." The Pharisees wanted to keep themselves separated from the other people.

Stop here and discuss what word you are going to use for Pharisees. Use the same word as you have used in other Bible books that you have translated. For more information, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

John "**confesses** and does not deny" that he is not the Messiah. That he "confesses" does not mean that he had done something wrong. It means that he says it is true that he is not the Messiah. He is agreeing that he is not the Messiah.

The word **Christ** is the same as the word **Messiah**. When in the New Testament Jesus is called the Christ or Messiah, it means that Jesus is the special king and Savior that God had promised to send to save the people. Use the same word as you have used in the previous passage. Look up the word in the Master Glossary for more information.

The religious leaders asked John if he is "**the prophet**." A prophet is a human person who gives messages from God to the people. The word prophet is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word that you have used in other books that you have translated. But here, you want to make sure that it is clear that religious leaders are asking about "*the* prophet." They are not just asking John if he is *a* prophet, but they are asking him if he is *the* special prophet that Moses said that would be coming.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for "the prophet." For more information, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

John quotes something that **Isaiah the prophet** had said. Isaiah was a prophet, but not *the prophet*. He was one of the many prophets that had given messages from God to the people. Use the same word that you have used in previous passages.

John says he is the **voice** of someone who is shouting in the wilderness. This means he is a person who is shouting in the wilderness.

The **wilderness** in the Bible means a lonely place where no people lived.

Stop here and show a photo of what the wilderness in Israel looked like. Discuss what word you will use for wilderness. The word wilderness is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word as you have used in other passages. Pause the audio here.

John says to the religious leaders that he is **baptizing** with water. To baptize someone means to make someone take a dip in water as a sign that they were sorry for the wrong things that they had done.

Stop here and look up the word baptize in the Master Glossary. Discuss together what word you will use in your language. Use the same word that you have used in other books you have translated.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of John 1:19–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 1:19–28

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4164242 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 1:29-34

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 1:29-34 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 1:29-34 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 1:29-34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, John the baptizer had very clearly said that he was not the Messiah. And he also said that there was someone who would come after him- someone a lot more important than John himself!

Now, John the writer jumps to the next day, and continues to tell the story. John the baptizer is standing near the river, with many people around him. People are coming to him to take baptism, and to listen to him. Then, what happens, Jesus is coming to John the baptizer! John knows who Jesus is, because sometime before this John has baptised Jesus, which he will tell us later.

When John the baptizer sees Jesus, he speaks to the people around him about Jesus. This is the same incident as the writer told us about very briefly two passages ago. But now we hear a lot more details.

John the baptizer calls Jesus "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the people of the world."

A lamb is a young sheep. A sheep is an animal that people keep in order to eat the meat, and people can use the hair of the sheep to make clothes. Sheep are very gentle animals.

If needed, stop here and as a group look at a picture of a lamb and a sheep. Pause this audio here.

At certain times, Israelites would kill a lamb as part of a ceremony to ask forgiveness for their sins. By killing the lamb, the Israelites confessed that they had sinned and needed to die, but they offered the lamb as a substitute for their own life. God accepted this substitute, and forgave the people.

A lamb was also killed at the yearly festival of Passover. At this festival, the people celebrated that God had freed their ancestors from being slaves in Egypt, a very long time ago. At that time, God had punished the Egyptian people by sending an angel who killed every eldest son in every Egyptian house. But God had told the Israelites to kill a lamb and to put the blood of this lamb on the doors of their houses. When the angel that God

had sent saw the blood of the lamb on the door of the house, he would skip that house and not kill the oldest son. So, the lamb had died in place of the eldest son. Each year, when the Israelites were celebrating Passover, they would again kill a lamb.

Whenever a lamb had to be killed for these kinds of ceremonies, the lamb had to be perfect. It could not have a sickness, or a spot, or be weak. It had to be a perfect animal.

So, when John calls Jesus the Lamb of God he is telling us that Jesus is perfect, has no sin, and is going to die to take the place of sinful people.

By calling Jesus the Lamb of God John is also creating a new title for Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your community, what is needed in order for someone to forgive someone else? Can you tell a story about someone forgiving another person? Pause this audio here.

In the previous passage, John the baptizer had told the religious leaders that someone would come after him, and that John was not worthy even to untie this person's sandals.

Now John tells us that he had also said something else about this person. John had also said that the person who would come after him would be much more important than John, because that person already existed long before John was born. Jesus was actually a few months younger than John the baptizer. But we know already that Jesus is the "word person" who already existed in the beginning of all things. And so, Jesus already existed before he was born as a human being, because he is also God!

John the baptizer tells the people that he himself did not at first know who this very important person would be. The reason why John was baptising people was so that the people could come to know this very important person. Then John tells the people how he found out that *Jesus* was this very important person. God had told John that he would see the spirit come down on a person, and stay there.

And this is what John had seen happening with Jesus! Therefore John can now tell the people that Jesus is the son of God.

The spirit means the holy spirit of God. A spirit is not visible to people, but God made the spirit look like a dove. A dove is a very gentle bird, often white. When a dove comes down to land on the ground, it often flutters much with its wings. So John had seen something looking like a dove landing on Jesus-maybe on his shoulder, or on his head-and stay there, and he had realised that this was the spirit of God.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a dove, or a video of a dove coming down. Pause this audio here.

In the previous passage, John had said that he was baptising people with water. He gave a hint that the person after him would give a different type of baptism. In this story we hear that God told John that the person who would come after him would baptise people *with the Holy Spirit*. John gives us no information yet about what this exactly means.

So finally, what John the writer was talking about from the beginning of his book is becoming more clear now. *Jesus* is the son of God, he was from the beginning, and he is God himself. Jesus is the Messiah, and he is the Lamb of God.

Some Bible translations say here that Jesus is the chosen one of God, instead of the son of God. Both translations are possible. Throughout your working with this passage, you can follow the same phrase as the translation that you are listening to is using.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 1:29–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene, John sees Jesus coming to him and tells the people who he is.

In the second scene, John says that he has seen God's spirit come down on Jesus.

The characters in this passage are:

- John the baptizer
- Jesus
- The crowd
- Possibly the religious leaders who had questioned John, but we are not sure.

The passage begins the day after John the baptizer had a conversation with the religious leaders, who asked him who he was.

In this passage, John is standing near the Jordan River. There are crowds of people around him, who have come to listen to him and to take baptism.

We don't know if the religious leaders who questioned John the previous day are also still present. If they would still be there, they would get a bit more answers to their questions!

When John sees Jesus, he talks to the people around him about Jesus. He might be pointing to Jesus as he is speaking. Maybe John is shouting, so that many people can hear him.

Where do you think that Jesus is standing when John is talking about him?

When John talks about a person who is coming after him, he means someone who will start his work after John.

John says that he had seen God's Holy Spirit come on Jesus. He is telling about something that had happened earlier. We don't know if John is still speaking to the crowd here. It could be part of the same speech, or it could be something that John said to some people privately. Maybe to his disciples, or to John the writer!

Because John the baptizer had seen the Holy Spirit coming down on Jesus, he was able to later point to Jesus and tell the people that Jesus is the Lamb of God.

John says that the spirit came down looking like a dove. The dove is coming from the sky. The dove is settling on top of Jesus, and staying there.

The order of the events here can be difficult to follow. The writer is not giving us the information in the same order as that it happened. See if you can figure out the order in which things actually happened. It probably was like this:

1. God tells John that he should baptise people with water (we know this because John says this at the end of this passage).
2. God tells John that John will see the spirit come down and stay on a man. God tells John that *that* man will be the person who will baptise people with the Holy Spirit (we know this because John says this at the end of this passage).
3. John baptises people, and tells the religious leaders that after him another person will come, who is more important than John is. This happened in the previous passage we translated.
4. Sometime after this, John saw the spirit come down and stay on Jesus (we know this because John says this at the end of this passage). From the other Gospels, we know that the spirit came down on Jesus when Jesus was baptised, but this gospel does not mention that.
5. Sometime later, John sees Jesus coming to him and tells the people that Jesus is the Lamb of God, and that Jesus is the person who would come after John and be more important than him. That is happening in today's passage.
6. After this, John gives his testimony that he had seen the spirit come down on Jesus.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualise the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 1:29–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- John the baptizer
- Jesus
- The crowd
- Possibly the religious leaders who had questioned John, but we are not sure.

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue with the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

You may begin by also acting out the previous passage, or even all the passages from the book of John so far!

Act out the crowds listening to John, and people coming to him to take baptism.

Act out Jesus coming towards John from among the crowd.

Act out John's first speech.

John is repeating something that he has said to people earlier. Maybe John can begin his speech, then step back to say, "Someone who is more important than I am is coming," to make clear that this is something that he had already said some time ago and is repeating now.

Pause the drama.

- I'm very excited.
- I'm glad that I can tell the people who Jesus is. [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out John's second speech. John is telling people here about something that happened before. Act out the spirit coming down on Jesus looking like a dove. Because this happened sometime earlier, and not right as John is speaking, you can act it out in a corner of the room.

Pause the drama.

- I was so glad when I saw God's spirit coming down on Jesus and I understood who he was!
- This is such a good memory.
- I am glad that I now know who the person is who is coming after me and can tell the people about him.
- I want the people to believe that Jesus is the son of God!

If you would like, you can do the drama again!

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 1:29–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

John the baptizer calls Jesus the **Lamb of God**. A **lamb** is a young sheep. A sheep is an animal that people keep in order to eat the meat, and they can use the hair of the sheep to make clothes. Sheep are very gentle animals.

If needed, look again at the picture of a sheep, and a lamb. Pause the audio here.

That Jesus is the Lamb of God does not mean that Jesus *is* a lamb, but that Jesus is *like* a lamb. That Jesus is the Lamb of God means that Jesus is like a lamb that God is giving to the people.

John says that Jesus is the Lamb of God that will take away the **sin** of the **world**. "The world" means the *people* of the world. **Sin** means the things that people have done that are against God's commandments.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **sin**. Look up sin in the Master Glossary for more information. If you already used the word sin in other passages, use the same word. Pause this audio here.*

John says that he was **baptizing** with water. To baptize someone means to make someone take a dip in water as a sign that they were sorry for the wrong things that they had done. The word baptize is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word that you have used in previous passages.

When John says that he saw the Spirit come down like a dove, he is giving his **testimony**. Someone who gives a testimony is telling about something that he has seen himself, and that he knows is really true. Use the same word that you have used in previous passages.

John saw the **Spirit** come down looking like a dove. The spirit means the Holy Spirit from God.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **spirit**. Look up Holy Spirit in the Master Glossary for more information. If you already used the word "Holy Spirit" in other passages, use the same word. Pause this audio here.*

John sees the spirit looking like a dove coming down from **heaven**. The word heaven here means the visible sky.

God had told John the baptizer that Jesus is the one who **baptizes with the Holy Spirit**. This means that Jesus will give the people the Holy Spirit.

John tells the people that Jesus is the **son of God**. Some Bible translations here say that Jesus is the "chosen one from God." You can follow the translation that your church is familiar with.

The word Son of God is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word that you have used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of John 1:29–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practise telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practise telling this final version of the passage.

John 1:29–34

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3098963 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 1:35–42

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 1:35–42 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then, as a group discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 1:35–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, John the baptizer pointed to Jesus and said to the people around him: "There is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the people!"

Now it is the next day. We find out that John has some disciples. Disciples are people who want to learn from a religious teacher, who stay with him, and who follow him wherever he goes.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Can you tell a story about people who follow a religious teacher? Pause this audio here.

John sees Jesus again, and he repeats to two of his disciples: "Look, there is the Lamb of God!" These two men then begin to follow Jesus. At first, this literally means that they are walking after him. But they stay with him, and they begin to follow Jesus as their teacher. They first were disciples from John the baptizer, but now they become disciples of Jesus.

When Jesus notices that they are following him, Jesus asks them what they are seeking. The two disciples ask Jesus where he is staying. This is a polite way to say that they want to go with him. They call him "teacher." This is another way for them to make clear that they want to become his disciples.

Jesus invites them to come with him and they stay the rest of the day with him. They began with following him, they called him teacher, and now they stay with him: they really have become his disciples!

The Bible tells us that it was late in the afternoon, about 4 o'clock, when they went with Jesus. It's not clear why John the writer thought it was interesting or important for his listeners to know what time it was.

The Bible gives us the name of only one of these two men. His name is Andrew. John the writer calls him "the brother of Simon Peter." He does this to help his readers know which Andrew he is talking about. By the time that John was writing his story, many people knew who Simon Peter was.

The first thing that Andrew does after he has become a disciple of Jesus is to go to his brother Simon. Andrew tells Simon, "We have found the Messiah!" The Messiah, or the Christ, was the special king and Savior that God had promised to send to the people. John the baptizer had not said to his disciples that Jesus was the Messiah. John had said that Jesus was the Lamb of God. But John's disciples understand that this means that Jesus is also the Messiah.

Andrew takes his brother Simon to meet Jesus. When Jesus sees Simon, he gives Simon a new name. His name was Simon, the son of a man named John. But Jesus says that his name will be Peter. Peter means rock. Jesus does not yet explain why he is changing Simon's name.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your community, what is the importance of a person's name? Can you tell a story about someone whose name was changed? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 1:35-42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene, John the baptizer sees Jesus walking by and points him out to the two disciples who are standing with him.

In the second scene, these two disciples follow Jesus and stay with him the rest of the day.

In the third scene, Andrew tells his brother Simon that he has found the Messiah.

In the fourth scene, Jesus gives Simon a new name.

The characters in this passage are:

- John the baptizer
- Two men who are John's disciples: one of them is Andrew
- Jesus
- Simon Peter, Andrew's brother

In the previous story, John the baptizer saw Jesus walking *towards him*. In this story, Jesus is walking *by him*. In the previous story, John the baptizer was the main character. But from now on Jesus is going to be the main character. As we are listening to this story, the Bible asks us to stop looking at John the baptizer, and to begin looking at Jesus. The Bible asks us to stop *standing* with John the baptizer, and to begin *walking* with Jesus.

In the beginning of the passage, John is standing at the same place where he stood in the previous stories, beside the Jordan River. Two of his disciples are with him. We don't know if there are other people around as well.

The two disciples go with Jesus to the place where he is staying. This is not Jesus' home. We don't know if Jesus is staying in the house of some other people-maybe some relatives-or whether he is spending the night somewhere outside.

The Bible tells us that it is 4 o'clock in the afternoon when this is taking place. That means there are a few hours of light left, and the worst heat is over.

The first thing Andrew does is go to his brother Simon. Because Andrew and the other disciple stay with Jesus the whole day, it probably means that Andrew goes to his brother the first thing *the next day*. So far, John the writer has been very careful in saying when things happened, so it's a bit strange that he does not do that here. It seems that John the writer finds it important for his listeners to know that Simon Peter, just like Andrew and the other disciple, also became a disciple of Jesus on the very first day that Jesus began getting disciples.

So, even though it probably happened on the next day, John the writer does not mention that it is the next day.

Andrew goes to get his brother Simon. In the next story we will find out that Simon and Andrew lived in the north part of the country, in the province Galilee. The story in the book of John so far is taking place in the southern part of the country, in the province Judea. It is not possible for Andrew to go all the way back to Galilee to get his brother and come back the same day. This means that Peter must also have been around somewhere in Judea. It is possible that Simon had also come to Judea to listen to John the baptizer, and maybe had become his disciple, just like his brother Andrew.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 1:35-42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- John the baptizer
- Two men who are John's disciples: one of them is Andrew
- Jesus
- Simon Peter, Andrew's brother

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

You may want to start with first acting out the previous story, or stories.

Act out John the baptizer and two of his disciples standing, and Jesus walking by.

Act out John saying to his disciples: "Look, he is the Lamb of God!"

Act out the two disciples walking after Jesus.

Pause the drama.

- If this Jesus is the Lamb of God, then he must be the Messiah!
- We want to become his disciples.

Ask the actor playing John the baptizer: "What are you thinking?" You may hear things like:

- I am glad that they are becoming disciples of Jesus.
- Jesus is more important than I am.
- My task is to tell the people about Jesus! [!end] Continue with the drama.

Act out Jesus stopping and asking the two disciples what they are seeking. Act out the disciples asking where Jesus is staying, and Jesus inviting them to come and see. Act out the disciples spending the rest of the day with Jesus. What do you think they were doing? What do you imagine that they might have been talking about?

Pause the drama.

- I am glad that these men want to become my disciples.
- I am glad that John is telling the people about me.

Ask the actors playing the two disciples: "What are you thinking?" You may hear things like:

- We are a little shy.
- We are glad that he is letting us be his disciples.
- I'm a little nervous; I'm excited about what is going to happen.
- I am so glad that God is finally sending us the special king and Savior! [!end] Continue with the drama.

Act out Andrew going to get his brother Simon. Act out Andrew taking Simon to Jesus.

Pause the drama.

- I am so excited that I can tell Simon we have found the Messiah!
- I want Simon to become a disciple of Jesus as well. [!end] Continue with the drama.

Act out Jesus giving Simon a new name.

Pause the drama.

- I am puzzled why Jesus is giving me a new name.
- I'm excited that Jesus is the Messiah.
- I want to become his disciple.
- I'm curious about what is going to happen.

If you want, you could act out the drama again!

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 1:35–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

John the baptizer calls Jesus the **Lamb of God**. A lamb is a young sheep. Use the same word that you have used in the previous passage.

A **disciple** is a person who wants to learn from a religious teacher, who often stays with him, and who follows him wherever he goes.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **disciple**. Look up disciple in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated other Gospels, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The two disciples called Jesus "Rabbi." The disciples were speaking a language called Aramaic. **Rabbi** is an Aramaic word and means "teacher."

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **rabbi**. Look up rabbi in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated other Gospels, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

When Jesus invites the two disciples to come with him, it is about **4 o'clock** in the afternoon. In the language that the New Testament was first written, it says "the 10th hour." This is because in the time of Jesus, people used a different way of counting time. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon in Israel the worst heat of the day is over, and there are a few hours of daylight left.

You can say this phrase in the most natural way that people in your language are telling time.

The Messiah and the Christ are two words that mean the same. These words mean the special king and Savior that God had promised to send to his people. These words are in the Master Glossary. Use the same word that you have used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of John 1:35–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 1:35-42

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2653727 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (4598055 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 1:43-51

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 1:43-51 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 1:43-51 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 1:43-51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story begins the day after the first people became Jesus' disciples. Jesus decides to go to Galilee. We know from this passage that Jesus grew up in a village named Nazareth in the province called Galilee, and in this passage the Bible tells us that Andrew and Peter also lived in Galilee.

Stop here and as a group look at a map of Israel. Look where Judea is, where John the baptizer was doing his work. Find where Galilee is. See where Nazareth and Bethsaida are. Pause this audio here.

Before Jesus and his disciples leave to go to Galilee, Jesus meets a man named Philip. Philip was from Bethsaida, the same town as Andrew and Peter. Jesus invites Philip to come with him, which means that he asks him to become his disciple. Philip must have said "Yes, I will go with you," because Philip then goes to another man named Nathaniel and tells him about Jesus. Maybe Nathaniel was a friend of Philip.

Philip and Nathaniel might have come to Judea to listen to John the baptizer. It even could be that they also had been disciples of John the baptizer.

Philip tells Nathaniel that Jesus is "the one whom Moses wrote about." Philip may have heard the religious leaders ask John the baptizer whether John was "the prophet," and Philip may have heard John answering that *he* (John) was not the prophet, but that John was telling *about him*! Philip understands now that Jesus is the person that John the baptizer was talking about! Jesus is "the prophet," foretold by Moses, that the Israelites are waiting for!

Philip tells Nathaniel that the one whom Moses wrote about is a man named Jesus, the son of a man named Joseph, from Nazareth. It was normal to mention a person's father as part of someone's name. From the other Gospels we know that Joseph was the husband of Mary, and that Mary conceived Jesus through the power of God. Joseph was not the biological father of Jesus. However, as far as the people knew, Joseph was Jesus' father.

Nazareth was the village in Galilee where Jesus grew up. Nazareth was a very unimportant village in Galilee. The other people in Galilee looked down on people who came from Nazareth. Nathaniel cannot believe that someone who has come from Nazareth can be the Messiah. But Philip tells him to "come and see!" Jesus had also said "come and see!" to the first two disciples when they asked him where he stayed. It is an invitation to come and become part of the story!

Nathaniel accepts the invitation and goes with Philip to meet Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Can you tell a story about people looking down on other people because of where they come from? Pause this audio here.

When Jesus sees Nathaniel, he says something very nice about Nathaniel. He says that Nathaniel is a real Israelite. Jesus means that Nathaniel is a good example of what it means to be an Israelite. He also says that Nathaniel is a completely honest person.

Nathaniel is very surprised. He wonders how Jesus can know anything about him! But Jesus tells him that he does know Nathaniel. Jesus already knew Nathaniel before Philip called him. Jesus says that he saw Nathaniel when he was sitting under a fig tree. We, who are listening to this conversation, don't know what is special about Nathaniel sitting under a fig tree. Maybe Nathaniel was sitting under a fig tree just before Philip came to him, and Nathaniel knows that Jesus could not possibly have seen him there. So we are not sure what happened, but it's clear that Nathaniel realises that Jesus knows something that a normal person could not know.

A fig tree is a type of fruit tree that is common in Israel. It could grow very wide and provide shade-a very nice tree to sit under!

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a fig tree. Pause this audio here.

Nathaniel is so impressed by what Jesus had said about him, that Nathaniel calls Jesus "teacher," "son of God," and the "king of Israel." Lots of titles! Earlier, Jesus' first two disciples also called Jesus "teacher." We also have already heard John the baptizer tell the people that Jesus was the "son of God." But this is the first time in this gospel that someone calls Jesus the "king of Israel." The "king of Israel" is another name for the Messiah-the special king and Savior that God was going to send.

Jesus then asks Nathaniel a question, but he's not expecting Nathaniel to answer. Jesus means to say that Nathaniel already believes that Jesus is the Messiah just because Jesus has done this little thing, this telling

Nathaniel that he saw him when he was under the fig tree. Nathaniel will see Jesus do even much more important things, and then he will believe even more!

Jesus tells Nathaniel that Nathaniel, and the other disciples as well, will see "heaven going open." And they will see angels going up and down between heaven and earth. The angels are going up and down *on* the Son of Man. The son of man means Jesus—we will explain more about this later. Jesus does not mean that the disciples will see a crack in the sky and angels coming down through the crack to land on Jesus' head, and then they keep going up and down. Instead, Jesus is using picture language. Jesus might be referring to a story from one of the ancestors of the Israelites, Jacob. Jacob had a dream one time in which he saw a ladder going all the way from earth to heaven, and angels were going up and down on that ladder. The dream meant that God was at the place where Jacob was. Jesus might be saying: "I am like a ladder between earth—the *place of people*—and heaven—the *place of God*. I will make it possible for people to come to the place of God." But it is also quite possible that Jesus is using this picture language to say that God will at some point clearly show the disciples that Jesus really is sent by God—that he really is the Messiah. The disciples will see how powerful and majestic and wonderful Jesus is, and that Jesus is truly sent by God.

We had already learned several titles for Jesus. In this passage, Jesus himself is teaching the people a new title about himself. He calls himself the "Son of Man." "Son of Man" literally just means a "human." But the phrase "Son of Man" also occurs in a special place in the Old Testament, in the book of Daniel. Daniel was an Israelite who lived about 600 years before Jesus. At one time he had a vision in which he saw someone who looked like a "Son of Man." And in his vision, God gave all authority to this person, and he became a king, and all the people in the world served him. And his kingdom never ended.

When Jesus calls himself the "Son of Man," he is therefore saying to the people: "I am the person from Daniel's vision. I am the king, and God has given me all authority." It is another way of saying that Jesus is the Messiah, but in a less direct way. People would have to think more before they understood what Jesus meant!

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your community, what titles do people give to other people? What kind of things do people do to receive a title? Can you tell a story about a person who gets a new title? Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells Nathaniel "I'm telling you the truth," or "truly truly." This does not mean of course that the other things that Jesus has said are not true. It means that Jesus is going to tell Nathaniel something very important. It is also a reminder for everybody that *everything* that Jesus says is always really true.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 1:43-51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This story has 3 scenes.

In the first scene, Jesus invites Philip to come with him.

In the second scene, Philip invites Nathaniel.

In the third scene, Jesus talks with Nathaniel.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Philip
- Andrew and Peter, and another disciple whose name we don't know.
- Nathaniel
- Moses and the prophets

The story begins with "the next day." This means the day after Andrew and another disciple whose name we don't know, and Peter, became disciples of Jesus.

Jesus decides to go to Galilee. Though the Bible does not mention this, it means that the people who became his disciples will also go with him.

Jesus *finds* Philip. This could mean that he just meets Philip, or it could mean that he first was searching for him.

Philip then *searches* for Nathaniel. And Philip tells Nathaniel that he has *found* the person that Moses had told about. There's a lot of searching and finding in this passage!

Jesus told Philip: "*Come*, follow me." Philip tells Nathaniel: "*Come* and see!" Jesus invited Philip, now Philip invites Nathaniel.

Philip tells Nathaniel: "Come and *see*." Jesus tells Nathaniel "I *saw* you under the fig tree." Jesus tells Nathaniel, "You will *see* more important things than this." And he says: "You will *see* heaven open and angels going up and down!" So there is a lot of "seeing" in the passage as well.

Jesus tells Nathaniel that "Truly, truly, I say to you... you will see heaven opened." The "truly, truly" makes clear that Jesus is about to say something very important.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Pause this recording here and do this activity.

Maybe you can tell the story and every time you hear "find," "search," "come," or "see," you can clap your hands! You could count your claps, and remember how many claps there are. This may help you when you try to remember the whole story.

Stop the recording here and do this activity.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 1:43-51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, the team will dramatise the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Philip
- Andrew and Peter, and another disciple whose name we don't know.
- Nathaniel
- Moses and the prophets

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

You may want to act out the previous story again before you act out this one.

Act out Jesus deciding to go to Galilee. Act out Jesus "finding" Philip and inviting him to come with him. We don't know where the other 3 disciples-Andrew and Peter and the disciple whose name we don't know-are at this point. Maybe they are with Jesus as he is speaking with Philip and with Nathaniel, or maybe they are at the place where they spend the night, getting ready for their departure to Galilee. You can decide!

Pause the drama.

- I am surprised: why is Jesus asking me?
- I am very happy that Jesus is calling me!
- I want to go with this person and see what he is going to do, because I believe that he is the one whom Moses talked about a long time ago.
- I am so excited that the things that God promised a long time ago are coming true! [!end] Continue with the drama.

Act out Philip looking for Nathaniel.

Pause the drama.

- I am so excited, I want other people to know as well!
- I want to go with Jesus, but I know that my friend Nathaniel would really want to come as well! [!end] Continue with the drama.

Act out the conversation between Philip and Nathaniel.

Pause the drama.

Act out Philip and Nathaniel going to Jesus, and Jesus telling Nathaniel that he is a real Israelite. Act out Nathaniel asking how Jesus knows him. Act out Jesus telling Nathaniel he saw him when he was sitting under the fig tree, and Nathaniel calling out "Teacher, you are the son of God, the king of Israel!"

Pause the drama.

- I am so surprised that Jesus knows me.
- If Jesus has really seen me sitting under the fig tree, then it must be true what Philip says about him!
- Jesus is the one that Moses spoke about, and he is the special king and Savior that God promised to send. [!end] Continue with the drama.

Act out Jesus speaking the rest of his words to Nathaniel.

Pause the drama.

- I am pleased that Nathaniel believes in me even after have done only such a small thing!
- I am glad that God is going to show him and the others even more clearly that he has sent me.

Ask the actor playing Nathaniel, "What are you thinking?" You may hear things like:

- I am very excited. God is beginning to fulfill his promises!
- I don't understand everything that he said, but it is clear that wonderful and amazing things are going to happen!

If you want, you could do the drama again!

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 1:43-51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Philip tells Nathaniel: "We found the person that **Moses** and the **prophets** wrote about."

Moses was a spokesman for God who lived at least a thousand years before Jesus. God gave the people of Israel his commandments through Moses. Just before he died, Moses had told the people that God would send another spokesman, a prophet, like him and that the people should listen to him.

A **prophet** is a person who gives messages from God to the people. The word prophet is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word that you have used in previous passages.

After Moses, there were other prophets who also told the people that God would send a special king to save the people. This special king was called the Messiah. The Israelites were always waiting for God to send the Messiah to his people. Philip has found out that Jesus is the Messiah!

Nathaniel calls Jesus **Rabbi**, which in his language means teacher. Use the same word that you have used in the previous passage.

Nathaniel calls Jesus the **son of God**. The term son of God is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word that you have used in previous passages.

Jesus tells Nathaniel that he will see "**heaven** opened." The word "heaven" or "heavens" can mean the visible sky, or it can mean the place where God lives. In this passage, it means the place where God lives. The word heaven is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word that you have used in previous passages.

Jesus calls himself the **Son of Man**. Every time when Jesus says something about the "Son of Man," he is saying it about himself. The word literally means "a human being," but Jesus is giving the word a special meaning. He is using the word as a title for himself.

The phrase "Son of Man" also occurs in a special way in the Old Testament, in the book of Daniel. Daniel was an Israelite who lived about 600 years before Jesus. At one time he had a vision in which he saw someone who looked like a "Son of Man." And in Daniel's vision God gave all authority to this person, and he became a king, and all the people in the world served him. And his kingdom never ended.

When Jesus calls himself the "Son of Man," he is therefore saying to the people: "I am the person from Daniel's vision." It is another way of saying that Jesus is the Messiah, but in a less direct way. At the time of Jesus the people did not use the term "Son of Man" as another title for the Messiah. Therefore, the people are going to have to slowly figure out what Jesus means when he calls himself the "Son of Man"!

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Son of Man**. Look up Son of Man in the Master Glossary for more information. If you already translated other Gospels, use the same term as you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus tells Nathaniel that he will see **angels of God** going up and down on the Son of Man. Angels are spirit messengers from God.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **angels**. Look up angels in the Master Glossary for more information. If you already translated other Gospels, use the same term as you have used there.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of John 1:43–51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 1:43–51

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3813958 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 2:1–12

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 2:1–12 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 2:1–12 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 2:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Jesus decided to go to Galilee and called more disciples. Jesus and his disciples are now in Galilee, in a small village named Cana.

Stop here and look at a map of Israel. Find the area around the Jordan River in Judea where Jesus was in the previous passage, and find Cana where he is now. Look up Capernaum, where Jesus will go to at the end of this passage. Pause this audio here.

John the writer says that the events in this passage happen on the third day. We don't know the third day after what. Maybe the third day after Jesus called Philip; but it is impossible that they would have reached Galilee so quickly. John the writer is probably not trying to give an exact timeline.

It is also possible that Jesus already had been in Galilee when he called Philip and Nathaniel.

The Jews counted days from sunset to sunset. So, a new day always began in the evening. When people were counting days, part of the day counted for the whole day; so, the evening was the first day, then the whole next day was the second day, and the morning that would come after that second night was the third day.

When John's readers would see "the third day," they may right away have thought: "Jesus also rose from the dead on the third day!" And so they would know that here also something important was going to happen. And it is: Jesus is about to do his first miracle. Jesus is going to begin the work that he came to do!

Jesus and his disciples have been invited to a wedding. His disciples are at least the five men that we have met in the previous passages. John does not tell us if Jesus by this time already had 12 disciples. Maybe there are already other disciples that we don't know about yet, or maybe the other people will be called later.

Jesus' mother is also at the wedding. Jesus and his mother must be friends or relatives of the people involved in the wedding.

Only at the end of the passage will we find out that Jesus' brothers were also at the wedding. They take no part in the story. Their father is not mentioned. Some people therefore think that he may have already died at this time. This would give us an extra reason to understand why Jesus' mother talks about the problem with Jesus: since he is her eldest son, he is the head of the family.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your community, how do people celebrate weddings? Tell a story about a wedding that was particularly memorable. Pause this audio here.

Wedding feasts in Israel could last up to seven days! The family of the bridegroom was responsible for the food for the guests. A person who is called the head steward, or the master of the feast, was in charge of the food and drink. This could be a family member or friend, or it could be someone who was paid to do this. Men celebrated

in a different place than the women. Wine was a normal drink in Israel, and important at weddings. Wine is the juice from grapes. Grapes is a fruit that was very common in Israel.

Stop here and with your team look at the picture of grapes, and of wine. Pause this audio here.

People plucked grapes and then pressed out the juice. The juice was stored in clay jars. The juice would then be left alone till it began to get sour. Once it had become sour, it had turned into wine. The older the wine was, the better it tasted! Wine has a dark red color. Because of the process of becoming sour, there is a bit of alcohol in wine. Alcohol is something that if people drink a lot of it, they will become drunk. But there is not that much alcohol in wine, and the people in Israel would even mix wine with water before they drank it. You would have to drink quite a lot of this in order to get drunk. In the Bible, wine is usually associated with joy.

But then, what happens here, at some time during the feast the wine runs out!

Stop here and discuss with your team: an you tell a story about people not having enough of something to give to their guests? It can be a wedding, or any other event. What happened? Pause the audio here.

As you can imagine, it was very embarrassing for the family of the groom that they had no more wine to serve to the people. The people in their community might be talking about this wedding for a long time afterwards, and not in a nice way!

A marriage in Israel was a contract between two families. When a boy became of marriageable age, his parents would look for a bride for him. After the wedding, the bride would begin to live with her husband's family. The wedding feast would take place in the home of the bridegroom. If the family of the groom did not provide adequate food and drink for the wedding feast, the family of the bride might feel insulted, and this could lead to a big conflict, and even a court case!

Jesus' mother goes to Jesus and tells him about the situation. This means that she wants Jesus to do something about it, or at least help. Since they were relatives or friends of the family, they may have been responsible to help out. She probably was not thinking about Jesus doing anything miraculous.

Jesus gives her a strange response. The first strange thing is that he calls her "woman" instead of "mother." He is not exactly rude, but he does put some distance between them. The second strange thing is that Jesus says, "Why are you saying this to me?"

Jesus may mean to say, "It is not your task to tell me what to do." By calling her *woman* instead of *mother*, he might be saying to her, "I am no longer as your child, who has to do what you say." The relationship between Jesus and his mother is changing at this point.

Then the third strange thing that Jesus says is, "My time has not yet come." Jesus may mean to say that it is not yet time for him to do something. But we will hear the phrase "the time has not yet come" more often in the book of John, and later we will also hear the term "the time *has* come." In the book of John, "the time" always has to do with Jesus' death. So Jesus seems to say: "the time *of my death* has not yet come!"

So Jesus' mother is asking a simple question, but Jesus gives a rather puzzling answer. Jesus' mother is thinking about everyday affairs, but Jesus is already talking about the main reason why he came to earth-to die. Jesus' mother would not have understood what he said. We will find this more often in the book of John, that people ask Jesus an ordinary question, and Jesus gives a puzzling answer. This forces his listeners-and us-to think what he might have meant!

Jesus' mother is not put off by Jesus' rejection. She tells the servants to do whatever her son will tell them. And, surprisingly, Jesus does take action, and goes to these servants!

Somewhere in or next to the house are six very large jars made of stone. People made jars by chipping away a soft type of rock and hollowing it out.

Stop here and look as a group at the picture of stone jars. Pause this audio here.

John says that these jars could hold "two or three measures." This means that they had different sizes. Many translations change this term into something that makes sense for the listeners. Some say "20 to 30 gallons," others say "80 to 120 liters."

Stop here and discuss as a group: How much water would this be? How do people store water in your community, and how do you measure the amount of water? How many jars, buckets, or other containers that people use would you need to fill these six stone jars? Pause the audio here.

John tells us that these jars were meant to hold water for ritual washing. The water in these jars would not be meant for doing the dishes, washing clothes, or for everyday bathing, but was meant for people to wash themselves in a special way. The water would probably be poured in a basin and people would take a bath in this basin to make themselves not just bodily clean, but ritually clean. After this special bath, people were fit to participate in religious activities. If these jars would be used for anything else, these jars themselves would become polluted-ceremonially unclean. Jesus seems to care more about the bridegroom's honor, than about the rules of ceremonial cleanliness!

Stop here and discuss as a group: In your community, are there special ceremonial ways of washing and bathing? If not, is there something else that people have to do in order to prepare themselves to participate in religious activities? What do people think that might happen if people do not do this in the right way? Can you tell a story about this? Pause the audio here.

At this time, the jars are empty, or at least not full. Jesus tells the servants to fill the jars with water. The servants would go back and forth between a well to pull up water, and would then pour it into the jars. To complete this task would have taken some time! Even though they would have had no idea why Jesus was asking them to do this, it seems they obeyed the task with enthusiasm, because they fill the jars up to the very top.

When the task is done Jesus tells them something very strange. They have to take some of the water that they have just poured into these jars and give it to the master of the feast. Again, without knowing why, they do what Jesus asked them. And amazingly, somewhere along the way, the water in the cup and all the water in the jars turns into wine!

The master of the feast is very surprised about this good wine, and he assumes that the bridegroom must have somehow managed to arrange more wine. At a wedding, the master of the feast was responsible for mixing the wine with the right amount of water. Over time, a bit more water would be added, and cheaper quality wine would be used. This wouldn't be a problem, because once the people were full they would no longer care much about the difference. This is especially the case if people would get a bit drunk. The master of the feast thinks that the bridegroom has done the very opposite: he has kept the best wine for the end!

The writer of the passage says that this is the first miracle that Jesus did. He places a lot of emphasis on this by repeating where the miracle is taking place. The word that he is using for "miracle" does not just mean something exceptional that would normally not happen. It means something that is pointing us to something very important. It is a sign for people that tells them something about Jesus. When Jesus does a miracle, he is showing the people how powerful Jesus is. The writer makes this extra clear when he says that Jesus performed this miracle, or this sign, and *revealed his glory*. This means that Jesus showed how powerful and majestic he is.

He also says that because of this sign, his disciples believed in him. This makes clear why Jesus is doing miracles: so that people will believe in him!

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Can you tell a story about a miracle that happened? What was the effect of the miracle on the people who witnessed this? Pause this audio here.

At the end of the previous passage, Jesus had told Nathaniel that Nathaniel would see great things. These great things are now beginning to happen!

This passage ends with a simple statement that Jesus, his mother, brothers, and disciples went to Capernaum. Capernaum was a village that was nearby Cana. Jesus and his relatives were probably living in Capernaum at that time.

Only now do we discover that Jesus' brothers also were at the wedding. "Jesus' brothers" means the other children that Jesus' mother and her husband had after Jesus had been born.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 2:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 6 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus, his disciples, and his mother are at a wedding. The wine is running out.

In the second scene: Jesus' mother tells Jesus about the problem, and Jesus responds by saying that his time has not yet come.

In the third scene: Jesus' mother talks to the servants and tells them to do what her son will tell them.

In the fourth scene: Jesus gives instructions to the servants. The servants fill the water jars and give the master of the feast a cup of water from these jars. We also learn some extra information about the purpose of these water jars.

In the fifth scene: the master of the feast tastes the water, which has now turned into wine, and very surprisedly tells the groom that the groom has kept the best wine for the last! The writer also tells us the purpose of the miracle: to reveal Jesus' glory, so that his disciples will believe in him.

In the sixth scene: Jesus and his mother, brothers, and disciples go to Capernaum.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Jesus' mother
- Jesus' brothers
- The other people at the wedding party: bride and bridegroom, their families, and other guests
- The servants
- The master of the feast

In the previous passage, Philip and Nathaniel became Jesus' disciples. Since that time, Jesus and his disciples have traveled to Cana. Jesus' mother and brothers, who probably lived in Capernaum, also came to the wedding.

The passage begins with saying "on the third day." If you have already translated some of the other Gospels, then it will be helpful if you will use the same term as is used for Jesus being raised on the "third day."

Remember that according to the book of John, Jesus has not done any miracle yet at this point. Therefore nobody would be expecting Jesus to do anything miraculous.

The biggest part of this passage is taking place during a wedding. Wedding feasts were celebrated at the home of the groom. Men and women celebrated in different rooms. People did a lot of dancing. Imagine a lot of fun and good food!

Maybe you can decorate the room to make it look like a wedding feast. You can show off some of your own wedding dances!

The servants would not be part of the fun. They would be working hard to make sure that everybody had enough to eat and to drink. The master of the feast would be constantly checking the supplies, and maybe getting more and more worried as time went on!

We don't know if the bridegroom and the bride knew about the shortage of wine. Maybe the bridegroom and his family were whispering with each other in a corner, trying to come up with solutions! Maybe someone among the family began to tell jokes to the guests, or arrange some other entertainment, in the hope that people would not notice the negative atmosphere!

Stop here and discuss: How would this situation be handled in your community? Pause the audio here.

We don't know how long Jesus waited before he went to the servants. Maybe he went soon after his mother spoke to the servants, or maybe some more time had passed.

We don't know when exactly the water changed into wine. Maybe it changed at the moment that the servants gave the water to the master of the feast. The writer does not tell us, so we should also keep this open.

The master of the feast tastes the wine and he is very surprised. He does not know where this good wine has come from. The servants know-but it seems they are not telling him yet! Maybe they think that he would not believe them anyway. The master of the feast then calls the groom. He doesn't want to talk to him with all the people around him, so he calls him apart. Though he does not say so specifically, he is in fact asking the groom, "from where did you get this good wine?" Since the master of the feast was responsible for the supplies, he doesn't understand how there suddenly can be wine that he didn't know about. He must have thought that the groom had had a secret supply of wine somewhere that he had not told the master of the feast about!

We don't know when the people found out that Jesus was responsible for what happened. It could be that only Jesus' disciples knew about it, but it's more likely that the other people found out soon. It would have been difficult to hide, especially since the amount of wine that Jesus had created was enough to give a whole village to drink!

Do not forget to include the writer's statement that this was Jesus' first miracle, and to say where he performed it, and why.

At the end of the passage, Jesus and the others in his group go to Capernaum. The writer tells us that they are staying there for a few days. Jesus' next travel will already come soon after that, in the next passage!

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 2:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 6 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Jesus' mother
- Jesus' brothers
- The other people at the wedding party: bride and bridegroom, their families, and other guests
- The servants
- The master of the feast

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out the preparations for the wedding being made, and for guests to arrive.

Act out Jesus' mother and brothers arriving.

Act out Jesus and his disciples arriving. Of course, it's also possible that they all arrived together, because we don't know where Jesus was right before this.

Act out the wedding being underway.

Act out the master of the feast getting worried about the dwindling supply of wine!

Pause the drama.

- I am getting very worried.
- The people will be upset if they can't have wine to drink.
- This is a huge embarrassment!
- Where can I get more wine? [!end] Restart the drama.

Act out Jesus' mother finding out about the shortage of wine.

Pause the drama.

- I feel so bad for the family.
- I wonder how I can help.
- I should talk to Jesus and see what he says.
- We need to do something.

Act out that she goes to find Jesus and act out the conversation they have.

Pause the drama.

- I'm a bit confused.
- I don't understand what he says.
- I still trust him that he will do something. [!end] Restart the drama.

Act out Jesus' mother talking to the servants.

Act out Jesus going to do servants and telling them to fill the jars with water.

Pause the drama.

- I wonder what's the point of this?
- Does he want to take a bath?
- We don't understand, but his mother asked us to do what he says. [!end] Restart the drama.

Act out Jesus telling the servants to take some of the water and to give it to the master of the feast.

Pause the drama.

- This is even more strange than the first thing!
- Why should we give the water to the master of the feast?
- We have no idea what will happen. Maybe the master of the feast will be angry with us for giving him water.
- We feel rather stupid doing this. But let's do it anyway. [!end] Restart the drama.

Act out the servants taking out some water and giving it to the master of the feast. Act out the master of the feast tasting the water-which now has become wine! Act out how people in your community show that something is really tasty! Would he smack his lips, or pat his stomach? Maybe quickly drink the whole cup? Burp? How do you think that his face changed as he was drinking this?

Pause the drama.

- I am so surprised!
- I thought the wine was finished. Where did this wine come from?
- I don't understand why the bridegroom didn't tell me he has more wine!
- I am so relieved! I should go and talk to him. [!end] Restart the drama.

Act out the master of the feast finding the bridegroom and talking to him.

Pause the drama.

- I am very confused, what is the master of the feast talking about?
- How can the problem of the shortage of wine have been solved?
- Did someone give us some wine? But it seems that our feast is not destroyed, so I am happy! [!end] Restart the drama.

Act out the disciples responding to the miracle. What do you think they might have been saying to each other?

Pause the drama.

- Jesus had told Nathaniel that he would see greater things like this! Here we have something much greater!
- We believe that Jesus is indeed sent by God.

Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you thinking?" You may hear things like:

- I am glad that I could start my work.
- I am glad that my disciples trust me.
- I'm happy that I could rescue the marriage feast! [!end] Restart the drama.

Act out the wedding getting over, and Jesus and his disciples, and Jesus' mother and his brothers going to Capernaum. It's not hard to think what they all would have been talking about during the walk!

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 2:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

In this passage, Jesus changes water into **wine**. Wine is the fermented juice from grapes. Grapes is a fruit that is very common in Israel.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **wine**. Look up wine in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus addresses his mother as "woman." This was not the normal way for a man to address his mother. It is important to choose the right tone of voice here. If it sounds rude in your language for a man to address his mother with "woman," it will help if you imagine Jesus speaking here with a loving voice. Jesus is teaching his mother here something, but he is not being rude.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **woman**. Experiment with Jesus saying this sentence in a couple of different ways, until it feels right. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus tells his mother that **my hour has not yet come**. Instead of "my hour," you can also say "my time." It seems as if Jesus is saying here that is not yet the right time for him to do something. But it may also mean that Jesus is saying that "the time for my death has not come." Because Jesus' mother would not understand what he meant, we also should not make this more clear. If it is not possible in your language to just say "it is not yet my time," then you may need to say "it is not yet my time to do something."

Stop here and discuss as a group what phrase you will use for "my hour has not yet come." Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells the servants to fill the **jars** with water. These jars were made out of stone.

Stop here and look again as a group at the picture of stone jars. Discuss what word or phrase you will use here. Pause the audio here.

The water in these jars was meant for a special type of washing. This washing had a religious meaning. By taking a bath with this water people were making themselves ritually, or ceremonially, clean. This meant that they were now able to participate in religious activities.

Stop here and discuss as a group what phrase you will use to explain the purpose of this water. Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells the servants to give some of this water to the **master of the feast**, or the head steward. This was the person who was responsible for food and drink at the marriage feast. It could be a friend or a relative, or it could be someone hired for the purpose.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "master of the feast." Pause the audio here.

Jesus performed this **sign**, or **miracle**, and revealed his **glory**. A miracle is something that is normally impossible to happen. A sign is a miracle that is done for a special purpose, in order to teach people something. The writer of the book of John always uses the word "sign" for Jesus' miracles instead of just saying "miracle."

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **sign**. Sign is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.*

That Jesus **revealed his glory** means that he showed to the people how great, wonderful, and majestic he is.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **glory**. Look up the word glory in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause the audio here.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 2:1–12

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5224717 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (8925028 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 2:13–25

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 2:13–25 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 2:13–25 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or do not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?

5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 2:13-25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus had just saved a wedding feast from disaster and because of this his disciples believed in him. After that, Jesus had spent some days at Capernaum, where it seems that his family was living at this time.

In this passage Jesus is going to Jerusalem. It is clear that his disciples go with him, even though it's not mentioned specifically. Cana, where the wedding had been, and Capernaum, are in the province of Galilee. Jerusalem is the most important city of the Jews and lies in the province of Judea.

Jesus is going to Jerusalem because of the Passover feast. In an earlier passage, where John the baptizer called Jesus "the Lamb of God," we explained that the Passover feast was one of the times that the Jews killed a lamb. At this Passover festival, the people celebrated that God had freed their ancestors from being slaves in Egypt, a very long time ago. At that time, God had punished the Egyptian people by sending an angel who killed every eldest son in every Egyptian house. But God had told the Israelites to kill a lamb and to put the blood of this lamb on the doors of their houses. Whenever the angel that God had sent would see the blood of the lamb on the door of the house, he would skip that house and not kill the oldest son. The name Passover means "to skip." After this incident the Egyptians finally let the Israelites go back to their own country. And every year the Israelites celebrated the Passover festival to remember how God had freed them. In order to celebrate the festival they would travel to Jerusalem. And so the city is full of people right now, with thousands of people thronging in and around the temple area.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Can you tell a story about something that people in your community do to remind themselves of something that happened in the past? Like a festival or holiday, or a certain ceremony? Pause this audio here.

Jesus goes to the temple in Jerusalem. The temple was the place where the Jews worshiped God and offered sacrifices. Some religions have many temples for their God or gods, but God had allowed the Jews to have only one temple. Once in the history of the Jews the temple had been destroyed by enemies, and a new one had to be built in its place. That new temple had been quite small. About 20 years before the birth of Jesus, a ruler named king Herod had begun to rebuild that small temple into something very big and impressive. He did this because he wanted to make the Jews happy so that they would support his rule. At the time of Jesus, the work on this temple was still going on.

Stop here and look at the pictures of the temple in Jerusalem as a group. Pause the audio here.

The temple consisted of a large main building with several other buildings and courtyards. If you were a *foreigner* visiting the temple, you could only come as far as the outer courtyard. Jewish *women* could enter into the next courtyard as well. Jewish *men* could go one courtyard further. Only the *priests* could enter the main building of the temple itself. The temple was a holy place, dedicated to God. It was the place where it was possible for people to meet God.

When Jesus comes to the temple, he sees many people selling animals and changing money. This would have taken place in the outer courtyard. The reason why these people were there was because people who came from far away would not be able to bring an animal for a sacrifice with them on their journey. They needed to buy one once they were in Jerusalem. The animals were cows or bulls, sheep, and doves, which is a type of bird.

If needed, stop here and look at a picture of these animals. Pause this audio here.

The Jews had made a rule that all the people needed to pay a certain amount of money in tax to the temple. There were different types of currencies circulating in that time, but for the temple tax only one particular currency was allowed. And so, people needed to change money. You can easily imagine that many people did good business here, outside the temple!

Stop here and discuss as a group: Can you tell a story about a religious place in your community? What activities happen there, and what is the meaning of these? Pause the audio here.

When Jesus sees all this trade and business happening right at the temple, he gets angry! The temple of God is a holy place, not a place that people should use to make money! He makes a whip from some rope and chases the animals away. He overturns the tables with money, and this all must make quite a mess! He tells the people to take all their stuff away. He says: "Do not make my father's house a marketplace!" Jesus calls the temple "my father's house." He is talking about God as his father.

John the writer gives us some extra information here. He tells us that later his disciples would make a link between this incident and something written in the Scriptures. The Scriptures for the Jewish people is the part of the Bible that Christians call the Old Testament. The passage that they remember is part of a song. This song is Psalm 69 in our Bible. The writer of this song had said: "The devotion, or love or passion, I have for your house is so strong that it is like a fire burning inside me." Or, it can also mean "it is like a fire that is burning me up."

The disciples later recognized that this verse was true for Jesus. Jesus loved the house of God so much that he could not stand it that people were not giving it the right respect.

After this, the Jewish religious leaders question Jesus. These people belong to the same groups of people who had earlier come to question John the baptizer. John the writer just calls them "Jews," but this means the Jewish religious leaders. These people are quite offended by what Jesus had done here! They ask Jesus what sign he can perform for them to show that he has the authority to do something like this. Maybe they think that Jesus should call out to God to give a thunderclap, or send some fire, or do some other spectacular thing. Then they would know that Jesus was indeed sent by God.

Jesus gives the religious leaders a mysterious response. He says, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up again!"

The Jewish leaders think that Jesus is talking about the temple building in front of them, and therefore think that Jesus is talking nonsense. But Jesus is talking about his own body. He compares his own body to a temple of God. Jesus is using picture language. Just as the temple in Jerusalem was the place where it became possible for people to meet God, like that Jesus will make it possible for people to meet God through his death and resurrection. Jesus can also mean to say that just as God was present in the temple, like that God was present in the body of Jesus.

John the writer gives us again some information about how Jesus' disciples understood this later. Jesus later died and became alive again in three days. After Jesus' resurrection the disciples remembered this conversation and now understood that Jesus had been talking about his own death and resurrection. And because of this they believed even more that what Jesus had said here was true. They also believed that the text from the Psalms about "the devotion I have for your house is so strong that it is burning inside me" was talking about Jesus.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Can you tell a story about someone being very much devoted to a particular cause? Pause this audio here.

During the time that Jesus is in Jerusalem many people believed in his name. This means that they believed that Jesus was indeed sent by God. They believed this because of the signs he was doing. John the writer does not tell us of any miracles that Jesus is doing at this time. We do not know if maybe Jesus did miracles and John is not telling us. But it could also be that when John talks about "the signs" that Jesus was doing, he is talking about what Jesus had done in the temple. If this would be true, then there is an interesting contrast between the Jewish religious leaders and the other people. The Jewish leaders are asking Jesus for a sign, but he has already given one. And many people have recognized this as a sign, but the religious leaders did not!

Even though many people begin to trust in Jesus, Jesus does not yet trust *them*. He knows that they do not really understand yet who he is and what he has come to do. He knows that they may still stop trusting in him. He knows that, because he knows what is in the heart of people—he knows what people think and feel. John the writer tells us that Jesus doesn't need anyone to tell him what people are like, Jesus knows that well enough!

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 2:13-25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus goes to Jerusalem.

In the second scene: Jesus is in the temple courts and chases away the people doing business there. We also hear how the disciples will later make a link between this incident and a text from the Psalms.

In the third scene: The Jewish leaders and Jesus have a conversation. We also hear how his disciples would later understand this, and how this helped them to believe even more.

In the fourth scene: We hear that many people begin to trust Jesus, but that Jesus does not trust them.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- His disciples
- The people doing business in the temple courtyard
- The Jewish religious leaders
- The people in Jerusalem who believe in Jesus

In the beginning of this passage, Jesus goes to Jerusalem. His disciples must be with him, even though they are not mentioned. It's possible that his mother and brothers also went with him, though we don't know.

Jerusalem is built on a hill, therefore people always said that they were "going up" to Jerusalem. It could take about a week walking to walk from Capernaum to Jerusalem.

Stop here and look at a map of Israel, and find Capernaum and Jerusalem. Discuss: if you would walk a week, how far could you come? What provisions would you take for the journey? Where would you sleep at night? Pause this audio here.

When Jesus comes to the temple in Jerusalem he notices all this commercial activity going on in the temple's outer courtyard. There are animals tied to posts (cows and sheep) and there are birds (doves) in cages. There are tables where people can trade money. There are many people jostling about. What sounds would you hear? What smells would there be? What do you see on the tables? What do you see on the ground-maybe straw and animal droppings?

Jesus picks up some rope somewhere and uses this as a whip, or possibly he braids together some ropes to make a thicker rope. He uses this rope to smack the animals so that they will run away. This means that he would have to untie them first, or possibly they were not tied. Can you imagine the noise that the animals would make, and the shouting of their owners? Maybe some people would try to grab Jesus, to stop him, and other people would be running after the animals, trying to catch them again. Where do you think his disciples were standing as they were watching this? What look might have been on their faces?

Jesus pushes over the tables of the people changing money. The coins are flying everywhere. Maybe the businessmen are all on their knees, trying to pick up the money again!

Jesus tells the people selling the doves to take their animals away. He tells the people not to "make my father's house a marketplace." What tone of voice do you think he is using? What expression might be on his face? Do you think he could be sweaty and a bit disheveled from this activity?

The disciples are remembering that there is a text in the Psalms that fits with what Jesus is doing. They probably do not remember this right at this time, but they remember this later. Maybe you can have the "disciples" move to another place in a room where you can act out something that might have happened after the resurrection of Jesus. At that time, the disciples are talking about what Jesus did in the temple. And they then remember that there is a Psalm that says "the devotion for your house is burning inside me." And they realize that this is why

Jesus drove away the people from the temple. Jesus loved the house of God so much that he became very angry when he saw people misusing God's house.

We don't know where the Jewish leaders and Jesus are when they have their conversation after this event. Maybe it is happening right after, in the same spot. Maybe around them the people are still trying to restore order again in the courtyard. We don't know if the people obeyed Jesus and cleared out this courtyard, or whether they came back right away. Or maybe by now Jesus has moved on to the next courtyard of the temple. Maybe he is sitting down to rest, or maybe he is walking around. You can use your imagination!

The Jewish leaders demand from Jesus to give them a sign to prove that he has the authority to do what he did. We don't know if these Jewish leaders actually have seen themselves what Jesus did, or whether they were told about it and then came to check it out. Maybe some of them have seen it, and others have not.

Jesus tells them to "destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again." Maybe Jesus could be pointing to himself as he is speaking.

The Jewish leaders do not understand this. They tell him that it has taken 46 years to build this temple-how could it be possible for Jesus to do this work in three days!

The conversation stops here. We don't know how this ended. Did Jesus walk away? Did the religious leaders walk away? How do you picture that this might have ended?

After this you can make a jump to the future again and have the disciples talk about this from the other part of the room. Because in the future, after Jesus' resurrection, they will remember what Jesus said to the Jewish leaders. They will then realize that Jesus had been talking about his own death and resurrection. And they believe even more that everything he had said was true. They also believe that what was said in the Scripture about him was true. This means that they believe that this particular text from the Psalms really was talking about Jesus.

After this, the passage goes back to the present time. The Passover festival is going on. This feast lasted at least a week. Jesus is in Jerusalem, and many people have come from all over the country to celebrate. The city would be crowded. People would spend time in the temple. People would have heard what Jesus had done in the temple. People probably begin to gather around him. We don't know what Jesus is doing during this time. Maybe Jesus is teaching the people more about God. Many people begin to believe that Jesus is indeed sent by God. But Jesus knows that they do not yet trust him fully.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 2:13–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- His disciples
- The people doing business in the temple courtyard
- The Jewish religious leaders
- The people in Jerusalem who believe in Jesus

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Jesus and his disciples leaving Capernaum and, after several days, arriving in Jerusalem.

Act out Jesus and his disciples arriving at the temple. See if you can re-create the marketplace that people had set up outside the temple. Maybe you even have some animals available!

Pause the drama.

- I am angry!
- I am offended.
- I am hurt.
- These people do not realize what a holy place this is!
- They have no respect for my father's house. [!end] Continue with the drama.

Act out Jesus making a whip. Act out Jesus chasing away the animals. You can act out people running after their animals! Act out Jesus turning over the tables and the coins scattering. Act out Jesus telling the people who are selling doves to go away. Act out Jesus saying, "Do not make my father's house a marketplace!"

Pause the drama.

- Who is this man?
- Why is he doing this?
- He must be crazy!
- He has ruined our business!

Ask the actors playing the disciples, "What are you thinking?" You may hear things like:

- We are rather shocked!
- It is strange to see Jesus so angry.
- We are surprised! [!end] Continue with the drama.

You can maybe quickly shift the disciples to another place in the room that means that it's now the future. Act out that, after Jesus' resurrection, they remember that there is a Psalm that says "the devotion for your house will burn inside me."

Act out the Jewish religious leaders coming to Jesus and asking him for a sign.

Pause the drama.

- We are angry.
- We are offended.
- Who does this man think that he is?
- How can he be criticizing the way that we are handling things in the temple?
- If he thinks that God has given him authority to do this, he should prove it to us by giving some special sign! [!end] Continue with the drama.

Act out Jesus telling them, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will build it up again." Act out the Jewish leaders telling him, "It took 46 years to build this temple, how can you say that you can build this in three days?"

Act out how you picture that this conversation might have ended. Maybe they all walked away.

Act out how later, after Jesus' resurrection, the disciples remember this conversation and now understand that Jesus was talking about his own death and resurrection.

Pause the drama.

- Now we understand what Jesus meant.
- Jesus already knew that he would die and would become alive again.
- Now we believe even more that everything he said is true.

Act out the people in Jerusalem responding to what they have seen Jesus doing in the temple. You can maybe act out how they are talking about it and describing it to other people.

Pause the drama.

- Jesus must be sent by God!
- I believe that Jesus is a special person.

Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you thinking about these people?" You may hear things like:

- They believe in me now, but I cannot trust them yet.
- They do not really understand; I know what they are thinking.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 2:13–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus goes to Jerusalem because the **Jewish feast of Passover** was coming. John the writer calls this the "Jewish feast" just so that any people who are reading his book and who were not Jews understand this.

At this **Passover** festival, the people celebrated that God had freed their ancestors from being slaves in Egypt, a very long time ago. At that time, God had punished the Egyptian people by sending an angel who killed every eldest son in every Egyptian house. But God had told the Israelites to kill a lamb and to put the blood of this lamb on the doors of their houses. Whenever the angel that God had sent to kill the eldest sons would see the blood of the lamb on the door of the house, he would skip that house and not kill the oldest son. The name Passover means "to skip." After this incident, the Egyptians finally let the Israelites go back to their own country. And every year the Israelites celebrated the Passover festival to remember how God had freed them. The Passover festival was one day, but it was followed by seven more days of celebration and remembering. Those seven days were called the "feast of unleavened bread." These two festivals together were often just called by one of their names.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **Passover**. Look up Passover in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word that you have used in other places. Pause the audio here.*

This passage is taking place in the **temple** and in the temple courts. The temple was the place where the Jews worshiped God and offered sacrifices. Another name for the temple was the house of God. The temple symbolized the presence of God on earth.

The temple was one very large building with some smaller buildings around it, and several courtyards. Some religions have many temples for their God or gods, but God had allowed the Jews to have only one temple. Outside the temple were several courtyards. In the inner courtyard, closest to the temple building, was the altar where the priests offered sacrifices to God to ask for forgiveness or to thank God for something. Only priests could enter the temple building. This was called "the Holy Place." Priests went inside that place to burn sweet smelling spices as a gift to God. Then at the end of this place was a curtain, and behind that curtain was the "Most Holy Place." Only the high priest could go behind that curtain. If anyone else would enter this place, they would die. The high priest could even only enter once a year during a special event, when he had to ask God for forgiveness for all the sins that the people had done in the past year.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **temple**. Look again at the pictures of the temple. Look up temple in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word that you have used in other places. Pause this audio here.*

The people who are doing their trades are not inside the temple building, but they are in the outer courtyard of the temple.

The people are selling cattle, which can mean cows, bulls, or oxen-castrated bulls. The people also sell sheep and doves.

If needed, show again a picture of these animals. Pause the audio here.

Moneychangers means people who are trading one type of money for another type of money. The people who want to trade money have to pay some extra money to these moneychangers.

Jesus' disciples remember that "**it is written** that the devotion for your house will burn me up." "It is written" means that they remember something that is written in the Scriptures. The Scriptures for the Jewish people is the part of the Bible that Christians now call the Old Testament.

"The **devotion** for your house" means the strong love, passion, or dedication that this person has for the house of God.

Your house means the temple of God.

The devotion for your house is **burning inside me**, or is **burning me up**. This can mean that the passion that this person feels for the house of God is so strong that it is as if a fire is burning inside him. It can also mean that the passion is so strong that it will destroy, or kill, the person.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will translate this whole phrase. Pause this audio here.

Disciples are people who follow Jesus and who are learning from him. Use the same word that you have used in other passages. The word disciple is in the Master Glossary.

The **Jews** asked Jesus for a sign. In general, the word "Jews" means descendants of Abraham, people who belong to God's special people. Jesus and most of the other people in the Gospels are Jews. In the book of John, the word "Jews" is used in a special way. In this book, "the Jews" always means the religious leaders of the Jews. You may therefore want to say "Jewish leaders" rather than just Jews. The word Jews is in the Master Glossary. Use the same term as you have used in previous passages.

The Jewish leaders asked Jesus for a **sign**. This is the same word that John the writer is using in his book when he is talking about Jesus' miracles. John calls Jesus' miracles "signs." A sign is a miracle, or a deed, that is done for a special purpose. Use the same word that you have used in the previous passage. The word sign is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus tells the religious leaders, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will **raise it up** again." To raise up can mean to make someone alive, or it can mean to restore a building. If there is no word in your language that fits both these meanings, then you can stick to the meaning of restoring a building only.

When Jesus was in Jerusalem, many people **believed in his name**. To believe in someone's name means that you trust that person, and believe that what he says is true.

The people trusted in Jesus because of the **signs** he was doing. The word for sign that is used here is the same word as the Jewish leaders are using when they ask Jesus to give them a sign. Use the same word as you have used there, and as you used in the passage about Jesus changing water into wine.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 2:13-25

Audio Content

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John 3:1-8

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 3:1-8 and put it in your hearts.

This passage is part of a larger conversation. It may be helpful if you listen to the whole conversation first. Listen to John 3:1-22, one time.

After that, listen to John 3:1-8, three times, in three different translations, if possible. This is the first part of this conversation.

Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God? And about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 3:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, Jesus gets a visitor in the night. Jesus is probably still in Jerusalem, and it might still be the time of the Passover feast. Jesus drew a lot of attention when he chased the people doing business away from the temple courtyard. The Jewish religious leaders had demanded that he would give a sign to show that he had authority to do this. Nicodemus is also a religious leader. We do not know if he was part of the people who talked with Jesus earlier. Nicodemus is a Pharisee. Pharisees were a group of religious leaders who were very concerned about obeying God's law completely. We met Pharisees earlier as well, when religious leaders questioned John the baptizer about who he was.

Nicodemus is also called a ruler, or leader, of the Jews. This probably means that he was a member of the Jewish court. The country was ruled by the Roman people, but some matters the Jews could decide for themselves. These matters were taken care of by this Jewish court. This court was called the Sanhedrin; you will hear this name later in the book of John.

Nicodemus comes to Jesus at night. Maybe this is because he did not want other people to see him. Or maybe he just wanted an opportunity for a quiet conversation, without disturbance.

But John, the writer of this gospel, often uses "darkness" and "light" in special ways. This conversation is taking place in the dark. And at the end of the conversation, Jesus will be talking about light and darkness. We will get to that in our next passage.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Can you tell a story about a meeting that took place at night? What happened? Pause this audio here.

It seems that Nicodemus wants to get to know Jesus better. Nicodemus calls Jesus "Rabbi" -in his language, this means "teacher." Earlier, we heard that Jesus' disciples called Jesus "Rabbi." Nicodemus is not a disciple-at least, not yet! But he is willing to listen and to learn.

The conversation that Jesus and Nicodemus have is a little bit puzzling. It is almost as if we are only hearing part of the conversation, and have to guess the rest. John, the writer, likes to make things a little bit difficult, so that we have to think hard in order to understand! In this passage, we will only look at the beginning of the conversation.

Nicodemus says to Jesus: "We know that you are a teacher who has come from God." He believes this because of the signs that Jesus has done. A sign is something unusual that is happening for a special purpose. A sign tells people something. John calls every miracle that Jesus does a "sign," because the miracles are telling the people something about Jesus. John does not tell us about any miracle that Jesus has done in Jerusalem so far, but when Jesus drove away the salesmen from the temple, this was also a sign. What Jesus did there was a sign to the people that Jesus had a special authority.

In that passage, John told us that some people believed in Jesus because of the signs that he did. This might be the reason that Nicodemus says "we know," instead of "I know."

Nicodemus said that "no one can do these signs, unless God is with him." Jesus uses a similar sentence to teach Nicodemus something new. Jesus tells him, "No one can see the kingdom of God, unless they are born from above."

"Born from above" means "born from God." But what does that mean?

When we were translating John 1:6-18, in the very beginning of the book of John, we heard the phrase "born from God." John the writer told us there that God gave the people who accepted Jesus the right to become God's children. It was as if these people were born all over again. But not in the same natural way as every human person is born. This was a different type of birth, a spiritual birth.

Jesus is here talking about the same thing. And he adds something to it. Only people who are born all over again in this special way can see the kingdom of God. To see the kingdom of God means the same as to enter the kingdom of God; Jesus uses both these phrases in this conversation. To enter the kingdom of God means to become part of God's people. The kingdom of God does not refer to a physical place somewhere on earth; it is everywhere where God rules and where people are obeying him. Jesus says that when people are born again they can enter the kingdom of God. This means they can now have a good relationship with God. These people are now saved.

We see here something that we already have seen earlier in the book of John: someone asks a simple question, or makes a simple statement, and Jesus gives a very deep answer. Nicodemus is only saying that he agrees that Jesus must have come from God; and Jesus jumps all the way forward and already talks about how Jesus is going to make it possible for people to be saved. It is as if Jesus is saying, "You are believing one thing about me, but you will have to believe much more!"

Nicodemus does not understand much from what Jesus says. Nicodemus does not understand what Jesus means when he talks about someone being born again. He thinks that Jesus is talking about a physical birth-and it is impossible for a grown-up person to be born again a second time, isn't it!

Stop here and discuss: Can you tell a story about the birth of a baby? Maybe about a baby that is born just recently in your church or in your community? Pause the audio here.

Jesus then repeats what he already said, in a slightly different way. He begins his words again with saying "truly truly," or "I tell you the truth." This does not of course mean that other things that Jesus says are not true. It means that Jesus is going to say something very important, and that Nicodemus should pay attention. Jesus says that "no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the spirit." This probably means that people need both baptism and the Holy Spirit of God in order to enter the kingdom of God. They need baptism as a sign of repentance and forgiveness, and they need the Holy Spirit to make them new people who want to obey God. So, Jesus probably means to say that no one can be saved unless they have repented and have

become a new person. When people repent of their sins, they are saying that they are feeling bad that they have disobeyed God, and they want to change. They now want to start obeying God. When people disobey God, they deserve to be punished. But when people repent, God forgives them: he does not punish them, and people can have a good relationship with God again. God then gives them his Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit helps them to obey God.

Jesus then clarifies to Nicodemus that he had not been talking about a physical birth. Humans give birth to other humans. Because our parents are humans, we are humans. But when we are born again, God becomes our father. And because God is spirit, he gives us a spiritual life as well.

Jesus tells Nicodemus that Nicodemus should not be surprised that Jesus said that everybody needs to be born again. Jesus then says something that is difficult to understand. He begins to talk about wind. For Nicodemus this would not be so unexpected, because in their language the word for *wind* is the same as the word for *spirit*. Jesus compares the mystery of being born again with the mystery of wind. We can feel wind, even hear it, and we can see the effect that the wind has on something that it blows against-but we cannot see wind itself. We don't know where the wind came from, and we don't know where it is going; we cannot understand it. In the same way, the Holy Spirit works in a person who trusts Jesus and helps this person to obey Jesus. Other people can see the person changing and becoming a better person, but they cannot understand why this is happening, because they cannot see the Holy Spirit.

Stop here and discuss: Can you tell a story about wind? Maybe about a storm that recently happened, or something that happened because of wind? Pause this audio here.

In our next passage we will see whether Nicodemus now understands what Jesus is talking about!

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 3:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

In this scene, Nicodemus comes to Jesus in the night, and Jesus and Nicodemus are having a conversation.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Nicodemus
- The Holy Spirit
- A person who is born of the spirit

The events in this passage are taking place at night. Jesus is probably staying at someone's house.

In this passage, we meet a new person. We learn three things about him: his name is Nicodemus, he is a Pharisee, and he is a ruler, or member of the Jewish council.

Stop here and discuss: How do people in your language introduce a new person in a story and how do they give their listeners all the information about him that is needed? Practice introducing Nicodemus in a few different ways until you find the way that sounds the most natural. You may already include that he came to see Jesus and that it was night. Pause this audio here.

How do you think that Nicodemus found out where Jesus was staying? Maybe he knocked at the door of the house where Jesus was staying, and Jesus' host, or one of the disciples, opened the door. Do you think that they might have been a bit surprised, and maybe a bit scared, to see a religious leader coming to their house?

Maybe the other people in the house are now sleeping. It would be dark; maybe there is a light from a small oil lamp. Or maybe Jesus and Nicodemus are sitting outside, in a courtyard, with only a little bit of light from the

stars. Maybe they could hear the sound of the wind rustling in the leaves of the trees around them! Maybe Jesus and Nicodemus were both looking at these rustling leaves when Jesus was talking about wind.

Can you act out what it might look like when someone is born again? Can you act out a person becoming changed, through baptism and the Holy Spirit-in other words, by repenting and by receiving the help of the Holy Spirit to obey Jesus?

Stop here and do this activity. Pause the audio here.

The conversation between Nicodemus and Jesus can be difficult to remember. It may help if you break it in pieces and use an object, or action, for each part of the conversation.

Part 1: Nicodemus tells Jesus that he-and some other people-know that Jesus is a teacher sent by God. He believes this because of the signs that Jesus did. The sign that Nicodemus probably refers to is that Jesus drove away the tradespeople from the temple. Jesus was using a whip at that time. So now, you can use some rope for a whip, or use any other object that you have used when doing the drama of the previous passage. This object will remind you that Nicodemus talked about the signs that Jesus did.

Part 2: Jesus' first response. Jesus says that "truly, only a person who is born from above (born again) can see the kingdom of God." You can use an object that has to do with the birth of a baby, or you can act out a baby being born; but add something that makes clear that Jesus was talking about a spiritual birth. Because the word for spirit in Jesus' language is the same as the word for wind, maybe you can use a sheet or some large leaves and move these rapidly to create wind over the birth scene or object.

Because Jesus talks about "seeing the kingdom," all the other people can make circles around their eyes with their fingers, or make another gesture for seeing.

Part 3: Nicodemus' question. Nicodemus does not understand what Jesus means by being born again. He thinks that Jesus was talking about a physical birth. For this, you can use the object that has to do with birth, or act out a birth, but then without the wind. And everybody can look very puzzled!

Part 4: Jesus' second answer. Again, Jesus begins by saying "truly." Jesus repeats what he said in his first response, but makes a few changes. Instead of saying "see the kingdom of God," he says "enter the kingdom of God." And instead of saying "born from above," he says "born from water and spirit."

Because Jesus now talks about "entering the kingdom" instead of "seeing the kingdom," you can open and close a door, or act out a gate being opened.

Create wind again with your sheet or large leaves over a birth scene or object. Because Jesus talks about water and spirit, have a bucket of water with you, or even better, go to the place where people in your church take baptism, and act out the scene there!

Part 5: Jesus explains that when we are born, we are humans, because our parents are humans. But when we are born again, God becomes our father, and now we have a spiritual life. Maybe you can find a child and its parent, or a photo of a child and parent, to remind you of this.

Part 6: Jesus compares the mystery of being born again with the mystery of wind. Find some very light objects, put them in the palm of your hand, and blow at them. The objects will blow away. Or, if you're outside, point to something that is moving because of the wind. You can see the objects falling from your hand, or the things moving outside, but you can not see the wind itself.

Stop here and do this activity. Find the objects that you need first. Of course, you can use other objects or activities than suggested here! Act out all these actions, and decide on one or two actions or objects that can later help you remember each part of the conversation. Pause the audio here.

Do not forget that in the beginning of the conversation Nicodemus says "We know that you are a teacher sent by God-he does not say "I know."

Do not forget to say that both times when Jesus answers Nicodemus, he begins his answer by saying "truly truly," or "I am telling the truth." This tells Nicodemus that Jesus was going to say something important.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it. Some members of the group can do the actions, or show the objects that you used earlier, to help you remember each part of the story.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 3:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has one scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Nicodemus
- The Holy Spirit
- A person who is born of the spirit

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story. Some people in the group can act out the gestures, or show the objects that you have selected in the previous activity, to help the others remember.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Nicodemus finding out where Jesus stayed and coming to him at night.

Pause the drama.

- I am a little bit nervous what other religious leaders would say if they knew I was meeting Jesus;
- I am very curious to meet Jesus;
- I am thinking that probably he is indeed sent by God. [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out the whole conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus. Other team members can show the actions or objects that you practiced earlier, to help the actors remember what comes next!

Pause the drama.

- I'm a bit confused, I'm not sure I understand!
- It sounds very strange to be born again. I wonder how this is possible.

Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- I wish that Nicodemus would understand.
- I am glad he wants to learn.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 3:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Nicodemus was a **Pharisee**. Pharisees were a group of religious leaders who were very concerned about obeying God's law completely. Use the same word as you have used in previous passages. The word Pharisee is in the Master Glossary.

Nicodemus was also a **ruler**, or leader of the Jews. This means he was a person with authority. It probably means that he was a member of the Jewish council-the **Sanhedrin**. The country at that time was ruled by the Roman people, but the Jews could decide some matters themselves, especially religious matters. The word Sanhedrin is in the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss whether you want to say that Nicodemus was a leader of the Jews, or that he was a member of the Jewish Council. Both options are fine. If you decide to say that he was a member of the Jewish Council, look up the word **Sanhedrin** in the Master Glossary and decide how you're going to translate that word in this passage. Use the same word as you have used in other books that you have already translated. Pause the audio here.*

Nicodemus calls Jesus a **rabbi**. Rabbi means teacher. Use the same word as you have used in previous passages. The word rabbi is in the Master Glossary.

Nicodemus says that Jesus has performed **signs**. A sign is something unusual that is happening for a special purpose, in order to teach people something. Use the same word as you have used in previous passages. For more information about sign, see the Master Glossary.

Jesus says that no one can see, or enter, the **kingdom of God** unless they are being born again. The kingdom of God does not refer to a physical place, like a country somewhere on this earth. The kingdom of God refers to the rule of God. The kingdom of God is everywhere where God rules, and where people are obeying him and live in a right relationship with him.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you would use for the **kingdom of God**. Look up kingdom of God in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause the audio here.*

Jesus says that no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and the **spirit**. The spirit means the Holy Spirit of God. Jesus only says "spirit," but you can say "Holy Spirit" if you think that this will be clearer for your listeners. The word Holy Spirit is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word as you have used in previous messages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 3:1-8

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4011051 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (6847187 KB)

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John 3:9-21

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 3:9-21 and put it in your hearts.

Because this passage is the second part of the previous passage, first listen to John 3:1-21 one time. Then, listen to John 3:9-21 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God? And about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

First, listen to your own translation of John 3:1-8.

Then, listen to an audio version of John 3:9-21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus had told Nicodemus that only someone who was born again could enter the kingdom of God. Jesus had explained that being born again did not mean a physical rebirth, but it meant a spiritual birth. He had compared the mystery of being born again with the mystery of wind—we cannot see it, but we know it's there.

In this passage, the conversation continues. Nicodemus asks how these things are possible. He still does not understand how someone can be born again. Jesus then scolds him a little bit. Nicodemus is a religious teacher of the Israelite people, so he should be able to understand a new thing!

Jesus tells Nicodemus, "We tell you what we know and have seen." It is a bit unusual that Jesus is talking about himself as "we." But remember that when Nicodemus began talking with Jesus, he also said "We know that you are a teacher sent by God," instead of saying "I know." Maybe Jesus is saying "we" to match the words of Nicodemus. It can also be that Jesus says "we" because he is talking about God and himself.

Some scholars think that Jesus himself is not speaking here, but that the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus has now ended. The rest of the passage would then be words that John the writer is speaking himself. If this is the case, then "we tell you what we know and have seen," means "I, John the writer, together with the other people around me who believe in Jesus, tell *you*—the people who are reading this book—what we know and have seen."

It does not matter for the meaning of this passage who is the person speaking—Jesus, or John the writer himself. In order to keep it simple, we will walk through this passage as if Jesus is speaking. But keep in mind that, just as we have seen in earlier passages, John the writer does not try very hard to separate his own words from the words that the people in his passages speak.

So, Jesus tells Nicodemus that Jesus testifies about what he, Jesus, has seen. If you testify, you are saying something that you know really is true. Jesus tells people things that are true, because Jesus has seen these things himself.

But Nicodemus and other people do not believe the things that Jesus says. Jesus therefore says to Nicodemus: "You and the other people did not even believe me when I told you about the things of this world, so you will also not believe me when I speak to you about heavenly things."

Bible scholars have different opinions about what Jesus means by the "things of this world." It might mean, "You did not believe me when I told you about the need to be born again." Jesus may call this a "thing of this world," because it has to do with people here on earth. The heavenly things that Jesus speaks about would then have to do with God and the future kingdom. In other words, Jesus might be saying, "If you don't believe me when I'm talking about how you can enter the kingdom of God, what's the point for me to tell you more things about the kingdom of God? You will not believe me anyway!"

Jesus then says that he himself has gone up to heaven and has come down again. Heaven means the place where God lives. Because Jesus has been in heaven, he has the right and the authority to speak about the things of heaven, about spiritual things. He is the only one with this authority, because no one else has ever gone to heaven and come back!

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about someone who is an expert about something—someone who knows very much about how to do something, or who has much knowledge about something that happened. How do other people in the community know that this person speaks the truth? What would happen if people would not listen to this person? Pause the audio here.

Jesus calls himself the "Son of Man." Earlier, when Jesus was speaking with Nathaniel, we also heard that Jesus called himself the Son of Man. "Son of Man" literally just means a "human." But the phrase "Son of Man" also occurs in a special place in the Old Testament, in the book of Daniel. Daniel was an Israelite who lived about 600 years before Jesus. At one time he had a vision in which he saw someone who looked like a "Son of Man." And in his vision, God gave all authority to this person, and this person became a king, and all the people in the world served him. And his kingdom never ended.

When Jesus calls himself the "Son of Man," he is therefore saying to the people: "I am the person from Daniel's vision. I am the king, and God has given me all authority." It is another way of saying that Jesus is the Messiah, but in a less direct way. People would have to think more before they understood what Jesus meant!

Jesus then makes a comparison with something that happened in the time of Moses. More than a thousand years earlier, Moses had been leading the Israelites out of slavery from Egypt, and they were on their way to the land that God had promised to give them. At one time, the Israelites complained to God about the food that he was providing for them, and they even complained that God had freed them from Egypt! God then sent poisonous snakes to punish the Israelites. But when the people repented, and asked God for forgiveness, God told Moses to make a snake out of copper—a yellow metal—and to put this snake on a pole, high up, so that everybody could see it. If someone was bitten by a snake but looked up at the snake on the pole, he would not die.

Stop here and show your team a picture of what the copper snake might have looked like. If needed, also show a picture of a snake. Pause the audio here.

Jesus says to Nicodemus that the Son of Man, which means Jesus himself, must also be lifted high. Jesus is here already talking about the way that Jesus will die—high on a cross. But Jesus does not mention that directly. Nicodemus will probably only understand what Jesus meant much later, after Jesus had died and became alive again!

Just as the people who were bitten by a snake would live if they looked at the snake on the pole, like that people who trust in Jesus will live forever with God. Jesus says that the reason why this will happen is because of God's love for this world. God loves the people of this world so much that he does not want them to die. God therefore gave the people a very precious gift—he gave them his very special and beloved son. God sent his very special son to earth, to die for the people. This is the gift.

This special son is Jesus, though Nicodemus does not know that yet! People who will trust in God's beloved son will not die, but will have eternal life. This means that they will live in a right relationship with God forever. Jesus says that *that* is the reason why God sent his son to earth—to save the people! God did not send his son to earth to punish.

Stop here and discuss: Can you tell a story about a special son in a family? Why was this son so special and loved? Pause the audio here.

Jesus continues by saying several things about punishment. He says that God will not condemn people who trust in the son of God, but that any person who does not trust in Jesus is already condemned now.

A judge is an official person who makes a decision if someone is guilty of a crime or not. When a judge *condemns* a person, this means that the judge declares that the person is guilty. The judge will then tell what punishment this person should get. God is the judge of all people.

When a person who believes in Jesus will stand before God, God will say to them: "I will not punish you for everything you have done wrong, because you believe in my dear son!" But when a person who does *not* believe in Jesus will stand before God as judge, God will punish them for everything they have done wrong. As long as people do not believe in Jesus, God declares them guilty of everything they have done wrong.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about a court case, or a judgment. How was the person punished? Who made the decision about this? Pause the audio here.

Jesus then talks about "the basis for judging," which means the reason for the judgment, or the way that judgment works. We recognize now a few things that we also heard in the beginning of the first chapter of John, when John the writer was still introducing Jesus. John at that time spoke about light and darkness. He had said the light had come into the world, and the darkness could not stop the light. Later it became clear that this was picture language, and that light referred to Jesus. Jesus was like a light that made it possible for people to see God.

In this passage we also hear about light and darkness. Jesus says that the light has come into the world. But people preferred darkness over light! So, the reason why God judges the people is that because they did not believe Jesus, they choose darkness instead of light.

Jesus then says that people who do bad things want to stay in the darkness. They do not want anybody to see the bad things they have done. But people who do the right things-those who follow God's true way-are happy with the light. These people are not afraid to step into the light. Everything they have done they did *in God*. This can mean that they did everything *with the help of God*, or it can mean that they did everything in order to *obey God*. Either way, they have nothing to hide and don't have to be afraid of the light.

And so, this conversation that Nicodemus had with Jesus in the dark of the night ends with talking about light. Because Nicodemus was a Pharisee, he would have had quite a different idea about God's judgment. We have already heard that the Pharisees were very careful to obey everything that God had commanded. The Pharisees believed that God would not judge the Pharisees, because they were so obedient. Nicodemus may have been really shocked to hear that Jesus said that people would not be judged if they believed in the son of God! Nicodemus does not even know yet who this special son of God is, though he might be guessing that Jesus is talking about himself.

Stop here and discuss: Can you tell a story about how people in your community think they can get right with God? Pause this audio here.

By the end of the book of John, we will hear that Nicodemus helps to bury Jesus after Jesus was crucified. Nicodemus probably became a believer in Jesus. Nicodemus chose the light!

Because this passage is quite complicated, you may want to listen to the text from the Bible again, and then go through this same recording a second time.

Defining the Scenes

First, listen to your own translation of John 3:1-8.

Then, listen to an audio version of John 3:9-21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

In this scene, Jesus is continuing his conversation with Nicodemus.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Nicodemus
- Moses
- The Son of Man
- God
- God's beloved son
- The people of the world
- People who choose the light
- People who choose darkness

This passage is happening at the same time as the previous passage. Nicodemus the Pharisee had come to Jesus in the night.

We only hear Nicodemus asking one question here: "How can these things be?" This means that he is wondering how everything that Jesus said in his previous answers can be possible." For the rest, we only hear Jesus speaking. And just as in the previous passage, Jesus begins his answer by saying "truly," or "I am speaking the truth." This does not mean that other things that Jesus says are not true. It means that Jesus is going to say something important and that Nicodemus should pay attention.

Jesus' answer can be difficult to remember. Just as in the previous passage, it can help to break it into parts, and to choose objects or actions to help you remember everything.

Part 1

Jesus scolds Nicodemus a bit for not understanding what Jesus had said, because Nicodemus is a teacher so he should have understood.

Choose an activity or an object that will help you to remember this part. Pause this audio here.

Part 2

Jesus says that "truly," Jesus speaks about what he knows and has seen, but the people do not believe him.

Choose an activity or an object that will help you to remember this part. Pause this audio here.

Part 3

People do not believe Jesus when he talks about things of this earth, and so they will not believe him when he talks about things of heaven.

Choose an activity or an object that will help you to remember this part. Pause this audio here.

Part 4

The Son of Man has been in heaven and has come down-that's why he knows all those things.

Choose an activity or an object that will help you to remember this part. Pause this audio here.

Part 5

Moses has lifted up the snake in the wilderness. The Son of Man will be lifted up. Everyone who will believe in the Son of Man will have eternal life.

Choose an activity or an object that will help you to remember this part. Pause this audio here.

Part 6

This is happening because God loves the world. God gave his beloved son to the people of the world. Everyone who believes in God's beloved son will live forever in good relationship with God.

Choose an activity or an object that will help you to remember this part. Pause this audio here.

Part 7

God did not send his son to the world to punish the people, but to save the people.

Choose an activity or an object that will help you to remember this part. Pause this audio here.

Part 8

Everybody who believes in God's beloved son will not be punished. People who do not believe in God's beloved son will be punished.

Choose an activity or an object that will help you to remember this part. Pause this audio here.

Part 9

The reason that God will judge people is because they choose darkness instead of light. The light means Jesus.

Choose an activity or an object that will help you to remember this part. Pause this audio here.

Part 10

People who do evil want to be in the darkness, but people who obey God are happy to be in the light.

Choose an activity or an object that will help you to remember this part. Pause this audio here.

Now, do all these actions, or show these objects, in the right order to help you remember what Jesus says. You may want to do this a few times until you are able to remember them in the right order. Maybe you have other ideas on how to remember the passage well! Maybe you can turn it into a dance or a song!

Pause the audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it. Don't forget to include the question that Nicodemus asked Jesus at the beginning.

As you're doing this activity, you can of course make use of the actions and objects that you used before this to remember what Jesus said next.

Embodying the Text

First, listen to your own translation of John 3:1-8.

Then, listen to an audio version of John 3:9-21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Nicodemus
- Moses
- The Son of Man
- God
- God's beloved son
- The people of the world
- People who choose the light
- People who choose darkness

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

The Son of Man and God's beloved son both mean Jesus. But Jesus does not say very clearly that he is these people. Therefore, you can have a different person acting out the role of Jesus, and another person the role of both Son of Man and God's beloved son. But you can also choose one person to play all three roles, or three different people.

You may want to act out the previous passage at the beginning of this one.

John the writer does not give us information about how the conversation ended. Was it still dark, you think, when Nicodemus quietly went back home? Or had they been talking so long that by now it's almost morning, and as Nicodemus is walking home he can see the first glimpses of the sunrise-reminding him about Jesus' words about light and darkness? You can use your imagination!

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Nicodemus wondering how these things can be. Act out Jesus scolding him a little for not understanding.

Pause the drama.

- If he does not understand this, how will he understand everything else?
- How can I explain things to him?

Act out the rest of Jesus' speech. As the person of Jesus is speaking, the other people in the group can do the actions, or show the objects that you selected in the previous activity to help the speaker remember what comes next.

Pause the drama.

- I'm not sure if I understand, but I am really interested. I'm also a little bit offended.
- I believe that God will not judge us if we obey him completely!
- How can God not judge us just if we believe in his son? What does it even mean to believe in his son? Who is his son?
- But I want to learn more. I'm going to keep listening to Jesus.

Ask the actor playing Jesus, "What are you thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I hope that Nicodemus will choose the light.
- I am so glad that God loves the people of the world so much.
- I want to save the people in the world. I want them to believe in me so that I can save them.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 3:9–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus calls Nicodemus a **teacher of Israel**. A **teacher** here means a religious teacher, not a schoolteacher. That Nicodemus is a teacher of Israel means he is a teacher of the Israelite people. Nicodemus and Jesus were both **Israelites** as well. This means that they were descendants of Abraham. The word Israel is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus **testifies** about what he has seen, but the people do not believe his testimony. Someone who testifies, or gives a testimony, is telling about something that he has seen himself, and that he knows is really true. If you're using this word, use the same word or phrase that you have used in the previous passages. The word testimony, and to testify, is in the Master Glossary.

Heaven means the place where God lives. Use the same word as you have used in previous passages. The word heaven is in the Master Glossary.

Every time when Jesus says something about the **Son of Man**, he is saying it about himself. The word literally means "a human being," but Jesus is giving the word a special meaning. He is using the word as a title for himself. It is a way of saying that Jesus is the Messiah, the special king and Savior that God had promised to send, but in an indirect way. The word Son of Man is in the Master Glossary. Use the same phrase as you have used in previous passages.

Moses had lifted up a copper **snake** in the wilderness. A snake is an animal that crawls on the ground and can bite people. Some snakes are poisonous, and people can die when such a snake bites them.

If needed, show a picture of a snake.

The **wilderness** in the Bible means a lonely place where no people lived. Use the same word that you have used in previous passages. The word wilderness is in the Master Glossary.

Copper is a yellow metal. Moses had made a snake out of copper and put this high up on a pole. Some translations say bronze instead of copper; the word that is used in the Bible can mean either.

Stop here and look at a picture of what Moses' copper snake might have looked like. Pause the audio here.

Jesus says that God loved the world so much that he gave his **only son**. The word that is used for only son means a very special son.

Stop here and discuss how you will translate God's "very special son." Pause the audio here.

Jesus said that people who believe in the son will have **eternal life**. To have eternal life means that those people can live forever with God in a good relationship.

*Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for **eternal life**. Look up eternal life in the Master Glossary. Use the same word as you have used in other books you already translated. Pause the audio here.*

Jesus said that people loved darkness instead of light, because they did **evil** things. Evil is the opposite of good. A person who is evil, or wicked, willingly does bad things that hurt other people. When people stop obeying God they begin to do evil actions.

*Stop here and discuss how you will translate **evil**. The word evil is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word as you have used in other books you already translated.*

Speaking the Word

First, listen to your own translation of John 3:1–8 again.

Then, listen to an audio version of John 3:9–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 3:9–21

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4488428 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 3:22–36

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 3:22–36 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 3:22–36 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus, and about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 3:22–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage begins with saying that Jesus and his disciples came to the area of Judea. In the previous passage, Jesus had been in Jerusalem. Jerusalem is also in Judea. John the writer is therefore probably telling his listeners that Jesus left the city Jerusalem, and now went somewhere else in Judea. He probably went to the part of the province Judea where there are no cities, but small villages and farms and wild country.

Jesus spends some time with the disciples. We do not know how many disciples Jesus now has. Jesus also baptizes people at this time. This is the first time that we hear about Jesus baptizing people, and it is mentioned only very briefly. Because you need water in order to baptize people, Jesus and his disciples may have been near the Jordan River, but we can't be sure.

By the way, in the next passage we will actually hear that Jesus himself did not baptize people, but that Jesus' disciples baptized people.

We now find out that John the baptizer also still was baptizing people. At this time, John is not near the Jordan River, but at a place called "Aenon near Salim." The word Aenon means "springs." A spring is a place where water comes up from the ground, forming small pools. Because of these springs, this place Aenon is also a good place to baptize people.

We do not know exactly where this place might be, but scholars think this is somewhere north of Judea. It seems that John the baptizer has moved away from the Jordan River and is now baptizing people in a different place.

Stop here and look at a photo of springs. Pause this audio here.

John the writer tells his listeners that at this time John is not yet in prison. He assumes that his listeners know that John the baptizer ended up in prison. For us, this is the only time we hear about this in the book of John. John the writer will not mention John the baptizer again. From other books in the Bible we know that John the baptizer was killed by king Herod. So, the response that John the baptizer will give to his disciples is the last sermon we hear from him. John is now handing over the work to Jesus!

Stop here and discuss: Can you tell a story about someone who hands over a job or responsibility to someone else? What kind of things did this person say before handing over the job? Pause the audio here.

The disciples of John the baptizer and a certain person get into an argument with each other. We know nothing about this person apart from that he was a Jew. Jesus, John the baptizer, and everybody else we have met in this book so far were also Jews. John the writer often uses the word "Jew" when he means a Jewish religious leader, but we don't know if this is what he means here. This person might have been a religious leader, or it might have been an ordinary person.

We do not know what they are arguing about. John the writer only tells us that it has something to do with ritual, or ceremonial washings.

Ritual washings were special baths that people took in order to become fit for worshiping God. From what happens next, it seems that they were especially talking about baptism. When a person takes baptism, they are taking a special bath as a sign that they are feeling sorry for the bad things that they have done, and that they want to change. We can say that baptism is a kind of ritual washing, so it is not so strange that they are talking about ritual washing as well as baptism.

It is quite likely that the man who was arguing with John's disciples is the one who told them that Jesus was also baptizing. Maybe he said to John's disciples that Jesus' baptism was better than John's; but we can only guess.

Whatever their discussion was about, it seems that John's disciples are now feeling worried. They tell John that Jesus is baptizing people and that many people are coming to him. They do not say Jesus' name, but they call Jesus "the one who was with you on the other side of the Jordan River." It seems they are bothered that people now go to Jesus instead of to John. Maybe they are feeling a bit offended for the sake of John! Maybe they think that John should stop Jesus from baptizing people as well.

But John is not worried at all. John is *glad* that people go to Jesus. John's task was to get people ready to go to Jesus.

John tells his disciples that no one can receive anything except what has been given from heaven. This means that whatever authority a person has, or whatever task he is doing, God has given it to that person. Both Jesus and John are doing the tasks that God is giving them. There is no competition between them.

John reminds his disciples that he already told the people that he, John, is not the Christ-the special king and saviour that God had promised to send. We heard about this in John 1:19-28.

If you can, stop here and listen to your own translation of John 1:19-28. Pause the audio here.

John then compares Jesus with a bridegroom, and himself with a friend of the bridegroom. At a wedding, the bridegroom is the one who is getting married-he gets the bride! The bridegroom is more important than the friend of the bridegroom, but the friend is very happy for the bridegroom's sake. John says "the friend of the

bridegroom stands by and listens for him, and is very glad when he hears the bridegroom's voice." We are not quite sure what John means here: maybe he is thinking that, before the wedding begins, the friend is waiting for the bridegroom to come. When the friend hears the voice of the bridegroom in the distance, the friend is happy, because he knows that the bridegroom is coming. Whatever situation John has in mind, his point is that the friend of the bridegroom is not jealous, but is very happy for the bridegroom's sake!

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about a friend of a bridegroom. When people in your community have a wedding, is there a special role for the friends of the bridegroom? What do these people do? Pause the audio here.

So, John says he is very happy about people going to Jesus. There is nothing that can make him happier than this! Now that Jesus has begun his work, Jesus will become more important than John. John will become less important. John does not mind. This is how it has to be!

This is probably the last thing that John the baptizer says. What we are going to hear next are probably words from John the writer himself. As we have already seen before, John does not try very hard to separate his own words as a writer from the words of the people in his stories. For the meaning, it does not matter who is speaking.

So, John the writer now goes on explaining more about what John the baptizer had said. John the baptizer had said that Jesus must become more important. And John the writer says, "Yes, that is true, because the person who came from above is the most important of all!" Then he says several things that are very similar to what Jesus had said to Nicodemus in the previous passage. John says that a person who belongs to earth speaks about earthly things. John could be talking about John the baptizer, or about himself, or both. John is a human, and he can only speak about the little bit that he knows. It could also mean that *all* people, because they all belong to earth, have only very little knowledge.

But Jesus came from heaven. And because Jesus has been in heaven, he knows so many things that people on earth don't know! Jesus can speak about things that he has seen and heard himself. Jesus has been with God, has spoken with God, and can tell the people directly what God has said!

Jesus is therefore more important than anyone else.

Stop here and discuss: Can you tell a story about someone from your community who has been to a place where no one else has been to? What stories did they tell, and how did the people respond to their stories? Pause this audio here.

But even though Jesus could tell the people directly what God has said, John says that nobody accepted Jesus' testimony. This means that most people did not believe that what Jesus said was true. But some people do believe that what Jesus says is true. They believe that Jesus has come from God. John says that these people prove that God is telling the truth. These people are saying, "Yes, everything that God has said is true!"

John says that God has given his Holy Spirit to Jesus. And God did not give just a little bit of the Holy Spirit to Jesus, but all of it! Therefore, because Jesus has the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus can speak the words of God.

John then says that the father-this means God-loves the son-which means Jesus-and that the father gave all authority to the son. This means that Jesus has the right and the power to make all judgments and decisions. Anyone who believes in the son will live forever with God in a good relationship. But people who reject the son will have to endure that God will be angry with them.

Stop here and discuss: what similarities did you discover between what John says here and what Jesus said to Nicodemus in the previous passage? Pause this audio here.

In our explanation of this passage, we talked about Jesus. But notice that John the writer actually never mentions the name Jesus, apart from in the very beginning. John the baptizer and John's disciples also never mention Jesus' name.

John's disciples call Jesus "the one who was with you on the other side of the Jordan." John the baptizer calls Jesus "the bridegroom." John the writer calls Jesus:

- the one "who comes from above,"
- the one "who comes from heaven,"
- the one "whom God has sent,"
- and "the son."

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 3:22–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 5 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus and his disciples leave Jerusalem, and travel through the villages in Judea.

In the second scene: Jesus is spending time with the disciples. People are coming to Jesus and take baptism. From a later passage we know that it is not Jesus himself, but the disciples who are baptizing people on Jesus' behalf.

In the third scene: A man comes to John's disciples and argues with them. This man probably came from the place where Jesus and his disciples were.

In the fourth scene: John's disciples tell John that Jesus is also baptizing people. John responds by saying that Jesus must become more important, and that John himself must become less important.

In the fifth scene: John the writer is talking to his listeners.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- People who are coming to Jesus so that Jesus may baptize them
- John the baptizer
- John the baptizer's disciples
- People who are coming to John so that John may baptize them
- A Jewish man who gets into an argument with John's disciples
- A bridegroom (Jesus)
- A bride
- A friend of the bridegroom (John the baptizer)
- People who belong to the earth, and who speak things of the earth
- God
- The person who speaks the words of God (Jesus)
- The Holy Spirit
- The father
- The son (Jesus)
- People who believe in the son
- People who reject the son

The conversation that Jesus had with Nicodemus in the previous passage is over, and Jesus now goes to a different place. How would you begin telling this new passage in the most natural way?

The passage begins by talking about where Jesus goes next, but Jesus does not take an active part in the story. The biggest part of the passage talks about John the baptizer and his disciples.

John the writer tells his listeners that what happens in the story is taking place before John the baptizer was thrown in prison.

Stop here and discuss, what would be the best time for you to give that information to your listeners? Pause the audio here.

Stop here and look at a map of Judea, Jerusalem, and the Jordan River. Pause the audio here.

Now, create a map of this passage in the room, and act out where the people in this passage might be, and where they move. Create the Jordan River by drawing it with chalk or charcoal, or use rope or cloth. Decide where Jerusalem is. John the baptizer had been baptizing people on the other side of the Jordan River. Now, John has moved to this side of the river and has gone north, to a certain place with springs. Decide where on your map John and his disciples now are. You could use some blue cloth to mark the springs.

Jesus is leaving Jerusalem and is now somewhere in Judea. He might be somewhere along the side of the Jordan. Decide where Jesus and his disciples are on your map. Be aware that John and his group are not able to see Jesus and his group, even though in your space they may be close to each other! There would be a big distance between them. The man who argues with John's disciples might have come from the place where Jesus was.

Stop here and do this activity.

A man comes to John's disciples and argues with them. It had something to do with ritual washings. Because of what happens next, it is likely that the man argues with John's disciples about baptism.

When John's disciples tell John the baptizer that Jesus is also baptizing, it seems as if they are complaining about Jesus. John does not go along with their complaint but explains to them that this is exactly how it should be!

It will be helpful to break John's reply into small pieces. For each part of the reply, think of an action or an object that can help you remember that part.

1. John says that whatever a person has, God gave this to that person. He is probably talking about a task or authority that God gave each person.

Choose an activity or an object that will help you to remember this part. Pause this audio here.

1. John says that he had already told his disciples that he is not the Christ, but that God had sent him to make people ready to receive the Christ. Remember that Christ means the special king and Savior that the people were waiting for.

Choose an activity or an object that will help you to remember this part. Pause this audio here.

1. John now tells a little story about a wedding. There is a bride, a bridegroom, and the friend of the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom waits for the bridegroom. The bridegroom is more important than the friend. When the bridegroom comes, the friend is happy. The bridegroom is the one who gets the bride! The friend of the bridegroom is not jealous, but he is glad that the bridegroom gets the bride.

Act out this little story. Pause this audio here.

1. John says that he, John, is like the friend of the bridegroom, and that Jesus is like the bridegroom. Jesus is more important than John. John is not jealous! In fact, John is really happy! This is how it should be. Jesus must become more important, and John must become less important.

John does not explain who the bride is in his story. That is because his point is only to say that a bridegroom is more important than the friend. Who the bride is, is not important for making this point.

Choose an activity or an object that will help you to remember this part. How can you act out that Jesus has to become more important, or greater, and John has to become less important, or smaller? Pause the audio here.

Now, do all these activities together, one after the other. Help each other to remember what these activities mean, and what John the baptizer said. You can do it a few times until you can remember this without difficulty. Pause the audio here.

After this, John the baptizer and his disciples can leave the stage, because now John the writer begins to talk to us. Let's break apart what John the writer is saying.

John the writer says:

A person who belongs to the earth can only speak about earthly things. They have limited knowledge. The one who comes from above—which is Jesus, though John does not give his name here—is more important than anyone else. He comes from heaven, where God is, and speaks about the things that he has seen and heard when he was with God.

If it is helpful to you, think of an activity, actions, or make a storyboard that can help you remember this part. Pause this audio here.

Nobody—or very few people—believed that what this person, who came from heaven, said was true. But some people did believe that what this person said was true. Those people therefore said that everything that God had said is true—or, they prove that everything that God had said is true.

Remember that John is speaking about Jesus, even though he does not mention his name.

If it's helpful, think of an activity, actions, or make a storyboard that can help you remember this part. Pause this audio here.

God has sent this person to earth. And this person speaks the words of God. So, when this person speaks, it is just as if God himself speaks! And this is because God has given all the power of his Holy Spirit to this person.

Remember that John is still speaking about Jesus, even though he does not mention his name.

If it's helpful, think of an activity, actions, or make a storyboard that can help you remember this part. Pause this audio here.

God loves this person whom he has sent to earth. God is the father, and the person whom he sent is the son. This son is Jesus, even though John does not give his name here. God, the father has given all authority to the son.

If it's helpful, think of an activity, actions, or make a storyboard that can help you remember this part. Pause this audio here.

Anyone who believes in the son will live forever with God. But anyone who rejects the son will not live but will have to endure God's anger.

If it's helpful, think of an activity, actions, or make a storyboard that can help you remember this part. Pause this audio here.

Now, do all the activities or actions for this speech of John together. You can do it a few times until you can remember everything without difficulty. Pause the audio here.

John says lots of things about Jesus in his speech. He says:

- Jesus is the most important of all.
- Jesus came from heaven.
- Jesus knows what he talks about, because he has been in heaven.
- Jesus spoke words of God to the people.
- Jesus is God's son.

John says several things about God:

- God has sent Jesus to the people.
- God loves Jesus.
- God gave all authority to Jesus.

John also says several things about people:

- People belong to the earth, and can only speak about earthly things.
- Most people do not believe that what Jesus said was true. They reject Jesus. As a result, they will not live. God will be angry with them.
- Some people do believe that what Jesus said was true. They will have eternal life.

John's speech is almost like a poem. Here is another optional activity that you could do to help you internalize John's speech:

- Can you make a song about all the things that John says? Maybe you can make three groups: one group sings everything that John says about Jesus, and another group sings everything that John says about God, and another group sings everything that John says about people. First, you can sing the parts separately; after that maybe you can weave them together, and mix them in the way that John mixes them.
- Can you do a dance about this? Maybe again with three different groups?

Pause this audio here and do this activity.

Now, do *all* the activities from this passage together. Begin by acting out where people are moving from and to on your "map." Include the discussion that the Jewish man had with John's disciples. Then have John's disciples talk to John. Give John's response, with the help of the gestures or objects that you have practiced earlier.

Don't forget to say that John was not yet in prison.

At the end of John the baptizer's response, all the characters move away and John the writer steps forward and gives his speech. Do the activities that you have created to help you think through John's speech. Remember that John does not mention Jesus' name. If you made a song or a dance, you can perform that again as well.

Do this activity now.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 3:22–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 5 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- People who are coming to Jesus so that Jesus may baptize them
- John the baptizer
- John the baptizer's disciples
- People who are coming to John so that John may baptize them
- A Jewish man who gets into an argument with John's disciples
- The bridegroom (Jesus)
- The bride
- The friend of the bridegroom (John the baptizer)
- People who belong to the earth, and who speak things of the earth
- God
- The person who speaks the words of God (Jesus)
- The Holy Spirit
- The father (God)
- The son (Jesus)
- People who believe in the son
- People who reject the son

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language. You can use the map you created in the room for the previous activity, and can also repeat all the other activities that you have done in order to help you remember the passage.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Jesus and his disciples leaving Jerusalem and traveling through the villages of Judea. Act out Jesus' disciples baptizing people.

Act out a man seeing what Jesus is doing. You can decide yourself whether you make him take baptism, or not!

Act out this man traveling to the place where John and his disciples are.

Act out the man arguing with John's disciples.

Pause the drama.

Act out John responding to his disciples. You can use the actions or objects that you have practiced in the previous step.

Pause the drama.

Act out John the writer now speaking to us. You can use the activities that you have practiced in the previous script to help you remember his words.

Ask the actor playing John the writer, "What are you thinking?" You may hear things like, "I am so glad that God has sent Jesus. I hope that many people will listen to what Jesus says."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 3:22–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

This passage talks about Jesus' **disciples**, and John's disciples. A disciple is a person who follows a religious teacher as a student. Use the same word as you have used in earlier passages. The word disciple is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus and his disciples come into **Judean territory**. This means they leave the city of Jerusalem and go to the part of the province Judea where there are villages and farms and where there is wild country. Use a word or phrase that you would use for such a place.

Stop here and discuss how you will say this. Pause the audio here.

Jesus was **baptizing** people. To baptize people means to make them take a dip in water as a sign that they are sorry for the wrong things that they had done. The word baptize is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word that you have used in previous passages.

A certain **Jew** was arguing with John's disciples. The word "Jew" means a descendent of Abraham. Jesus and most of the other people in the Gospels are also Jews. In the book of John, the word "Jews" usually means the religious leaders of the Jews. But we don't know if this person was a religious leader or not. Use the same word as you have used in other passages, but do not say that this person was a religious leader. The word Jew is in the Master Glossary.

John the baptizer is now baptizing people in a place called Aenon near a place called Salim. Because Aenon means "springs," you can also say that John was baptizing people at the springs near a place called Salim. A **spring** is a place where water comes up from the ground.

Stop here and discuss how you will describe the place where John is baptizing. Pause this audio here.

John's disciples call John **Rabbi**. This means teacher in their language. Use the same word that you have used in the previous passages. The word Rabbi is in the Master Glossary.

John's disciples say that John has "testified" about Jesus. And John says that his disciples can testify that John has said that he is not the Christ. And later, John the writer says that Jesus testified about what he has seen and heard in heaven. Someone who **testifies** says something that they know is really true. The word testify is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word as you have used in earlier passages.

John the baptizer had already said that he is not the **Christ**. The Christ, or the Messiah, was the special king and Savior that God had promised to send to the people. Use the same word as you have used in previous passages. The word Christ is in the Master Glossary.

John the baptizer said that no one can receive anything, unless it has been given from **heaven**. Heaven is the place where God lives. The Jews often used the word heaven as a respectful way to speak about God. So when something is given from heaven, this means that God gave this.

The word heaven is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word as you have used in previous passages.

John the writer talks about the one who comes from above. Later he talks about the one who comes from heaven. Heaven is above earth. Therefore, the meaning of these two phrases is the same.

God sent a person-Jesus-and gave him his spirit. The **spirit** means the **Holy Spirit** of God. Use the same word as you used in previous passages. The word Holy Spirit is in the Master Glossary.

God has placed all things under his son's **authority**. That means that God gave Jesus authority over all things. Someone who has authority has the right and the power to make decisions and judgments. The word authority is in the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for **authority**.*

Any person who **believes** in the **son** has **eternal life**. The son means the son of God, Jesus. If you believe in someone, you believe that what that person says about himself is true. You then trust that person and are committed to do what that person tells you to do. Use the same word you have used in previous passages. The word believe is in the Master Glossary.

To have **eternal life** means to live forever with God in a good relationship. Use the same word you have used in previous passages. The word eternal life is in the Master Glossary.

Any person who rejects the son will not **see life**. This means they will not have, or experience, this eternal life that the other people will receive.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 3:22-36

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 4:1–15

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 4:1–15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 4:1–15 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 4:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus was in Judea with his disciples, or close followers. John the Baptist was baptizing people, and Jesus was also baptizing people. John's disciples asked John about Jesus, and John told his disciples why Jesus is greater than John. Now, we learn that the Pharisees, or religious teachers, learn that Jesus has more baptized followers than John. Jesus and his disciples leave the region of Judea to travel back to Galilee in the north. They travel through the region of Samaria. This story has a surprising conversation between Jesus and a Samaritan woman at a well in Samaria.

In Judea, Jesus baptized many new disciples to show the new disciples were now a part of God's people. In the original language, "baptize" means to dip or immerse in water. The Pharisees heard about Jesus baptizing many people. Pharisees followed the laws of God very closely. John-Jesus' disciple who wrote the book of John-says that Jesus didn't do the baptizing himself. Jesus' disciples actually baptized people. The Pharisees also knew

how many people John the baptizer baptized. The Pharisees compared the numbers of baptisms happening in Judea and saw that Jesus and his disciples were baptizing more people than John the baptizer was baptizing.

Jesus wants to avoid questions from the Pharisees about this comparison of baptisms between John the Baptizer and Jesus. So, Jesus and his disciples leave the region of Judea. They start to walk back to Galilee in the north. The journey should take two or three days. The fastest way to travel from Judea to Galilee was through Samaria, but strict Jews often avoided Samaria and took the longer route to Galilee. Samaritans were people who lived in the region of Samaria. They were descendants of Jews, but Jews hated Samaritans and did not consider Samaritans part of the people of God. Jesus could have avoided Samaria, but he chose not to. Some Bible scholars think that Jesus had to go through Samaria because he was determined to follow God's plan and mission. He knew God had a plan for him to accomplish in Samaria. During the journey, Jesus and his disciples stop near a town called Sychar.

Stop here and look at a map of Judea, Samaria, the town of Sychar, and Galilee as a group. Pause this audio here.

The town of Sychar was near the field Jacob gave to his son Joseph more than two thousand years before Jesus' time. Jacob was one of the important Jewish ancestors, and every Jewish and Samaritan person would have known the stories of Jacob and his son Joseph. The field Jacob owned also had a well of water in it. The Jewish people considered this well important because Jacob dug it. Jesus, the Jews, and the Samaritans all knew how important this well of water was. A well is a deep hole in the ground that has water in the bottom. People lowered a bucket into the well to get water. Jacob used the well to get water during his time, and now Samaritans used the well to get water during Jesus' time. This deep well still had water for people to use.

Stop here and as a group, look at a picture of a well of water and a bucket people used to get the water. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your community get their water? Do you use a well, a spring, or some other kind of source of water for your daily needs? If possible, go look at a well with your translation team and see how people get water from the well. Pause this audio here.

Jesus was tired from the long trip, so he sat down next to Jacob's well. He was sitting there by himself. Jesus' disciples went to the town of Sychar to buy food, and that's why Jesus was alone at the well. It was the sixth hour. Romans started counting the hours of the day at 6 a.m., which means it was about noon, or the middle of the day.

A Samaritan woman came to the well to get water. She had a bucket or water pot with her-she needed a way to get the water from the well and a way to carry the water back home. Jesus was thirsty from his journey, and Jesus asked the woman for a drink of water. It was unusual for someone to come to the well for water at noon because it was during the heat of the day. Most people would come to the well in the early morning or early evening when it wasn't so hot. The Samaritan woman came at noon when she knew other women wouldn't be at the well. She probably wanted to avoid the other women because something in her lifestyle made her an outsider in her own town.

Springs and wells of water were sometimes places where God made important meetings happen. This was going to become one of those important meetings. Jesus asks the Samaritan woman for water. Instead of immediately giving Jesus some water, the Samaritan woman asks Jesus a question. This starts a long conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman. First, she wants to know how he can ask her for a drink, since he's a Jew and she's a Samaritan? She does not want an answer to this question-she asks it to show how shocking it was for a Jewish man to make any kind of request from a Samaritan woman. It was against Jewish custom for a Jewish man to be alone with a woman not related to him, especially a woman who was a Samaritan.

John informs his audience here that everyone during Jesus' time knew that Jews and Samaritans did not talk with each other. In the original language, the phrase is "they did not share the same cups and bowls." Jews thought that if they used the same cups and bowls as Samaritans, they would become unclean or impure before God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Who are some groups of people that other groups of people avoid? Why do the groups of people dislike each other? What would happen if someone from one group interacted with someone in the other group? Pause this audio here.

Jesus answers her question by telling her she doesn't know what the gift of God is. She also doesn't know who Jesus is. If she did know, she would ask Jesus for living water. Jesus does not mean physical water that a person drinks. Jesus is talking about spiritual water that gives real life with God. Jesus wanted the Samaritan woman to understand what the living water is, but she does not understand yet. She says to Jesus "Sir, how can you get this water? You don't have a bucket and the well is very deep!" "Sir" is a term of respect for Jesus. She also asks him a question to show that she doesn't think Jesus is as important as her ancestor Jacob, who dug the well. Jacob, his sons, and their animals all drank water that came from that same well, and she doesn't believe that Jesus could possibly be greater than Jacob.

Jesus tells the woman he's talking about a different kind of water. People who drink the physical water from Jacob's well will be thirsty again and need more water. Jesus is telling her about a new kind of life-giving water. This water will quench a different kind of spiritual thirst that people have. This living water is better than the water from Jacob's well. This life-giving water will be like a flowing fountain of fresh, clean water that bubbles up into eternal life. This fountain would never be dry. Eternal life means a person will live forever with God. The woman replies to Jesus again, and she shows she still doesn't understand what he means by "living water." She thinks Jesus means he knows about some other physical water she can drink. She wants to know where this special water is, so she won't be thirsty again or have to return to the well to get water. Again, she calls him "sir" to show respect.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 4:1-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This story has two scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus begins his journey from Judea to Galilee. Jesus travels with his disciples through Samaria on his way to Galilee, and they stop near the town of Sychar at a famous well. Jesus sits at the well, and the disciples go to town to buy food.

In the second scene: A Samaritan woman comes to the well while Jesus is resting there. Jesus has a conversation with the Samaritan woman. They talk about physical water, thirst, and living water.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples
- John the Baptist
- The Pharisees
- The Samaritan woman
- Jacob

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting.

In the first scene, it is important to remember that Jesus started out at the beginning of the story in Judea, and then began a journey with his disciples to Galilee. The most direct way to travel from Judea to Galilee was through Samaria, so that's the path they chose. Remember it was also intentional they traveled this way so that Jesus could talk with the Samaritan woman. Remember also that this is an area where most Jews try to avoid contact with Samaritans.

Remember that the reason Jesus leaves Judea with his disciples is because he hears that the Pharisees, strict followers of Moses' law, are comparing the number of baptisms Jesus and John the Baptizer each have. Remember that Jesus' disciples are really the ones baptizing people, and not Jesus himself. It's important to remember that Jesus wants to avoid conversations with the Pharisees.

It is important to remember that when Jesus sits by the well, he's alone. His disciples went to the nearby town of Sychar to buy food, and Jesus is sitting and resting at the well. Remember that Jesus was probably tired from the long walk. He was also thirsty, and it was the middle of the day, so it was probably hot. Also, remember that John gives his audience extra information about why Jesus is alone at the well-Jesus' disciples had gone to the nearby town to buy food. This information can be included here to say why Jesus is alone at the well, or later when the Samaritan woman starts talking with Jesus.

As the second scene begins, remember that the Samaritan woman comes to the well to get water, and Jesus is the one who starts the conversation. He asks her for some water.

There is a series of questions back and forth between Jesus and the Samaritan woman. First, the woman asks Jesus how he can ask her for a drink? Remember that she does not expect an answer to this question. She is expressing her shock that he, a Jew, would talk to her, a Samaritan woman, about anything.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. What kind of question could you use here to express her shock and surprise? Or, what other kind of statement could you use? Pause this audio here.

Remember that Jews hated Samaritans and did not want to talk to them or be around them. Jews also did not want to share cups and bowls with Samaritans. Remember, Jews considered Samaritans to be unclean or impure. It was shocking that Jesus, a Jew, would ask a Samaritan for a drink from her Samaritan waterpot. Again, John gives extra information here about why Jews and Samaritans don't interact with each other.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. How would you introduce this extra information in your own language? Would you add this information here, or earlier in the story? Pause this audio here.

Remember also that Jacob's well was well-known to Jews and Samaritans and considered an important place, since their ancestor Jacob had dug it.

Remember Jesus tells her that if she knew about the gift of God, and if she knew who Jesus was, she would ask him for living water. Also, remember that Jesus doesn't actually answer the woman's question directly. Remember she thinks Jesus is only a Jewish man-she doesn't know anything else about him. Also, remember she didn't know what Jesus meant by "living water."

The woman wants this kind of water that Jesus talks about, but she doesn't know how he can give it to her. She still thinks he needs a bucket to be able to get this "living water." She also asks him a question to show she doesn't think he could be greater than their ancestor Jacob. She expects that Jesus would agree that "No, I'm not greater than Jacob." Jacob dug that same well, and it gave a lot of water for Jacob, his sons, and their animals. The same well still gave water during Jesus' time, which was two thousand years later. She is surprised Jesus seems to be saying he has some better water than Jacob's well has.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. Would you use a question here to express her doubt of Jesus being greater than Jacob, or some other form of statement? Pause this audio here.

Remember that Jesus does not answer her question about whether Jesus is greater than Jacob or not. Instead, Jesus tells the woman more about the "living water" he can offer her. Remember that the living water never dries up, and it is different from physical water. This living water "bubbles up" to eternal life with God forever. In the original language, "bubbles up" means literally leaping or jumping. This picture of leaping water shows how God gives full and active life to people following him.

This living water is better than the physical water in Jacob's well. Also, it is important to note that this is the first time Jesus says, "I can give people this living water." He is finally starting to show the woman who he is. Jesus means that anyone, including the woman, can drink from this living water and experience true life.

Remember that even though Jesus has shared a lot about living water, thirst, and eternal life, the woman still does not understand. She still thinks Jesus knows about some special water that will keep her from being physically thirsty again.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 4:1-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples
- John the Baptist
- The Pharisees
- The Samaritan woman
- Jacob

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, Jesus is in Judea in the south. Jesus and his disciples are baptizing people, and John the Baptist is also baptizing people. The Pharisees find out about the baptisms and see that Jesus and his disciples are baptizing more people than John the Baptist. Jesus decides to leave Judea and travel back to Galilee in the north. Jesus travels with his disciples.

Pause the drama.

Jesus and his disciples walk through the region of Samaria, and they stop near the town of Sychar. Jesus is tired from walking, and he sits down by Jacob's well. It is about noon. Jesus is alone by the well. Jesus' disciples went to the town of Sychar to buy food.

Pause the drama.

A Samaritan woman comes to the well to get water. Jesus asks the woman for a drink of water. The woman asks Jesus how he can ask her for a drink. She's Samaritan and he's a Jew, and Samaritans and Jews don't talk with each other or share cups or bowls.

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells the woman she doesn't know what the gift of God is. If she knew who Jesus was, she would ask him for living water, or water that gives life. The woman wants to know how he can get water from the well with no bucket, and where he can get this living water. She asks if Jesus thinks he's greater than their ancestor Jacob, who gave them the well.

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells the woman more about the living water. People who drink physical water from Jacob's well will get thirsty again. People who drink living water that Jesus gives them won't be thirsty again. They will have eternal life. The woman asks Jesus for this water so she won't need to keep coming back to the well to get water.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 4:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **Pharisees** were leaders in the Jewish religion. Pharisees were strict followers of the law. Use the same word for Pharisees as you used in previous passages. For more information on Pharisees, refer to the Master Glossary.

Baptize means to wash someone with water to show that this person is now a follower of Jesus. **John the Baptist** prepared the way for Jesus, and John the Baptist baptized people to show a person wanted to stop sinning and obey God. Use the same words and phrases for baptism and John the Baptist as you used in previous passages. For more information on baptism and John the Baptist, refer to the Master Glossary.

Disciples are the close followers of Jesus. John the Baptist also had disciples. Use the same word for disciples as you used in previous passages. For more information on disciples, refer to the Master Glossary.

Judea, Galilee, and Samaria are all regions in Israel. Judea is a region in the south of Israel. Jerusalem is in Judea. The Mediterranean Sea is to the west of Judea, and the Dead Sea is to the east of Judea. Samaria is north of Judea, and the town of **Sychar** is in Samaria. Galilee is the region north of Samaria, and Jesus grew up in Galilee. Use the same words for Judea, Galilee, Samaria, and Sychar as you used in previous passages. For more information on Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a map of Judea, Samaria, the town of Sychar, and Galilee again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Jacob was the son of Isaac, and Isaac was the son of Abraham. Jacob was the father of twelve sons, who became the twelve tribes of Israel. **Joseph** was one of those twelve sons.

A **well** is a deep hole in the ground that provides a source of water for people and animals to drink. People lowered a **bucket** with a rope attached to it into a well to get water. A bucket is a pail made of leather used for drawing water up from a well or cistern. A bucket had two crosspieces at the top to keep it open.

Stop here and look at a picture of a well of water and a bucket again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

During Jesus' time, the Romans counted the hours of the day starting at 6 a.m. The sixth hour meant it was about 12 p.m., or the middle of the day.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. How do you tell the time or count the hours in the day in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Jews did not like **Samaritans**. Samaritans were descendants of Jews. Jews considered Samaritans to be unclean because Samaritans had married foreigners. God had commanded the Jews not to marry foreigners. Samaritans also worshiped differently than Jews. Jews thought Samaritans were not pure and clean before God because of how they worshiped and because they had married foreigners a long time ago. Jews did not talk to Samaritans or share cups and bowls with Samaritans.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Samaritans**. Look up Samaritans in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

The **gift of God** is probably God's Spirit, or the **living water** that Jesus tells the woman about. Jesus uses the phrase "living water" to describe spiritual water that gives life to a person. Be sure not to translate living water as magic water or physical water that has animals living in it.

Jesus also says this living water will become like a spring of water bubbling up into eternal life. **Eternal life** means a person will have a life that never ends. Eternal life also means a quality of life beginning when someone allows God to rule his life. Use the same words for eternal life as you used in previous passages. For more information on eternal life, see the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 4:1–15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4750676 KB)

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John 4:16–26

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 4:16–26 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 4:16–26 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God and Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 4:16–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus and his disciples are traveling from Judea to Galilee. They travel through the region of Samaria. Jesus' disciples went into the town of Sychar to buy food, and Jesus stayed alone next to a well of water outside of the town. A Samaritan woman came to the well to get water, and Jesus started a conversation with her about physical water and spiritual water. She doesn't understand what Jesus means by "life-giving" water—she still thinks he is talking about physical water. Now, Jesus continues the conversation and reveals information about her. He also tells her about true worship and reveals to her that he is the Messiah, the Promised Savior.

Stop here and look at a map of Judea, Samaria, the town of Sychar, and Galilee as a group. Pause this audio here.

Several times in the conversation so far, Jesus has not directly answered the Samaritan woman's questions. When she asks Jesus for this "life-giving" water, Jesus again does not directly answer her question. Instead, Jesus tells her to go get her husband and bring him back to the well with her. Her reply is that she doesn't have a husband. Jesus agrees that she is correct in saying she has no husband. Jesus tells her she actually has had five husbands one after another, and she isn't even married to the man she's living with now. Jesus again says she is speaking the truth about not having a husband.

In Jewish and Samaritan culture, people were allowed to be divorced and then remarried more than one time. Jewish rabbis did not approve of more than three marriages. Even Samaritans would not approve of her many marriages, and it is likely the townspeople had stopped associating with her because of her many marriages and divorces. Some scholars think the five husbands represent five false gods that Samaritans used to worship, but most people agree that Jesus was talking about this specific woman's past.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. How do people in your culture view men and women who have multiple marriages and divorces? Pause this audio here.

Jesus was not trying to make the woman feel guilty by what he revealed about her many husbands. He showed her that he knew about her past. She recognized instantly that Jesus was a prophet because he knew about her past five husbands and the current man she was living with. Prophets speak messages from God and can know things that people cannot know naturally. The woman again calls Jesus "sir" as a term of respect.

Next, the woman changes the conversation to talk about worship. The woman does not ask Jesus a direct question, but her statement shows she wants to know Jesus' opinion on where people should worship God. Some people think she is testing Jesus to see if he truly is a prophet, and some people think she truly believes he is a prophet and can speak as an expert on where to worship God. She says "our fathers," the Samaritans, worshiped God on this mountain, but "you people," the Jews, worship in Jerusalem. "This mountain" means Mount Gerizim, which was a mountain that Jesus and the woman could probably see from where they were talking at the well. There used to be a Samaritan temple to God on Mount Gerizim, but it had been destroyed hundreds of years before. During Jesus' time, Samaritans still worshiped God on Mount Gerizim. Jews worshiped God in the temple in Jerusalem, which also was on a mountain. Samaritans and Jews interpreted Moses' law differently about where people should worship God. The woman wants to know if Jesus thinks the Samaritans, her people, or the Jews, his people, are right about where they worship God.

Stop here and look at a picture of Mount Gerizim as a group. Also, look at a map that has both Jerusalem and Mount Gerizim on it. Pause this audio here.

Jesus doesn't directly answer the woman's question about whether people should worship God on Mount Gerizim or in Jerusalem. Jesus says *how* people worship God is more important than *where* they worship God. He begins his reply with the word "woman." In the original language, this is a polite way to talk to a woman. Jesus says "believe me," which means what he's about to tell her is true. Jesus tells her that "an hour is coming" when worship won't need to be on Mount Gerizim or in Jerusalem. The phrase "an hour is coming" was a common way that a prophet introduced a message from God about the future. Jesus means that sometime soon, all people will be able to worship God their Father in heaven from any place. Worship means to praise and honor God. It was significant that Jesus called God "Father" in this conversation with the Samaritan woman. Jesus was telling her that even Samaritans would soon be able to worship God their Father in heaven the same way the Jews could.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. What are some ways that people worship God in your culture? Where do people worship God? Pause this audio here.

Jesus also told the Samaritan woman that Samaritans don't truly know God who they worship. Jesus had earlier told her that she didn't know the "gift of God," and now he is talking about how Samaritans as an entire group don't know God. Jesus contrasts the ignorance Samaritans have of God with the knowledge the Jews have of God. Jesus is a Jew, so he includes himself in the group saying, "We Jews know the God who we worship." God had revealed himself to the Jewish people over and over throughout history. Jesus also says, "salvation comes from the Jews," which means God is the one who saves people, and knowledge about how God saves people comes from the Jewish people.

Jesus does not mean that Jewish people are superior to other people. Jesus shows that "an hour is coming and has now come" when true worshippers will include all the people who worship the Father in spirit and in truth. True worshippers could be Jews, Samaritans, or others. Jesus means this time of true worship will come soon—for John's audience, it was already happening! Jesus also says God is spirit, and true worshippers need to worship God in spirit and truth.

The phrase "in spirit and truth" may be difficult to translate. Most people believe "spirit" means the human spirit or inner self. Other scholars believe "spirit" means the Spirit of God will help people worship God the way God truly is. These scholars believe when God gives these true worshippers new life, God's Spirit shows them how to worship God how he really is. Many people believe that "worshiping in spirit" means to worship God in a spiritual way. This means worship is not only about physical actions like kneeling or talking to God. Other people also think "worshiping in spirit" means people need to be born of the Spirit. "Worshiping in truth" means either worshiping God sincerely or worship that is based on the truth about God.

Jesus says God wants true worshippers—people who worship God in an honest and real way, the way God wants to be worshiped. These are the kind of worshippers God is looking for. Jesus also says, "God is spirit," meaning that God is not visible, even though he is real and alive. God has a spiritual nature, so people must worship God in a spiritual way. Jesus repeats that people need to worship God in spirit and truth again to emphasize this.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. What is the best way to translate the word "spirit" for this passage? Talk about different words in your language that mean "spirit." Be sure not to choose a word that means an evil spirit or that suggests that God died. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the Samaritan woman replies to Jesus. She tells him that she does know Messiah is coming, who is called Christ. Some people believe John the author added the phrase "who is called Christ." This was a way to explain to his audience more about who the Messiah is. Other people believe the woman is the one who says "who is called Christ." Messiah and Christ both mean "the anointed one" in two different original languages. Someone God anoints means God appoints that person for a special task.

She says she knows the Messiah will tell us, the Samaritans, everything when he comes. She doesn't understand yet that Jesus is the Messiah. It is unusual for a Samaritan woman to use the Jewish terms "Messiah" and "Christ." Samaritans were also waiting for a Messiah like the Jews, but the Samaritans used a different word for "Messiah." Samaritans thought the Messiah would be a prophet like Moses.

The last thing Jesus says in the conversation is, "I who am speaking to you-it's me! I am the Messiah!" This is the first time in the book of John that he reveals who he really is. This is the climax, or the most important part of the story. Jesus is telling her that the Messiah she's looking for is right in front of her. Jesus is the one God appointed to save people in the world.

Some people also believe that when Jesus says "I am," Jesus may be identifying with God himself. The phrase "I am" is a common phrase in the Old Testament that God used to identify himself.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 4:16–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus and the Samaritan woman continue their conversation by the well of water. Jesus reveals that he knows information about her life, and she recognizes he is a prophet.

In the second scene: The Samaritan woman asks Jesus where people should worship God. Jesus tells her that *how* people worship God-in spirit and in truth-is more important than *where* people worship God.

In the third scene: The woman says she knows the Messiah will tell them everything when he comes. Jesus reveals to the woman that he is the Messiah, the one she's waiting for!

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Samaritan woman

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, it is important to remember that Jesus started out at the beginning of the story in Judea, and then began a journey with his disciples to Galilee. The most direct way to travel from Judea to Galilee was through Samaria, so that's the path they chose. Remember it was also intentional that they traveled this way so that Jesus could talk with the Samaritan woman. Remember also that this is an area where most Jews try to avoid contact with Samaritans.

Remember that in the last passage, Jesus offered the woman living water, and she asked Jesus for some of this water. The first scene in this passage begins when Jesus tells the woman to go get her husband and come back to the well with him. Remember that she answers she has no husband. Jesus says she's right-she has no husband. She actually has had five husbands. Remember, she's also living with a different man now who's not her husband. In the original language, Jesus puts the word "husband" and "five husbands" at the beginning of the sentence to emphasize her many husbands. He also repeats again that she's speaking the truth.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. How do you emphasize something in your language? Do you repeat the same words several times, say it in a certain tone, or do you do something else? Pause this audio here.

Remember that the woman knows Jesus must be a prophet. There's no other way Jesus could know this information about her life. She knows Jesus is speaking a message from God.

In the second scene, the woman starts talking about where people should worship God. Remember she may be testing Jesus to make sure he is really a prophet, or she may want to know his opinion because she thinks he is an expert. She uses a statement and not a direct question.

Stop and discuss as a group. Would you use a statement or a question here to show the woman asking Jesus his opinion about where to worship God? Pause this audio here.

Remember that Jesus and the woman are still by the well of water. When the woman says that Samaritans worship on "this mountain," she means Mount Gerizim. This mountain was close to the well of water, and Jesus and the woman could probably see the mountain. Jerusalem was far away and they could not see that city where

the Jews worship God. Remember, the woman includes herself with the Samaritans and includes Jesus with "you people," meaning the Jews.

Stop here and do this activity: Use objects to visualize the well where Jesus and the woman are talking, the nearby Mount Gerizim, and Jerusalem that is far away. Pause this audio here.

Jesus replies that a time is coming when people won't worship God on Mount Gerizim or in Jerusalem. Jesus starts his reply with "believe me" to show her that what he's about to say is true.

Stop and discuss as a group: What do you say in your language when you want someone to believe what you're about to say? Pause this audio here.

Remember, Jesus says the Jews know who they worship, but Samaritans don't know God who they worship. Knowledge about God comes from the Jews, so knowledge about how God saves people will also come from the Jews. Jesus says "an hour is coming and now is" when true worshippers will worship God in spirit and in truth. This phrase in the original language means that true worshippers will someday soon be able to worship God in spirit and in truth. In fact, they can also start worshipping God in spirit and in truth now!

Stop and discuss as a group: What phrases do you use in your language to talk about a time both now and in the future? Some other phrases may be "the time is arriving" or "in the future, which you can see now." Pause this audio here.

Remember also that Jesus says God is spirit, and true worshippers must worship God in spirit and in truth. People who worship God in an honest and true way are the kinds of people God is looking for, whether they're Jews, Samaritans, or anyone else. Also remember that "worshiping in spirit" probably means worshipping God in a spiritual way, and not just physical actions. Remember that "worshiping in truth" means worshipping God sincerely, or worship that is based on the truth about God.

In the third scene, remember that the woman says she knows Messiah will come and tell them everything. Remember that the author John may add the phrase "who is called Christ," or it may be the woman who added this.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. How would you introduce this phrase in your own language? How will you show that the woman says "who is called Christ" or that the author John says "who is called Christ?" Pause this audio here.

Remember that Jesus replies to the woman with a simple answer. This is the climax of this passage. Jesus reveals who he is. Jesus says he is the Messiah, the anointed one who God appointed for a specific task. Remember that in the original language, Jesus says "I am," which was a common way for God to reveal himself to the Jews in the Old Testament. Remember Jesus may have been identifying with God himself, or Jesus may have been saying "I am the Messiah." Some languages choose to translate it as "I am the Messiah," with a clear emphasis on the word "am" to reflect the saying God made about himself. Remember to make it clear that Jesus was saying he is the Messiah.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 4:16–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Samaritan woman

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus is still talking with the Samaritan woman by the well of water. He told her about living water, and she asks him for some. He says she needs to go call her husband and bring him back to the well. The woman says she has no husband.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says the woman is right-she currently has no husband. He tells her that she had five husbands, and the man she's living with now is not her husband. He says again that she's correct in saying she has no husband. The woman replies that she knows Jesus is a prophet.

Pause the drama.

The woman asks Jesus about where people should worship God. She wants to know who is right about their worship-the Jews or the Samaritans. The woman is a Samaritan, and her people worship God on Mount Gerizim. Jesus is a Jew, and Jews worship God in Jerusalem. Jesus replies that soon, people won't worship God on Mount Gerizim or in Jerusalem. Jews know God who they worship, but Samaritans don't know God. Jesus says salvation comes from the Jews.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says that soon, true worshippers will worship God in spirit and in truth. God is looking for people who worship him in a spiritual way and not only a physical way. Jesus also says, "God is spirit." God wants people to worship him sincerely. The location where people worship God is not important. What's important is *how* people worship God.

Pause the drama.

The woman replies to Jesus that she knows the Messiah will come and tell them everything. Jesus says "I am the Messiah! I'm the one talking to you!" This is the first time he reveals himself to anyone in the book of John.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 4:16–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

After Jesus reveals that he knows information about her past, the Samaritan woman recognizes that Jesus is a **prophet**. Jesus knows things about her that people cannot know naturally. Use the same word for prophet as you used in previous passages. For more information on prophets, refer to the Master Glossary.

Samaritans and Jews did not like each other. Samaritans were descendants of Jews. Jews considered Samaritans to be unclean because Samaritans had married foreigners. God had commanded the Jews not to marry foreigners. Samaritans also worshiped differently than Jews. Jews thought Samaritans were not pure and clean before God because of how they worshiped and because they had married foreigners a long time ago. Jews did not talk to Samaritans or share cups and bowls with Samaritans. Use the same word for Samaritans as you used in previous passages. For more information on Samaritans, refer to the Master Glossary.

The woman wants to know where people should **worship** God: on Mount Gerizim like the Samaritans do, or in Jerusalem like the Jews do. Worship means to praise and honor God. Worship can mean outward actions, and also the attitude of our inner person when we show awe and wonder about God. **Worshippers** are people who worship God.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **worship**. Look up worship in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

Samaritans worshiped God on **Mount Gerizim**. There used to be a temple on Mount Gerizim, but it had been destroyed. Samaritans still worshiped God on that same mountain.

Stop here and look at a picture of Mount Gerizim as a group. Pause this audio here.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Mount Gerizim**. Look up Mount Gerizim in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

The Jews worshiped God in the temple in **Jerusalem**. Use the same word for Jerusalem as you used in previous passages. For more information on Jerusalem, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a map that has both Jerusalem and Mount Gerizim as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that soon, people won't worship the **Father** on Mount Gerizim or in Jerusalem. "The Father" means God in heaven, who cares for his people like a father cares for his children.

Jesus says the Jews know God that they worship, but the Samaritans don't know the God they worship. God spoke to the **Jews** throughout the Old Testament, and that's how the Jews knew the God they worshiped. Use the same word for Jews as you used in previous passages. For more information on Jews, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus says **salvation** comes from the Jews. Salvation in this context means rescue from spiritual danger. People learn about how God can save them from spiritual danger through the Jewish people.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **salvation**. Look up salvation in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus says true worshippers will worship God "in spirit and in truth." **Spirit** in this context probably means the human spirit or inner self. Use the same word for spirit as you used in previous passages. For more information on spirit, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus says God is **spirit**. In this context, Jesus means that God has a spiritual nature. People should worship God in a spiritual way because God is spirit.

The Samaritan woman says she knows when the **Messiah** comes, who is called **Christ**, he'll explain everything to them. Messiah and Christ both mean "the anointed one" in two different original languages. God anoints the Messiah, the Christ, for a special task. Use the same words for Messiah and Christ as you used in previous passages. For more information on Messiah and Christ, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus replies to the woman, "**I am** the Messiah." Some translations emphasize the word "am" to show how God used the phrase "I am" in the Old Testament. God revealed himself to Moses on the mountain by saying "I am that I am." In the New Testament, Jesus had many sayings beginning with "I am." Sometimes Jesus was identifying himself like here, "I am the Messiah." Other times Jesus said phrases about himself like "I am the bread of life" or "I am the door" as a word picture for his disciples to know more about him. Finally, sometimes Jesus said "I am" to identify himself with the One true God. In this passage, Jesus may have been saying **I am** in the same way God said his own name in the Old Testament.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "**I am** the Messiah." Look up I am in the Master Glossary for more information.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene, but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 4:16–26

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5341023 KB)

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John 4:27–42

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 4:27–42 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 4:27–42 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God and Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 4:27-42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus and his disciples are traveling from Judea to Galilee. They travel through the region of Samaria. Jesus' disciples went into the town of Sychar to buy food, and Jesus stayed alone next to a well of water outside of the town. A Samaritan woman came to the well to get water, and Jesus talked with her about physical water and spiritual water. He told her about true worship of God and revealed to her that he is the Messiah, the Promised Savior. Now, Jesus' disciples return to the well after buying food in town. Jesus tells the disciples about spiritual food and the harvest. The Samaritan woman brings many Samaritans back from the town to Jesus. Jesus stays with the Samaritans for two days, and many Samaritans believe in him.

Stop here and look at a map of Judea, Samaria, the town of Sychar, and Galilee as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus had just revealed himself to the Samaritan woman. He told her "I am the Messiah!" Right at that moment, Jesus' disciples return from the town. They had been in Sychar to buy food. The disciples are shocked that Jesus is talking with a woman because Jewish law said Jewish men should not talk with any woman who isn't their wife. Also, because Jews and Samaritans do not talk together, it was shocking that Jesus, a Jew, was talking with a Samaritan. The disciples didn't say anything, but they wanted to ask, "What do you want?" Most scholars believe the disciples wanted to ask Jesus this question, and not the woman. They also wanted to ask Jesus, "Why are you speaking with her?"

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. How does your culture view interactions between unrelated men and women? When is it appropriate for unrelated men and women to talk with each other, if ever? What are some times and places that unrelated men and women should not talk to one another or be seen together? Pause this audio here.

The Samaritan woman leaves her waterpot next to the well. A waterpot, or water jar, was made of clay. It was baked so that it became dry and hard. People used waterpots to hold water. The woman may have forgotten her waterpot, or maybe she wanted to hurry to the town. The waterpot is probably still empty, and Jesus probably never got a drink of water from the woman before she left.

Stop here and look at a picture of a waterpot as a group. Pause this audio here.

The woman went back to the town of Sychar so she could talk to the men of the town about Jesus. She probably also spoke with women in the town about Jesus. In the original language, she asks the *men* to come see a *man* who told her everything she ever did. Jesus didn't literally tell her everything in her life, but she said this to interest the people in coming to see Jesus. She also knew that when the Messiah came, he would tell them all things, and she knows the other Samaritans are also waiting for the Messiah to come and tell them all things.

The woman probably had a negative reputation in the town because of her many marriages and divorces, and it is significant that she went to the men in the town to share this good news. She asks them if Jesus could possibly be the Messiah, or the one God anointed, or appointed, to do his work. She does not want an answer to this question, and in the original language, this kind of question usually had a negative answer. Her question shows some doubt because maybe she's not sure if Jesus is the Christ, or it could be a good way to encourage the people to come meet Jesus for themselves. Many of the Samaritans listened to the woman, and they left the town and started coming back to Jesus with the woman.

While the woman and the other Samaritans are on their way back to Jesus at the well, Jesus has a conversation with his disciples. The disciples encourage Jesus to eat something. The disciples call Jesus, "Rabbi," which means

a respected religious teacher. The disciples bought food in the town, and they know Jesus must be hungry from the journey. But, unexpectedly, Jesus says he has eaten food that the disciples don't know about. In the same way that Jesus talked to the woman about spiritual water, now Jesus is talking to his disciples about spiritual food. The disciples don't understand what Jesus means, and they start asking each other if someone else brought Jesus food to eat. The disciples think Jesus is talking about physical food, just like the woman thought Jesus was talking about physical water. The disciples don't want an answer to their question about whether someone brought Jesus some food to eat. They are showing how surprising it is that Jesus says he has food they don't know about.

Jesus uses a word picture to explain what he means by "I have eaten food you don't know anything about." Jesus tells the disciples that obeying God satisfies Jesus in the same way that physical food satisfies physical hunger. Jesus gets strength from doing the will of God, meaning doing what God wants him to do. God is the One who sent Jesus to earth. Jesus also says that God sent him to earth to finish all of the work God wants him to do. Jesus is showing the disciples that food is a word picture for obeying God.

Next, Jesus teaches the disciples about a spiritual harvest. Jesus talks about physical crops, sowing, reaping, and harvesting, and it is all to help the disciples understand more about the spiritual harvest of people who were ready to believe in Jesus. Jesus reminds them about a common saying people said about the harvest. Everyone knew that people planted seeds like barley or wheat, and then four months later the grain was ready for people to harvest.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. What kinds of crops do people grow in your community? Describe the process of planting crops and harvesting crops, and how people know it is time to harvest the crops. What color is the grain when it is time to harvest? What time of year does the planting happen and what time of year does the harvesting happen? Pause this audio here.

Jesus shifts from talking about a physical harvest of crops to telling the disciples that they need to look and see the spiritual harvest coming. Jesus wants them to realize the Samaritan people are on their way to the well at that very moment. Jesus compares these people who are ready to believe to a crop that is ripe and ready for the harvest. In the original language, Jesus says the fields of grain are "white" for harvest. This probably means the fields of grain in that part of the world look white when they are ripe and ready to be harvested.

Next, Jesus describes a harvester and the sower. A harvester normally harvests ripe grain from a field. Jesus is comparing a harvester of ripe grain to people who bring others to Jesus. Jesus says a harvester receives wages, or money for his work. In the same way, people who bring others to Jesus receive a reward for their work. God is the one who will reward people for bringing others to Jesus. The people who believe and follow Jesus will have eternal life, meaning they will have spiritual life forever with God.

Jesus says the person who speaks God's message is like a person who sows seed in a field. A person who helps others accept the message of God is like a harvester. Jesus says the sower and the harvester will be happy together when they see the results of their work. Jesus reminds the disciples of another common saying at the time: "One person is the sower, and another person is the harvester." People do not always get to enjoy the fruit of their labor, but in this word picture, the sower and the harvester get to celebrate together. Jesus tells the disciples that they will benefit from the work of others when they harvest in a field where they did not plant any seeds. It is not clear who the "others" are here, but it is clear that the disciples are the harvesters.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. Describe the celebrations you have in your culture during harvest time. Pause this audio here.

Now, we hear that many Samaritans believe in Jesus because of the woman's testimony. They believed Jesus was the Messiah and they trusted in him. A testimony is a report about what someone knows or saw. Her testimony was that Jesus told her everything about her life, which was an exaggeration. She exaggerated because she was excited that Jesus knew about her life and showed her that he is the Messiah they've been waiting for.

The Samaritans came to the well where Jesus and the disciples were talking. They begged Jesus to stay with them in their town, and Jesus stayed for two days. Most likely, Jesus' disciples also stayed with Jesus in the town as well. Jesus continued to talk to the people about God's Kingdom, and many more of the Samaritans believed in Jesus because of what he said. They heard for themselves what Jesus said, and they knew that Jesus truly was

the Savior of the world, including Samaritans. This is the climax, or the most important part of this story. It shows that the Samaritans know Jesus is the one who spiritually saves all the different groups of people in the world. Jesus is not just the Savior of the Jews. This does not mean that Jesus saves every person in the world, but only the people who believe and trust in Jesus.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 4:27-42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: The disciples come back from buying food in the town, and they are surprised Jesus is talking with the woman. She goes back to the town to bring other Samaritans to Jesus.

In the second scene: Jesus and the disciples talk together at the well of water. Jesus tells them about spiritual food and about the spiritual harvest.

In the third scene: Many Samaritans believe in Jesus because of the woman's testimony, and many others believe because they hear Jesus themselves. Jesus stays with the Samaritans for two days.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Samaritan woman
- The disciples
- The Samaritans

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Jesus has been talking with the Samaritan woman at the well. Remember that Jesus and his disciples are on a journey from Judea to Galilee, and they are in Samaria now. The disciples went into the town of Sychar to buy food, and Jesus and the woman are alone at the well of water. Remember that this is an area where most Jews try to avoid contact with Samaritans.

In the first scene, the disciples return from buying food in the town. This happens right when Jesus tells the woman "I *am* the Messiah!" Remember the disciples are shocked that Jesus is speaking with a woman, especially a Samaritan woman. None of the disciples ask Jesus why he's talking with the woman.

Remember that the woman leaves her waterpot at the well and goes back to the town without it. She may have been hurrying back to town and that's why she doesn't bring it with her. Remember that she goes to the men of her town and asks them, "This is not the Messiah, is it?"

The woman does not expect an answer to this question. She is asking them to get the people interested and wondering if Jesus could be the Christ, the person they've been waiting for God to send them.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. How would you say this in your language? Would you use a question like "Could he be the Christ?" Or would it be more natural to use a statement like, "This could be the Messiah"? Pause this audio here.

Remember that while the woman goes to the town to bring back other Samaritans, the second scene begins. In this scene, we hear a conversation between Jesus and his disciples. The Samaritans are on their way back to Jesus while Jesus and his disciples talk at the well of water. In the original language, this scene begins with the word "meanwhile," which shows that this scene happens at the same time as the first scene.

The disciples urge Jesus to eat something, and he says he has food they don't know anything about. Remember that the disciples ask each other, "Could someone else have brought him food to eat?" They are confused about why Jesus doesn't want the food they bought in the town. They are wondering if someone else gave Jesus

physical food to eat while the disciples were in the town. Their question shows how surprised they are that Jesus is refusing the food from them.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. How would you say this in your language? Would you use a question like "Could someone else have brought him food to eat?" Or would it be more natural to use a statement like, "It is unlikely that someone else brought food to him"? Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells the disciples his food is to do what God wants him to do. Remember that Jesus is talking about spiritual food and not physical food. Jesus asks them if they use the saying "four more months until the harvest." He knows that it is common knowledge at the time that there are four months between planting seeds and harvesting grain. He does not expect an answer to this question. Jesus knows this is what people say. Jesus wanted the disciples to start thinking about the harvest in a new way.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. How would you introduce this saying about sowing and harvesting in your language? Would a question or a statement be more natural in your language? Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells them about the spiritual harvest of people who bring others to Jesus. Jesus wants the disciples to realize there are many Samaritans coming to the well at that very moment. These Samaritans are like a field ready to be harvested. Jesus says the fields are "white for harvest," or ripe and ready to be harvested. Some scholars believe the word "already" also goes here. They think Jesus says the fields are *already* ripe. Other scholars believe the word "already" belongs with the next word picture that Jesus describes. They think Jesus says, "The harvesters *already* receive payment and gather crops for eternal life." Remember that in this word picture, Jesus describes a harvester and a sower, and how they will rejoice together.

Remember that the disciples did not sow seeds in the lives of the Samaritans by sharing the message of God, but now the disciples can harvest in the lives of the Samaritans. The spiritual harvest means people who believe in Jesus will have eternal life.

Remember that in the third scene, many Samaritans believe in Jesus because of the woman's testimony. They believe in Jesus, so they want Jesus to stay with them to talk with them more about God. Jesus agrees and stays with them in the town of Sychar for two days. Remember that many others believe because they hear what Jesus says to them.

Finally, the most important part of the story is what the Samaritans say about Jesus at the end. They say they believed before because of what the woman told them, but now they know for themselves that Jesus is the Savior of all the different groups of people in the world.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 4:27-42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Samaritan woman
- The disciples
- The Samaritans

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus is still talking with the Samaritan woman by the well of water. He told her that he is the Messiah, and then Jesus' disciples return at that same moment. The disciples are shocked to see Jesus talking to the Samaritan woman. None of the disciples ask Jesus why he's talking with her.

Pause the drama.

The woman leaves her waterpot by the well and goes back to the town. She tells the people about Jesus. She wants them to come back to the well with her to see Jesus for themselves. Many of them listen to her and follow her back to the well of water where Jesus is.

Pause the drama.

While the Samaritans are coming to the well of water to see Jesus, the disciples talk with Jesus at the well. The disciples ask Jesus to eat some food they bought in the town. Jesus tells them he has food they don't know anything about. The disciples don't understand Jesus, and they wonder if someone else brought Jesus some food to eat. Jesus is talking about spiritual food, not physical food. Jesus explains that his food is to obey God and do all the work God gives him to do.

Pause the drama.

Jesus teaches the disciples about the spiritual harvest. He says there's a saying that people plant seeds, and then four months later, they harvest the crops. Jesus wants the disciples to think about the spiritual harvest of the Samaritans coming to the well, and not just about a physical harvest of crops. Jesus says the fields are white, or ripe, and ready for the disciples to harvest. Jesus also says the sower and harvester will rejoice together. The disciples did not do the work of planting seeds for the Samaritans to believe, but now the disciples can celebrate in the spiritual harvest of the Samaritans.

Pause the drama.

Many Samaritans believe because of the woman's testimony about Jesus. The Samaritans beg Jesus to stay with them, and so Jesus stays with them in their town for two days. He teaches them many things, and many more people believe in Jesus. Many Samaritans tell the woman that now they believed in Jesus because they heard him for themselves. They had heard what the woman said about Jesus, but now it was even more convincing. They knew that Jesus was truly the Savior of all the different groups of people in the world.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 4:27–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus' **disciples** return from buying food in the town of **Sychar**.

Disciples are the close followers of Jesus. Use the same word for disciples as you used in previous passages. For more information on disciples, refer to the Master Glossary.

Sychar is a town in the region of **Samaria**. The well of water where Jesus had talked with the Samaritan woman was located outside of the town. The disciples were in Sychar buying food, and now they come back to the well of water.

Stop here and look at a map of Judea, Samaria, the town of Sychar, and Galilee as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Samaritan woman leaves her waterpot at the well, and she goes to Sychar to tell the people about Jesus. She says, "Could he possibly be the **Messiah**?" **Messiah** and Christ both mean "the anointed one" in two different original languages. God anoints the Messiah, the Christ, for a special task. Use the same word for Messiah as you used in previous passages. For more information on Messiah, refer to the Master Glossary.

The disciples say, "**Rabbi**, eat something." Rabbi means "my great one" or "my great teacher." It does not mean a schoolteacher. Use the same word for Rabbi as you used in previous passages. For more information on Rabbi, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus says people who reap the spiritual harvest will gather fruit for **eternal life**. Eternal life means a person will have a life that never ends. Eternal life also means a quality of life beginning when someone allows God to rule his life. Use the same words for eternal life as you used in previous passages. For more information on eternal life, see the Master Glossary.

Many **Samaritans** from the town of Sychar believed in Jesus. Samaritans and Jews did not like each other. Samaritans were descendants of Jews. Jews thought Samaritans were not pure and clean before God because of how they worshiped and because they had married foreigners a long time ago. Jews did not talk to Samaritans or share cups and bowls with Samaritans. Use the same word for Samaritans as you used in previous passages. For more information on Samaritans, refer to the Master Glossary.

Many of the Samaritans believed in Jesus because of the woman's testimony. In the original language, this word is the verb **testify**. Testify means to tell about what someone knows or has directly seen with their own eyes. Use the same word for testify as you used in previous passages.

The Samaritans **believed** in Jesus, meaning they believed and they put their faith in Jesus. Belief includes accepting the facts about who Jesus is. Belief also means trusting Jesus instead of trusting oneself or someone else. Someone who believes in Jesus is called a believer. Use the same word for believe as you used in previous passages. For more information on belief, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Samaritans say they believe Jesus is the **Savior** of all the different groups of people in the world. Savior means someone who rescues or delivers people from evil or danger. In the New Testament, Jesus is the Savior who rescues people from spiritual evil. Jesus rescues people from the punishment of sin. Savior can also mean the one who restores people.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Savior**. Look up Savior in the Master Glossary for more information.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene, but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 4:27–42

Audio Content

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John 4:43–54

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 4:43–54 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 4:43–54 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God and Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 4:43–54 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus and his disciples are traveling from Judea to Galilee. They travel through the region of Samaria. Jesus' disciples went into the town of Sychar to buy food, and Jesus stayed alone next to a well of water outside of the town. Jesus talked with a Samaritan woman at the well. When the disciples got back to the well, Jesus taught them about spiritual food and the harvest. While Jesus taught his disciples, the woman went back to the town to bring many other Samaritans to Jesus. The Samaritans believed in Jesus, and Jesus stayed there for two days.

Now, Jesus and his disciples continue their journey to Galilee. They arrive in Galilee, and Jesus heals the son of a royal official. The events in this passage take place in Cana and Capernaum.

Stop here and look at the map of Judea, the city of Jerusalem in Judea, Samaria, the town of Sychar in Samaria, Galilee, and the towns of Cana and Capernaum in Galilee as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus and his disciples were with the Samaritans in Sychar for two days. After the two days, Jesus and his disciples continued their journey to Galilee. Jesus left Samaria after two days. He returns to where he spends most of his time, Galilee. John reminds us here that Jesus told his disciples at some point that prophets are not honored or respected in their own hometowns. A prophet is someone who has a message from God. This is a difficult part to understand because some people believe "hometown" may mean Galilee, Judea, or Samaria. It may mean that people in Samaria welcomed Jesus more than Jews in Galilee, where Jesus was from. Or, it may mean that people welcomed Jesus in Jerusalem more than in Galilee. Jesus had lived most of his life in Galilee, so it is likely that "hometown" means Galilee. The important thing to know is Jesus did not stay in one place long enough to make it his home. Instead, Jesus taught in one place and then moved to another place. It is likely that this saying was added by the author John as something that Jesus said to his disciples, but we are not sure how exactly this statement relates to this context.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. How does your culture view people who speak messages from God? How do people in their hometowns who are closest to them react to them? Pause this audio here.

Back when Jesus had been in Jerusalem for the feast, or the Passover festival, there were also Galileans in Jerusalem. The Passover festival was a Jewish religious festival that the Jews celebrated every year. Jesus cleared out the temple in Jerusalem, and the Galileans saw Jesus do this and other things. Now, the same Galileans were back in Galilee, and they welcomed Jesus to Galilee because of what they saw Jesus do in Jerusalem. The following story about Jesus healing the royal official's son is one example of how the Galileans welcomed Jesus to Galilee. It may be confusing to say "a prophet has no honor in his own country" and then immediately hear that the Galileans welcomed Jesus when Jesus arrived in Galilee. The kind of faith that people in Galilee seemed to have was based on the miracles that Jesus did. This may not be the kind of faith that Jesus wants, or that Jesus thinks brings the most honor to him.

Stop here and look at the map of Jerusalem in the region of Judea and the region of Galilee again as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus and his disciples arrive in Cana, which is a town in Galilee. Cana is the place where Jesus changed water into wine at a wedding. Wine was a common alcoholic drink during Jesus' time.

The author John wants his audience to remember the importance of Cana as the first place Jesus did a miracle. The following story is of another miracle that Jesus does in Cana.

The new person in this story is the royal official. He is from Capernaum, which is another town in Galilee. A royal official could be someone with royal blood, but this is not likely in this story. The royal official was probably someone who worked for the Roman ruler in Capernaum. It is possible the royal official was Jewish or Gentile, but it is most important to know the royal official was from Galilee. The royal official had a son who was sick at his home in Capernaum. Capernaum was a town next to the Sea of Galilee, and it was near Cana.

Stop here and look at the map of Galilee, Cana, and Capernaum again as a group. Pause this audio here.

The royal official was in Capernaum with his sick son, and then he heard from someone that Jesus was back in Galilee. The royal official traveled from Capernaum to Cana to beg Jesus to come heal his sick son in Capernaum. It is possible the royal official had heard about Jesus' miracle in Cana, and that's why he wanted to ask Jesus to heal his sick son. The royal official wanted Jesus to come quickly because his son was close to death, or about to die from his sickness. He wanted Jesus to "come down" from Cana to Capernaum because Cana was on higher ground than Capernaum.

Jesus replies to the royal official, but his reply is also to all the people around, and not only to the royal official. Jesus says that people won't believe in him unless they see signs and wonders. Some people translate this as "miraculous signs." Miracles, signs, and wonders are all powerful acts that only God can do. He is showing that most people choose to believe in Jesus only when they see miracles. Jesus wants the royal official to think about why he is asking Jesus for a miracle. Jesus is not rebuking the royal official. Jesus probably wants the royal

official to learn to have faith in Jesus that is not only based on the miracles Jesus does. This is similar to the earlier statement that people in Galilee welcomed Jesus because of miracles Jesus did in Jerusalem. Jesus seems to say here that faith or trust in Jesus without seeing miracles is more honoring to Jesus.

The royal official asks Jesus again to come down from Cana to Capernaum to heal his son before the son dies. The royal official uses a word that can be translated as "lord" or "sir" to show respect for Jesus. There is urgency in the request because the son is very sick and about to die. In the original language, the word for "son" is a word that shows the love and care the father has for his sick son.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. Share about a time you, a family member, or someone else you know was very sick. Describe how people care for a sick person in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Jesus does not agree to go see the man's sick son. Instead, Jesus heals the sick son simply by telling the father "You may go. Your son is going to live!" It is clear the son was healed at that moment. The man believes Jesus and leaves for his home in Capernaum. It is important to note that he is now called "the man" and not the "royal official." Some people think the author John starts calling him "the man" to show less emphasis on his official status as the man starts to show faith in Jesus.

The next day while the man was traveling from Cana to Capernaum, his servants met him on the road. Servants could also be translated as slaves. The royal official owned the slaves and did not pay them any wages. They told him the sick son was healed. The man asked when exactly his son started to recover. The servants told the man that the boy stopped having a fever yesterday at the seventh hour. This was probably at 1 p.m. according to the way the Romans counted the hours of the day starting at 6 a.m.

Then the father realizes 1 p.m. yesterday was the exact time the day before when Jesus told the man "Your son is going to live." The father knows that Jesus is the one who healed his sick son. This is the most important part of the story. This is the third time the phrase "Your son is going to live" is in the story. This is also the first time he is called "the father" because it says he is the leader of an entire household. His household means all the people living in the house. It includes his wife, the healed son, other children, and servants. The father and all his household believe in Jesus.

The final statement of this story reminds the audience that healing the royal official's son was Jesus' second miraculous sign that Jesus did in Galilee. This statement does not mean that Jesus did two miracles this time after he returned from Judea to Galilee. The first miracle was before in Cana when Jesus changed the water into wine. That first miracle happened after Jesus returned to Galilee from another trip to Judea. Jesus now returns from Judea to Galilee a second time, and Jesus heals the sick son in Capernaum. This healing was the second miracle that Jesus did after a trip from Judea to Galilee. Jesus had a long delay in Samaria when he stopped to talk with the Samaritan woman and the other Samaritans, and now we know that he is back in Galilee again.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 4:43–54 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus and his disciples travel from Samaria to Galilee and arrive in the town of Cana in Galilee.

In the second scene: A royal official comes to Jesus in Cana and asks Jesus to come heal his sick son in Capernaum. Jesus heals the sick son by speaking.

In the third scene: The royal official travels back to Capernaum. His servants meet him on his way and tell him his son is healed. The royal official and his household all believe in Jesus.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples are not mentioned, but they are traveling with Jesus
- The Galileans
- The royal official
- The sick son
- The servants
- The household of the royal official

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Jesus and his disciples are still on their journey from Judea to Galilee. They had stayed in Samaria two days so that Jesus could talk to the Samaritans. Remember there was a large group of Samaritans who believed in Jesus after they heard the words of the Samaritan woman, and after they heard Jesus himself speak. Jesus probably could have stayed longer in Samaria with the many Samaritans who believed in him, but he left after only two days. It is possible he left at that time so that he could heal the royal official's son in Galilee.

In the first scene, we hear that Jesus said, "a prophet has no honor in his hometown." This is probably something that Jesus said to his disciples. The author John may have included this statement here to describe the kinds of things that happen to Jesus in his home area of Galilee. It also could show why the Samaritans from the region of Samaria responded to Jesus so well. Remember that it is not clear why this statement is included here.

Jesus arrives in Galilee, and the people there welcome him. Remember there is background information about why the Galileans welcomed Jesus. Some of them had been in Jerusalem during the Passover Festival, and they remembered the signs Jesus did there. He goes to the town of Cana, which is an important town in the life of Jesus. Remember that Cana is the town where Jesus changed water into wine at a wedding. The first scene ends when Jesus arrives in Cana.

The second scene begins with the introduction of a new character. In the original language, the word "now" introduces the new character in the story.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. How do you introduce a new character in a story in your language? Pause this audio here.

The royal official lived in Capernaum, which was a town near the town of Cana. The royal official's son was sick in Capernaum.

Stop here and look at the map of Cana and Capernaum again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

The royal official hears from someone about Jesus' arrival in Galilee, so he travels from Capernaum to Cana to see Jesus. Remember that Capernaum is on the lake, so it is on lower ground than Cana. The official travels up to Cana to find Jesus.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. How do you talk about traveling to/from places in your language? For example, if you're traveling from a town on higher ground to a town on lower ground, what do you say? How do you show directions like east, west, north, and south in your language? Pause this audio here.

The royal official begs Jesus to come down to Capernaum to heal his sick son. Remember that now the audience learns the son is about to die. This means the son was very sick. The word for "beg" in the original language shows that the royal official was asking Jesus over and over to come heal his sick son in Capernaum.

Remember that Jesus does not immediately heal the sick son. Jesus first says something to the man and to all the people around him. Jesus says that people only believe in him when they see signs and miracles. In the original language, there are two negative words: "If you people do *not* see signs, you will *never* believe." This emphasizes the words of Jesus. People often only wanted to see the miracles and signs of Jesus. This does not mean they have true faith in him, or believe in Jesus as the promised savior who takes away their sins.

Remember, the royal official asks Jesus again to come down to Capernaum to heal his sick son. Remember the official is respectful and calls Jesus "lord" or "sir." Again, there is a mention of the son being close to death.

The last part of the second scene is when Jesus heals the sick son. Jesus tells the royal official that he should go back home, and that his son will live. This means the son will be healed. Remember that Jesus healed the sick son with his words, and that he didn't even need to go to Capernaum to heal him. Jesus stayed in Cana and healed the sick son from a distance.

In the third scene, the royal official believes the word of Jesus that his son will be healed. The official starts the journey from Cana back to his home of Capernaum. The next day, on his way, his servants meet him to tell him the son is healed! He asks them when the son was healed, and they say it was at 1 p.m. the day before. The father knows that 1 p.m. the day before is the exact same time when Jesus said, "Your son will live!" Remember this is the climax of the story. It is also the third time in the story it says, "Your son will live!"

The royal official and all his household believe in Jesus as a result of the healing of the sick son. They knew that Jesus was the one who healed the son, even though he was in a different town. They trusted in Jesus because of this healing.

Remember this is the second time Jesus makes a journey from Judea to Galilee. The first time, he comes to Galilee and changes water into wine in the town of Cana. This time, he also is in Cana and he heals the royal official's son in Capernaum.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 4:43–54 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples are not mentioned, but they are traveling with Jesus
- The Galileans
- The royal official
- The sick son
- The servants
- The household of the royal official

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus and his disciples stayed in Samaria two days to talk with the Samaritans. At the end of the two days, they leave Samaria and continue their journey to Galilee. Jesus had said at some point to his disciples, "A prophet has no honor in his own hometown."

Pause the drama.

Jesus arrived in Galilee, and the people of Galilee welcomed him. They remembered the signs Jesus did in Jerusalem during the Passover Festival.

Pause the drama.

Jesus and the disciples arrive in Cana, which is where Jesus did his first miracle. Jesus changed water to wine in Cana. A royal official lives in Capernaum, which is a nearby town on the Sea of Galilee. The royal official's son is very sick, and he hears about Jesus' arrival back in Galilee. The royal official travels to Cana to talk to Jesus about his sick son.

Pause the drama.

The royal official arrives in Cana. He begs Jesus to come back to Capernaum to heal his sick son. The son is close to death. Jesus replies by saying, "If you people don't see miracles and signs, you will never believe."

Pause the drama.

The royal official asks Jesus again to come down to Capernaum to heal his sick son. He wants Jesus to come before his son dies. This time, Jesus replies, "Go back home! Your son will live!" With his words, Jesus healed the sick son. The royal official believes Jesus and starts the journey back home to Capernaum.

Pause the drama.

While the royal official is on his way home, his servants meet him. The servants tell the official that his son is well! The official asks the servants at what time did his son get better. The servants tell the official that it was at 1 p.m. the day before. The official realizes this is the exact same time the day before that Jesus told him, "Go back home! Your son will live!"

Pause the drama.

The royal official and all his household believe and put their trust in Jesus. This is the second miracle Jesus does after he takes a journey from Judea to Galilee. The first miracle was also after a different journey from Judea to Galilee.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 4:43-54 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus and his disciples were traveling from Judea to **Galilee**. They had stopped in Samaria for two days, and now they continued their journey to Galilee. Galilee is the north, and Jesus is from Galilee. People from Galilee are called Galileans.

Stop here and look at the map of Judea, Samaria, the town of Sychar, and Galilee again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Jesus said that a **prophet** has no honor in his own hometown. A prophet is someone who speaks messages from God. Use the same word for prophet as you used in previous passages. For more information on the word prophet, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Galileans welcomed Jesus because they remembered what Jesus did in **Jerusalem** at the Passover Festival. Jerusalem was the religious capital of the Jewish people. The temple was in Jerusalem. The **Passover Festival** was a yearly religious festival the Jews celebrated together in Jerusalem. Use the same words for Jerusalem and the Passover Festival as you used in previous passages. For more information on Jerusalem and the Passover Festival, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at the map of Jerusalem and Galilee again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Jesus came to the town of **Cana** in Galilee. Cana was the town where Jesus did his first miracle. Jesus changed water into wine at a wedding. Cana was on higher ground than the nearby Sea of Galilee. Use the same word for Cana as you used in previous passages. For more information on Cana, refer to the Master Glossary.

The royal official had a sick son in **Capernaum**. Capernaum was a town on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum was a town about 20 miles, or 32 kilometers, away from Cana. It was an important trading town. People had to travel down to Capernaum because it was on low ground near the sea. Use the same word for Capernaum as you used in previous passages. For more information on Capernaum, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at the map of Cana and Capernaum as a group again if needed. Pause this audio here.

Jesus told the people they will never believe if they don't see miracles and signs. A sign means a miracle that happens to show people something important. Use the same words for miracles, signs, and wonders as you used in previous passages. For more information on miracles, signs, and wonders refer to the Master Glossary.

The royal official calls Jesus "sir," which is a term of respect. It can also be translated as "master" or "lord." Use the same word for **lord** as you used in previous passages. For more information on lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

Servants work for a master. They live in the master's house, and they do not earn any wages. They are like slaves. Use the same word for servants as you used in previous passages. For more information on servants, refer to the Master Glossary.

The servants confirmed with their master that the sick son became well the day before at "the seventh hour." The Romans started counting the hours of the day at 6:00 in the morning, so the seventh hour is 1 p.m.

The royal official and all his **household** believed in Jesus. Household means all the people living in the house. This includes the head of the household, his wife, children, any unmarried children, married sons and their families, other relatives, and any servants or slaves who worked in the house.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **household**. Look up household in the Master Glossary for more information.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene, but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 4:43-54

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5060139 KB)

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John 5:1-15

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 5:1-15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 5:1-15 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 5:1-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous story, Jesus healed the son of an official who almost died. It was the first time that Jesus healed anyone. After this, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the most sacred city for the Jews. Here, Jesus healed another person.

In Jerusalem where Jesus was, there was a feast of the Jews. A feast is a celebration to honor an important person or event. Jews celebrated several feasts, but we do not know which feast was happening at that time.

But this feast helps explain why there were a lot of people in the city. In Jerusalem, there was also a pool next to the city gate called Sheep Gate where people entered the city with their sheep. A pool is a large water container where people can bathe or swim. People at the time called this pool Bethesda. This was an Aramaic word. Aramaic was the name of the language that Jews like Jesus spoke during that time. People washed their sheep at the pool before they brought them into the city through the Sheep Gate. This pool was also surrounded by five colonnades. These are open spaces that had roofs that were supported by pillars or poles. Colonnades were also called porticoes or porches.

Stop here, and as a group, look at a picture of the pool of Bethesda that also shows the Sheep Gate and the five colonnades. Pause this audio here.

Many invalids, or sick people, stayed in these colonnades. Some of them were blind, lame, and paralyzed. These people were in the colonnades near the pool because they wanted to be well. They believed that if the waters moved like a person was stirring the pool even when there was no person in it, it means that an angel must have touched the pool. When they saw the water move like this, the people thought that the pool could heal the sick people who would get into the pool first.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is a place in your culture where sick people go because they believe that the place has the power to heal them? Pause this audio here.

Among these sick people who wanted to be well was a man who had been invalid for thirty-eight years. During that time, most people did not live beyond thirty years old. This means that this man had been sick longer than most people lived. In the story, it appears that he was lame. Jesus saw the man, and even though nobody told him, he knew that he had been sick for a very long time. This shows that Jesus knows each person very well. At this point, Jesus and the man would have a short conversation. Jesus asked the man if the man wanted to be healed. The man answered Jesus and said that there was no person that was helping him get into the water when it moved. When he tried to get into the pool by himself, another sick person would go there ahead of him. The man does not know who Jesus is, so he was still thinking about getting healed in the pool. The man is not thinking that Jesus could possibly heal him. Then, Jesus told him to get up, take his mat, and walk. A mat was a thin object that was about the length of a person. People who were poor, sick, and had no homes slept on mats like this. After Jesus spoke to the man, immediately, the man became well. To show that the man was completely well right away, he took his mat and walked. This shows that Jesus is really God who has the power to heal.

Stop here, and as a group, look at a picture of a mat with a person lying on it. Pause this audio here.

This happened on a Sabbath. The Sabbath was a special day for the Jews. During Sabbath, Jews were supposed to stop working and rest. There were no clear laws about how to properly observe the Sabbath, but many Jews believed at that time that people broke the rules of the Sabbath when they picked up their mats. Some of the Jews saw the man doing this during the Sabbath. The Jews here most likely referred to the Jewish leaders. They are Jews who are the leaders of the Jewish religion. When they saw the man pick up his mat, they told him that he was violating the Sabbath law because he picked up his mat and walked. But the man said that the man who had healed him told him to pick up his mat and walk. When the Jewish leaders asked who it was that told him, the man could not answer because he did not know that it was Jesus who had healed him. He could not ask Jesus also because Jesus had left already and there were too many people in that place.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Is there a special day or tradition that people in your culture consider sacred and must be observed at all costs? How do people in your culture react when they see a person violating this? Pause this audio here.

Sometime later, Jesus found the man in the temple and told him not to sin anymore. The temple was the place where the Jews brought their sacrifices to worship God. Jesus warned him that if he were to continue sinning, he might suffer more than just illness. Jesus may be talking about the eternal punishment that God will give him if he keeps on sinning. Then, the man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had healed him.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 5:1-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: John describes the Pool of Bethesda.

In the second scene: Jesus heals the man who had been invalid for thirty-eight years.

In the third scene: The Jews rebuke the man for picking up his mat and walking on the Sabbath.

In the fourth scene: Jesus meets the man again and warns him to stop sinning. The man also tells the Jews that it was Jesus who healed him.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Many sick people
- The lame man who could not walk
- The Jew or the Jewish leaders

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The way the story began shows that this story follows the previous story. Be sure to show this connection as both stories show Jesus' healing activity.

In scene one, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Jerusalem was a city that was on a hill. People that went to Jerusalem had to go up. At that time there was a Jewish feast in Jerusalem. So, there were a lot of people singing, dancing, and even having meals. In Jerusalem, be sure to show the pool called Bethesda, the Sheep Gate, and the five colonnades, or covered porches that surrounded the pool. The colonnades are filled with people with different illnesses.

In scene two, the man who had been lame for thirty-eight years should be portrayed as suffering and is positioned at the center where people could see him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do invalid people in your culture look? Pause this audio here.

Jesus will notice this man. Be sure to show that Jesus knew that the man had been invalid for a long time. Then, Jesus and the man will talk. Jesus will ask the man if he wants to be well. In explaining his situation, the invalid may point to the pool where he wanted to go. The conversation will end with Jesus' command to the man to get up, take up his mat, and walk. This immediately heals the man. The word immediately shows that the healing happened right away as soon as Jesus commanded him. It is important to show that the man became well completely and immediately. Then, the man will take up his mat and walk.

In scene three, the Jewish leaders would react to the man after he got up and picked up his mat. They told the man that it was Sabbath, and what he did broke the rules of the Sabbath. The man would tell them that the man who had healed him told him to take up his mat and walk. The Jewish leaders would ask who told the man to do that. In this conversation between the man and the Jewish leaders, it is important to show that both the man and the Jewish leaders repeated the same words that Jesus told the man. The man would try to look around to find Jesus but would not find him because there were too many people around.

In scene four, after some time, Jesus will find the man in the temple. In Jesus' speech, he used a word that was often used to call the attention of the listener so that the listener will pay close attention to what he will say.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When people in your culture talk to each other, what word or words do they use when they want to make sure that the other person will listen carefully? Pause this audio here.

So, Jesus calls the attention of the man who had been healed to tell him that he is completely well-he won't get sick like this again. After this, Jesus would warn him. The scene ends with the man telling the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who healed him.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 5:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Many sick people
- The lame man who could not walk
- The Jewish leaders

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus goes up to Jerusalem. He goes to the five colonnades that surround the pool called Bethesda, and there he sees the many invalid people.

Pause the drama.

In scene two, Jesus and the invalid man for thirty-eight years would talk.

Pause the drama.

You may also ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "This man has suffered for too long," or "If I heal this man who has been suffering for the longest time, it will show that I am God and there is no illness that I cannot cure." [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene three, the Jewish leaders will rebuke the man for taking up his mat and walking on the Sabbath.

Pause the drama.

You may also ask the person playing the man, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I wonder who that man was that healed me," or "I wish I could see him again so I can thank him." [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene four, Jesus and the man will meet again in the temple.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 5:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

After the previous story, Jesus went up to **Jerusalem**. Jerusalem was the most sacred place for the Jews because the temple was in it. Jews went to the temple regularly to offer their sacrifices and to celebrate their feasts. The leaders of the Jewish religion were also in Jerusalem. Translate Jerusalem the same way you have translated this before. For more information on Jerusalem refer to the Master Glossary.

In Jerusalem where Jesus was, there was a **feast**. A feast is a celebration to honor an important person or event. This typically involved singing, dancing, and families eating large meals together. The word feast is sometimes called festival. Translate the word feast the same way you have translated this before. The Jews had several feasts, but the exact feast that was happening this time is unclear. But this explains why there were many people in Jerusalem at that time.

In Jerusalem, there was also a **pool** that people called in the **Aramaic** language, **Bethesda**. This pool is located near the **Sheep Gate**. A pool is a large water container where people can bathe or swim. Aramaic was the common language that Jews spoke during that time. Sheep Gate is a gate where people enter with their sheep after they have cleaned their sheep at the pool. The pool also had five **colonnades**. These are open spaces that had roofs that were supported by pillars or poles. Colonnades were also called porticoes or porches.

Stop here, and as a group, look at a picture of the pool of Bethesda that also shows the Sheep Gate and the five colonnades.

Discuss also as a group what word or phrase you will use for pool, Aramaic, Sheep Gate, and colonnades. Pause this audio here.

In the colonnades, there were many **invalid** people. Invalid people are people that suffered from illnesses that prevented them from performing tasks that most people could do normally. They were also often weak, so they needed other people to take care of them. The kinds of invalid people that were in the colonnades were blind, lame, and paralyzed people.

Discuss also as a group what word or phrase you will use for invalid. Pause this audio here.

One invalid stood out because he had been invalid for thirty-eight years. Jesus saw him and knew that he had been suffering for a very long time. So, Jesus asked if he wanted to be healed. The man answered and explained his situation, and then Jesus told him to get up, take up his mat, and walk. Then, the man took up his mat and walked. This happened on a **Sabbath**. The Sabbath was a special day for the Jews. In the Old Testament, God instructed the Israelites to observe the Sabbath by resting on the seventh day of the week. Translate the word Sabbath the same way you have translated this before. For more information on Sabbath refer to the Master Glossary.

There were no clear laws about how to properly observe the Sabbath, but many Jews in the New Testament believed that people violated the Sabbath when they picked up their mats. So when the **Jews** saw the man pick up his mat and walk, they rebuked him, and asked him why he was violating the Sabbath. "The Jews" here most likely referred to the Jewish leaders, or leaders of the Jewish religion. Translate the word Jews the same way you have translated this word before. For more information about the Jews, you may refer to the Master Glossary.

Later, Jesus found the man in the temple. The **temple** was the place where the Jews brought their sacrifices to worship God. Translate the word temple the same way you have translated this word before. For more information about the temple, you may refer to the Master Glossary. Jesus commanded the man to stop **sinning** or something worse may happen to him. Translate the word for sin the same way you have translated this word before. For more information about sin, you may refer to the Master Glossary. After this, the man told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who healed him.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 5:1–15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3390592 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 5:16–23

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 5:16–23 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 5:16–23 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?

3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 5:16–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous story was about the healing of a man who was invalid for thirty-eight years. After Jesus healed him, he took his mat and walked. It was the Sabbath when Jesus healed him. The present story is about Jesus' authority that is equal with God.

The story begins by explaining why the Jews are persecuting Jesus. Persecution happens when a person treats another person badly for his beliefs. Like the previous story, "the Jews" here most likely referred to the Jewish leaders or the leaders of the Jewish religion. In this case, the Jews were treating Jesus wrongly, perhaps by shaming him and calling him a lawbreaker. They were persecuting Jesus because Jesus was doing things like healing on the Sabbath. The Sabbath was a special day for the Jews. During Sabbath, Jews were not supposed to work. Rather, they should be resting for the whole day. The Jewish leaders were upset with Jesus' behavior because, in their view, Jesus was breaking the rules of one of the most sacred days in their religion.

Jesus defends himself. He says that the reason he was doing things like healing on the Sabbath is because his Father is always working, even on the Sabbath. The Father refers to God who is the Creator of all things. However, the Jewish leaders became more upset with Jesus because he was calling God his Father. The Jews were used to calling God their father. But when Jesus called God his Father, the Jewish leaders recognized that Jesus was claiming a more special relationship with God. They knew that Jesus was saying that he has authority that is equal with God. For the Jewish leaders, Jesus' words dishonor God. So, they began seeking to kill Jesus.

Jesus tells the Jewish leaders about the authority of the Son. "The Son" is a short way of saying "Son of God," and this is a title that refers to Jesus. So when Jesus speaks of the Son, he is actually referring to himself. Jesus begins his speech by saying words that call the attention of the listeners because he is about to say something important and true.

Jesus said that he, the Son, does not do anything on his own. He only does what he sees from God, the Father. If the Father is working on the Sabbath, Jesus the Son also works on the Sabbath. The Father loves the Son and he shows the Son all the things he is doing. In fact, the Father will show greater things to the Son, greater than healing illnesses on the Sabbath, so that the Jews will see the power of the Son. Jesus explains what this means. Just as the Father gives life to dead people so they become alive again, the Son also gives life to people as he wishes. Jesus adds that the Father does not judge anyone. This means that the Father does not decide or declare whether a person is worthy of life after death or not. Rather, he gave this decision to the Son so that people will honor the Son, just as they honor the Father.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When a person with great status and authority, maybe a leader or father, gives authority to another person to do a very important task, what does he do so that people will know that the person now has a special status and authority? Pause this audio here.

If people do not honor the Son, then they do not honor the Father as well. So, the Son has the power and the authority to give life to anyone he wishes.

This story, therefore, shows that Jesus is equal with God the Father. But for the Jews or the Jewish leaders this claim of Jesus is blasphemy. This is why they began persecuting Jesus and seeking ways to kill him. The story also shows that Jesus is God's appointed Judge. The Jews knew that God was the judge of all people. It would have been very surprising to them that Jesus was the judge, and not God the Father.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 5:16–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: The Jews persecute Jesus and try to kill him because Jesus does things on the Sabbath, and Jesus is calling God, his Father.

In the second scene: Jesus explains his authority for doing these things even on the Sabbath. Jesus will claim that he is only doing what the Father is doing, and the Father has given him authority to decide who is worthy to receive life and who is not.

The characters in this passage are:

- The Jews or the Jewish leaders
- Jesus the Son
- God the Father

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is not clear where the story takes place. Perhaps Jesus was still talking to the Jews or the Jewish leaders after they opposed him for healing on the Sabbath. But the focus of the story is on the words of Jesus. So, it will be important to understand and use Jesus' words clearly as you act out the story.

In scene one, the Jewish leaders will persecute Jesus. You could portray them as angry or upset. They will treat Jesus badly, perhaps by shaming him or calling him a lawbreaker. They will do this because Jesus was healing people even on the Sabbath. But Jesus will defend himself and say that his Father is working even on the Sabbath, that is why he is also working. Be sure to show that the Father is doing something here, perhaps healing a sick person. But the Jewish leaders will be upset with Jesus because they knew that Jesus was claiming that he is equal with God. So they will try to kill him.

In scene two, Jesus will respond to the Jewish leaders. His speech will start using an expression that calls the attention of the listeners because what he is about to say is true and important.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When people in your culture talk to each other, what word or words do they use when they want to make sure that the other person will listen carefully? Pause this audio here.

Jesus will explain the source of his authority to do things on the Sabbath. Here, he will refer to himself as the Son. When he says that the Son is only doing what the Father shows him, be sure to show that the Father is doing something and is showing it to the Son. Then the Son will do as the Father is doing. Jesus also says that the Father loves the Son. The Father also gives life to dead people and will give the same power to the Son. Be sure to show that the Father does not decide who is worthy of life or not. He has given the Son the power to decide who is worthy of life or not. The Father did all this to the Son so that people will honor the Son as they honor the Father. People who do not honor the Son, also dishonor the Father.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 5:16–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- The Jewish Leaders
- Jesus the Son
- God the Father

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, the Jewish leaders will persecute Jesus and will try to kill him. This is because Jesus said that his Father is working so he is working too. Jesus is claiming to have authority that is equal with God.

Pause the drama.

In scene two, Jesus will explain his authority that is from God the Father.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 5:16–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

In this story, the **Jews**, or the **Jewish leaders**, were persecuting Jesus. Translate the word Jews the same way you have translated this word before. For more information about the Jews, you may refer to the Master Glossary. They were persecuting Jesus because he was doing things like healing on the **Sabbath**. The Sabbath was a special day for the Jews. In the Old Testament, God instructed the Israelites to observe the Sabbath by resting on the seventh day of the week. Translate this word the same way you have translated this before. For more information on Sabbath refer to the Master Glossary.

There were no clear laws about how to properly observe the Sabbath, but many Jews in the New Testament believed that people violated the Sabbath when they did certain things. For the Jewish leaders, healing the sick was a kind of work that violated the Sabbath. This is why they **persecuted** Jesus. Persecution happens when a person treats another person badly for his beliefs.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **persecute**. For more information about persecution, you may refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.*

But Jesus said that he is doing that only because his Father is always working. The **Father** refers to God who is the Creator of all things. Jesus calls God his Father because he is the Son of God. But the Jewish leaders were not happy with Jesus because he was claiming that he is equal with God when he called God the Father. So they tried to kill him. Translate this word the same way you have translated this before.

Jesus responds to the Jews. Here Jesus referred to himself as the **Son** because he is the Son of God. Translate Son of God the same way you have translated this before. The Father **judges** no one. **Judging** is when a person or a group of people decides whether a person is good or bad or if a thing or action is right or wrong. Usually, the people who judge are people who are appointed as judges.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 5:16–23

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2508806 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 5:24-30

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 5:24-30 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 5:24-30 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 5:24-30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous story is about the authority of Jesus that is equal with God the Father. Jesus is speaking and he refers to himself as the Son, which is a short way of saying Son of God. Jesus said that the Father gave the Son the authority to work even on the Sabbath. The Father also gave Jesus the Son the authority to give life to the people that he wants to receive life. In the present story, Jesus continues speaking. Jesus says more about his authority to give life and judge people.

Jesus begins his speech using words that call the attention of the listeners because he is about to say something important and true. He said that people who listen and believe in the one who sent him have eternal life. The one who sent Jesus is God the Father. Believing in God the Father means believing and trusting that everything Jesus teaches is true. This means that any person who believes in him will receive eternal life or a life that will never end. Even if he dies, he will live again and never die anymore. Jesus will no longer judge if the person is worthy of eternal life because he is already worthy of eternal life when the person believes in him. This person does not come into judgment anymore. This means that he is no longer evil in God's eyes, and God will no longer punish him. From being dead, or being worthy of punishment, now he is worthy to live again. Jesus has given him eternal life to live with God forever.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture imagine or talk about eternal life, or a life that never ends? Pause this audio here.

Then again, Jesus used the same words that call the attention of the listeners because he is about to say something important and true. Jesus said that an hour or a time is coming and has now begun when the people who have died will hear the voice of Jesus, the Son of God. "Those who have died" may also be referring to the people who are spiritually dead, or people who have not believed in Jesus. The title Son of God is a title for individuals who had a special relationship with God. In the New Testament, this title refers to Jesus because of his special relationship with God the Father. Jesus explains that the Father is the source of all life. When God the Father created human beings, he gave them life. Jesus, the Son of God, is also the source of life. When people die, Jesus can give them life so they will live again.

The Son's power to give life has to do with his role as the judge. The Father has given Jesus the Son the power to give life because he has appointed the Son as judge of all people. When a person judges, he determines who is good and who is evil. Jesus said here that the Father has given him the authority to judge among the dead because he is the Son of Man. The Son of Man is a title that refers to Jesus. In the Old Testament, the Jews believed that when the time comes for God to judge all people, God will send a person that is like a Son of Man. This means that he appears as a human being, but his authority and power are from God. This person that is called Son of Man will be the judge of all people. Jesus is saying that the Son of Man that the Old Testament is speaking about is actually him-Jesus is the Son of Man. In this story, Jesus is saying that God the Father has

given him the authority to judge all people because he is the Son of Man. Jesus adds that they should not be surprised at what he is saying. A time is coming when all who are in the tombs, or those who have died, will hear his voice. When they hear his voice, they will come out from where they are buried, and they will be alive again. When a person dies and lives again, that is called resurrection.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What word or words do people in your culture use to describe a person who was dead, but has come back to life? Pause this audio here.

Jesus is saying that he will resurrect the people who have done good to a resurrection of life. These people will live and be with God and never die again. At the same time, he will also resurrect the people who have done evil to a resurrection of judgment. They will live again, but only to face God's judgment or the punishment for their evil. Here, the people who have done good are the people that believed in everything Jesus said, and the people who have done evil are the people that did not believe in Jesus' words.

When Jesus judges all people, he is not doing it by himself or for himself. Jesus said in the previous stories that he only does what he sees the Father doing. In the same way, Jesus only judges based on what God tells him. Everything that Jesus decides in his judgment is fair. This means that when Jesus judges, people always receive what they truly deserve. Jesus' judgment is fair because he is not judging to seek his own will or to accomplish his own purposes. Rather, he makes his judgment to accomplish the will of the one who sent him. The one who sent him is God the Father.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 5:24–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus says that those who hear or believe in the one that sent him will have eternal life.

In the second scene: Jesus refers to himself as the Son of God. He says that the time has come for those who have died to hear the Son of God who will give them life.

In the third scene: Jesus refers to himself as the Son of Man. He says that the Father gave him the authority to judge among the dead. Then he will resurrect the dead people based on whether they have done good or evil.

In the fourth scene: Jesus explains his judgment about who will receive life and who will not is always fair.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus the Son of God and the Son of Man
- The Jews, or the Jewish leaders
- God the Father
- The people who believe in Jesus, those who have done good
- The people who did not believe in Jesus, those who have done evil

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is not clear where the story takes place. Perhaps Jesus was still talking to the Jews or the Jewish leaders after they opposed him for healing on the Sabbath. But the focus of the story is on the words of Jesus. So, it will be important to understand and use the words of Jesus clearly as you act out the story.

In scene one, Jesus will start his speech using an expression that calls the attention of the listeners because what he is about to say is true and important.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for this expression. Remember to translate this expression the way you have translated this before. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that those who hear his words and believe in the one that sent him have eternal life. The one that sent Jesus was God the Father, and believing in the Father means believing in Jesus. In the previous and in the present story, Jesus is the giver of life. Be sure to show that some people will hear and believe Jesus, and Jesus will give them eternal life, or a life that never ends. Before, the person who does not believe in Jesus is worthy of punishment. Now a person who believes in Jesus is worthy to receive eternal life. Jesus will no longer punish him. Jesus said that the person who believes in him will be like a person who is going from a place of death to a place of life. Be sure to show how this change happens when a person believes in Jesus.

In scene two, Jesus will again start his speech using an expression that calls the attention of the listeners because what he is about to say is true and important. Then Jesus says that an hour, or a time, is coming and has now come. Those who have died will hear the voice of the Son of God, or the voice of Jesus. When they hear his voice, they will live. Since Jesus has come to earth, those who are spiritually dead can be alive again. Meaning, they will have a renewed relationship with God. This also means that when they die, they will rise from where they are buried. Jesus will make them alive again. Jesus can do this because the Father who is the source of life gave Jesus the power to give life to others as well, even to those who have died.

In scene three, the Father will also give authority to Jesus to judge among the dead people. The Father will do this because Jesus is the Son of Man, or the appointed judge of all people. This means that Jesus has the authority to decide who will receive life or punishment. The power of Jesus to judge among the dead people should not surprise the Jews. Jesus said that an hour or a time is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice. This time that is coming talks about the end of time when God will finally accomplish everything he has planned for the world. When this happens, the dead people will hear the voice of Jesus like in scene two. Then, they will rise and come out from where they are buried because Jesus will resurrect, or give life, to them again. But Jesus will divide them into two groups. Jesus will give life to those who have done good, or those who believed in him. Then they will live again and be with God forever. Then, Jesus will also give life to those who have done evil, or those that did not believe in him. Then God will punish them.

In scene four, Jesus explains that he is not judging people based on his own. Rather, he judges based on what God tells him. This is why Jesus' judgment is fair—people will get what they deserve. Because this is what the Father who sent Jesus wants. And Jesus is judging to accomplish what the Father wants, not his own.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 5:24–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus the Son of God and the Son of Man
- The Jews, or the Jewish leaders
- God the Father
- The people who believe in Jesus, those who have done good
- The people who did not believe in Jesus, those who have done evil

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus says that those who hear or believe in the one who sent him will have eternal life.

Pause the drama.

In scene two, Jesus refers to himself as the Son of God. He says that the time has come for those who have died to hear the Son of God who will give them life.

Pause the drama.

In scene three, Jesus refers to himself as the Son of Man. He says that the Father gave him the authority to judge among the dead. Then he will resurrect the dead people based on whether they have done good or evil.

Pause the drama.

You may also ask the people playing the evil people who did not believe in Jesus and have died, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "This is terrible! We heard his voice, then Jesus resurrected us. But he is punishing us because we did not believe in him!" [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene four, Jesus explains that his judgment about who will receive life and who will not is always fair. Then he will resurrect the dead people based on whether they have done good or evil.

Pause the drama.

Ask also the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "Many people will not be happy with how I judge. But this is the will of my Father who sent me. I judge as he tells me to judge."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 5:24–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The story is about Jesus' authority to give life and to judge people. It begins with the speech of Jesus that calls the attention of the listeners because he is about to say something important and true. Translate this expression the same way you have translated this expression before.

Jesus said that anyone who hears him and believes him who sent Jesus has **eternal life**. Eternal life means living with God forever. Jesus is saying that anyone who trusts God the Father who sent Jesus will live again. He will no longer die but will live forever with God. Translate eternal life the same way you have translated this before. For more information on eternal life, refer to the Master Glossary.

Because the previous story showed that Jesus and the Father are equal in authority and in power, trusting God means trusting Jesus and believing in him. Jesus says that anyone who does this does not come into **judgment**. This is another way of saying that Jesus will no longer punish him. A person who believes in God the Father and Jesus the Son of God has passed from death to life. Before, he deserved punishment. Now he deserves life, and Jesus has given him life to be with God forever. Translate judgment the same way you have translated this before. For more information on judgment, refer to the Master Glossary.

Then again, Jesus begins his next speech that calls the attention of the listeners because he is about to say something important and true. When Jesus said that an hour is coming and has now come, he is saying that God appointed a time for an important event and that time has now come. In this story, this refers to the time when the dead or those who have died will hear the voice of the **Son of God**. The title "Son of God" is a title for individuals who had a special relationship with God. In the New Testament, this title refers to Jesus because of his special relationship with God the Father. Translate Son of God the same way you have translated this before. For more information on Son of God, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Father gave the Son the power to give life to others so the **Son of Man** can judge among the dead. Jesus is the Son of Man. This means that Jesus is God's appointed judge of all people. Translate the word Son of Man the same way you have translated this before. For more information on Son of Man refer to the Master Glossary.

Again, Jesus said that the time will come when those in the tombs, or people who have died, will hear his voice. Jesus will **resurrect** the dead people. This means that Jesus will make alive again those who have died. Jesus will resurrect those who have done good, or those who believed in him. They will live again, and they will be with God forever. Jesus will also resurrect those who have done evil, or those who did not believe in Jesus. They will live again to suffer the punishment of God for rejecting Jesus his Son.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **resurrection**. Look up resurrection in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 5:24-30

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3371039 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5640882 KB)

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John 5:31-47

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 5:31-47 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 5:31-47 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 5:31-47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous stories, Jesus has been defending his actions against the Jews or the Jewish leaders. The Jews began persecuting Jesus after he healed a person on the Sabbath. Jesus explained and said that he was the Son of God, which means that he has authority equal to God the Father. Like God the Father, Jesus has the authority to work on the Sabbath. Because he is also the Son of Man, he also has the authority to give life and to judge among the people. The present story is about the witnesses to the authority of Jesus.

The story begins with Jesus still speaking and defending his actions. Jesus said that if he were to bear witness or testify about himself, then people will not accept it as true. The word witness or testify is a language that is often used in court trials. A witness is a person who knows something about the case in the court trial. Either he knows something that will prove a person guilty, or something that will prove that the person is innocent. When he shares what he knows in a court trial, he is witnessing or testifying, and the statement that he gives is called a testimony. Jesus is using this language because when the Jews accused him of breaking the Sabbath law, it is like Jesus has been in a court trial, defending himself. He has been showing that he is not guilty of breaking the Sabbath law. Here, Jesus is saying that if he were to bear witness or testify about himself, then people will not accept it as true. This is because according to the Old Testament or the Jewish law, there must be at least two witnesses to prove whether a person is guilty or innocent. Jesus alone cannot prove his authority, and that is why people will not accept his testimony. But Jesus said that there is another witness who can testify about his authority, and his testimony is true. This means that his testimony will help prove Jesus' claims of authority. Jesus does not name this other witness but based on the previous and in the present story, Jesus is referring to God the Father. Jesus will then mention other witnesses to his authority.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about these people who give statements in a court trial. What do people in your culture call a person who may help the judge decide who is guilty or innocent in a court trial?

What kinds of people give these statements? What do you call their statements in a court trial? How do you know what they say is true? Pause this audio here.

Jesus said that the Jewish leaders sent some of their men to John, and John testified to the truth about Jesus. Jesus clarifies that he does not need any testimony from any man. But he mentions John's testimony anyway because it is true, and it may help them know the truth about Jesus and his message. When they know the truth and believe it, Jesus will save them from death and give them eternal life. Jesus continues and says that John was a burning and shining lamp. A lamp was an object that people used as a light so that they could see in the dark. The lamp itself could not provide light until oil and fire were put in it. In the same way, John was not the light. It is Jesus who is the light. Rather, John was like a lamp that provided light in the dark because he testified about Jesus to people that needed him but did not know him. For a short time, the people were happy to hear John's testimony because it gave them hope for God's savior. John's testimony lasted only for a while because John's role as a witness to Jesus ended when Jesus finally came.

Stop here and look at a picture of a lamp as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus said that he has a testimony that is greater or more important than the testimony of John. Here Jesus is referring to the works that God the Father told him to do. These works are the activities and the miracles that Jesus has been doing. This included the miracle when Jesus healed a man who was sick for thirty-eight years. These works are serving as testimonies that prove Jesus' authority.

In addition, God the Father who sent Jesus also testifies to the authority of Jesus. But because the Jews do not believe in Jesus, the Jews have failed to know the Father. And so, they also find it hard to obey his words. The Jews believed that the Scriptures or the Old Testament give them information on how to receive eternal life. So, they do their best to study the Scriptures. Yet, Jesus said the Jews do not come to him or believe in his teachings. The Jews failed to realize that the Scriptures they kept studying also testify and prove Jesus' authority.

Jesus immediately clarifies that he is not doing or saying all these things so that humans will give him honor. Jesus is not like the Jews or the Jewish leaders. Jesus said that he knows that these Jews do not love God. Moreover, they are people who like to receive honor for themselves. They go around saying that they are speaking for God, even when God did not send them. And when they do this, they welcome one another, they honor one another, and they believe one another. Yet they do not welcome nor believe Jesus who came in the name and authority of God the Father. So, Jesus asks them a question to make a point, "How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?" Jesus means that the Jews do not believe in him because it is important for the Jews to receive honor from people, rather than honor from God.

Then Jesus said that he will not accuse the Jews before God and tell God that they are wrong. There is someone else who will accuse them when the time of judgment comes. The one who accuses them or the one telling God that they are wrong is Moses. When Jesus mentioned Moses, he was not talking about Moses, the person in the Old Testament. Rather, he is talking about the Law of Moses. God gave this Law to the Jews and it was Moses that wrote these Laws. The Jews thought that they were correctly studying and obeying the Law of Moses, and they put their hope in it. This means that they were hoping that God will reward them with eternal life when they study the Law of Moses. But for Jesus, they failed to correctly understand the Law of Moses. Because if they truly understood and believed the Law of Moses, they would believe in Jesus too. This is because Moses wrote about Jesus. This is another way of saying that the Law of Moses is teaching the Jews to believe in Jesus. The Law of Moses taught the Jews and their ancestors how they could live their lives in a way that pleased God. The Old Testament story, however, showed that the ancestors of the Jews failed to obey the Law of Moses. They always sinned and disobeyed God. When Jesus came into the world, he did not only reveal God the Father. He also showed how to obey the Law of Moses correctly. He showed how to live a life that pleases God. If the Jews want to please God and obey the Law of Moses, they should look to Jesus, listen to his words, and learn from his life. In other words, the Jews should realize through the Law of Moses that they need to believe in Jesus to please God. This is the only way that God would reward them with eternal life just as they were hoping. But because they failed to obey the Law of Moses by believing in Jesus, God will judge them. Then Jesus asks another question to make a point: "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?" Because they failed to truly believe in the Law of Moses, they cannot believe in the teachings of Jesus.

This story ends the long story that started when Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath. In this long story, Jesus defends himself by saying that he is the Son of God. This means that he has authority equal to God the Father. He also says that he is the Son of Man who is God's appointed judge of all people. This means that he has the power and authority to give life to people who have died if they believed in him, or he can punish people if they did not believe in him. In this last part of the story, Jesus says that there are several witnesses that will prove what he is saying. These witnesses to his authority are God the Father and the works that God told Jesus to do, and then there is John, and the Scriptures or the Law of Moses.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 5:31-47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus says that people will not believe him if he testified about himself. He also says that there is another person who testifies for him. This is God the Father.

In the second scene: Jesus tells the people that John also testified about him, and John's testimony is true. But Jesus says that the works that he is doing serve as greater witnesses than John's testimony.

In the third scene: Jesus explains that the Father also testifies for him. But the Jews do not know the Father because they do not believe in Jesus.

In the fourth scene: Jesus says that he is not like the Jews. The Jews want to receive honor from people rather than God. He says that he knows that the Jews do not love God, so Jesus rebukes them.

In the fifth scene: Jesus says that the Jews have got it wrong. They study the Scriptures thinking that Moses or the Law of Moses will save them and give them eternal life. Jesus says if they truly understand the Scripture they will believe in Jesus.

The characters in this passage are:

- God the Father
- Jesus the Son of God and the Son of Man
- The Jews or the Jewish leaders
- The men that the Jews or the Jewish leaders sent to John
- John

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is not clear where the story takes place. Perhaps Jesus was still talking to the Jews or the Jewish leaders after they opposed him for healing on the Sabbath. But the focus of the story is on the words of Jesus. So, it will be important to understand and use Jesus' words clearly as you act out the story.

In scene one, Jesus is speaking to the Jews, and he is showing that people will not believe him if he testified about himself. Jesus says another person is testifying for him, and his testimony is true. Jesus is referring to God the Father, but Jesus did not mention the Father.

In scene two, Jesus reminds the Jews that they sent their men to ask John before. John testified about the savior that God would send, and his testimony is true. It is important to show that John's testimony about Jesus continues to be true. John was like a burning and shining lamp. When Jesus said this, he was only comparing the effect of John's testimony to a burning and shining lamp. What Jesus means is that the Jews were happy when they heard from their men the message of John about the savior who will come. But Jesus says that he has an even greater testimony than John. This greater testimony refers to the activities and miracles of Jesus. Be sure to show that Jesus is showing some miracles and these miracles are convincing more people to believe in Jesus than the testimony of John did.

In scene three, Jesus says that God the Father who sent him also testifies about him. The Father is speaking through Jesus; the Father is working through Jesus, but the Jews do not believe in Jesus. As a result, they fail to see or hear that God was physically present with them, and was speaking to them through Jesus. Because they fail to realize that, they cannot obey God's word.

In scene four, the Jews will study the Scripture or the Law of Moses while rejecting Jesus as he speaks. So, Jesus rebukes them. He says that he is not like them. He also says that he knows that they do not love God. Jesus came to them in the name of God the Father, which means that he came with the authority of God. But they rejected him. Yet, they welcome one another when they claim that God sent them, even though the truth is God did not send them. So, Jesus asks them a question to make a statement, "How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?" He says that they want people to honor them rather than for God to honor them.

In scene five, Jesus says that he will not accuse them before God. Jesus says that God will use the Law of Moses to judge them. They thought that by studying the Law of Moses, God would save them and reward them. But God will not reward them because the Law of Moses teaches that they should believe in Jesus, and yet they did not believe in Jesus. Jesus asks another question saying, "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?" Because they failed to correctly understand and believe the Law of Moses, they will not believe in Jesus.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

This is the end of the script.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 5:31–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God the Father
- Jesus the Son of God and the Son of Man
- The Jews or the Jewish leaders
- The men that the Jews or the Jewish leaders sent to John
- John

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus says that people will not believe him if he testified about himself. He also says that there is another person who testifies for him.

Pause the drama.

In scene two, Jesus tells the people that John also testified about him, and John's testimony is true. But Jesus says that the works that he is doing serve as greater witnesses than John's testimony.

Pause the drama.

In scene three, Jesus explains that the Father also testifies for him. But the Jews do not know the Father because they do not believe in Jesus.

Pause the drama.

You may also ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I'm sad for these people. They want to know God the Father, but they fail to do that because they don't believe in me. They don't keep God's words in their hearts." [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene four, Jesus says that he is not like the Jews. The Jews want to receive honor from people rather than God. He says that he knows that the Jews do not love God, so Jesus rebukes them.

Pause the drama.

In scene five, Jesus says that the Jews have got it wrong. They study the Scriptures thinking that Moses or the Law of Moses will save them and give them eternal life. Jesus says if they truly understand the Scripture they will believe in Jesus.

Pause the drama.

You may also ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "These Jews keep studying the Scriptures, but they cannot understand that the Scriptures are talking about me!" or "I wish these Jews would realize that the Law of Moses teaches them to believe in me."

This is the end of the script.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 5:31–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The story begins with Jesus still speaking and defending his actions. Jesus said that if he were to **bear witness** or **testify** about himself, then people will not accept it as true. The word "witness," or "testify," is a language that is often used in court trials. In court trials, people bring to a judge their complaints against a person, usually because that person broke the law. The person who is said to have broken the law must defend himself to prove that he is not guilty of breaking the law and that he does not deserve punishment. One of the ways that a judge determines who is right and who is wrong is by asking for witnesses. A witness is a person who is not involved in the complaint but knows something about it. Either he knows something that will prove that the person is surely guilty, or he knows something that will prove that the person is innocent. When he shares what he knows in a court trial, he is witnessing, or testifying, and the statement that he gives is called a testimony. Translate this word the same way you have translated this before.

Jesus said that John testified to the **truth**. In the book of John, "the truth" refers to Jesus who is the Son of God that came to save sinners and give them life. Translate this word the same way you have translated this before.

When Jesus was rebuking the Jews, Jesus said that **God's word** does not **remain** in them. "The word" refers to Jesus and his message. Translate word the way you have translated this before. For more information about this, you may refer to the Master Glossary. The word **remain** means listening and obeying Jesus.

Jesus also said that the Jews keep studying the **Scriptures** because they think that God will reward them with **eternal life** if they keep studying it. The Scriptures refer to the Law of Moses that talks about the coming of God's savior who is Jesus. Eternal life means living with God forever. Jesus is saying that anyone who trusts God the Father who sent Jesus will live again. He will no longer die but will live forever with God. Translate Scriptures and eternal life the same way you have translated them before. For more information on scriptures and eternal life, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus also said, unlike the Jews, he is not working to bring **glory** for himself. The word glory refers to the great honor that people give to a person who is great and powerful. Translate glory the same way you have translated them before. For more information on glory, refer to the Master Glossary. The Jews, however, do not have the **love** of God within them. The word love refers to the great care that a person shows to another person. In the Gospel of John, this word often refers to the love that Jesus shows to his disciples. This is also the kind of love that Jesus expects from his followers. But according to Jesus, the Jews do not have the same kind of love for God. This means that the Jews do not care about God. They only care about themselves, and their own honor.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **love**.*

Jesus said that the Jews placed their hope in **Moses**. Moses was the great Israelite that God appointed to rescue the Israelites from being slaves in Egypt. By this time, Moses had already been dead for a long time. When Jesus mentioned Moses, he is actually referring to the Law of Moses. This **Law of Moses** was the law that God told him to write. This Law served as the guide for all Jews on how they can obey God, and how they can remain hoping for God's savior. This Law is also called **Scriptures** or the **writings**. Translate Moses the same way you have translated it before. For more information on the Law of Moses, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

This is the end of the script.

John 5:31-47

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4122272 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (6921268 KB)

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John 6:1–15

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 6:1–15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 6:1–15 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 6:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous stories, Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath. When Jesus did this, the Jews or the Jewish leaders thought that Jesus broke the Sabbath law. So, they persecuted and tried to kill Jesus. But Jesus defended himself. He said that he is the Son of God and the Son of Man who has the power and authority from God the Father. The witnesses that could prove his claim include God the Father, the miracles that he did, as well as the Law of Moses. In the present story, Jesus does another miracle. He will feed a large number of people with only a very small amount of food.

The story begins sometime after Jesus defended himself against the Jews. Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee is a sea found in the region of Galilee. It is also called the Sea of Tiberias. Tiberius was the name of a Roman emperor. The sea is named after one of the greatest leaders of Rome.

Stop here and look at a picture of the Sea of Galilee as a group. Pause this audio here.

When Jesus went there, a large crowd was following him. They were following Jesus because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. The signs refer to the miracles that convinced people he is the Son of God. The crowd was following Jesus because they wanted to see more of Jesus' miracles. When they arrived on the other side, he went up to a mountain with his disciples. The mountain may have been a small mountain, perhaps a hill where people could go in a short amount of time. There, they sat down.

Stop here and look at a picture of a hill as a group. Pause this audio here.

It was almost time for the celebration of the Jewish feast called Passover. Passover was one of the festivals that the Jewish people celebrated. During the Passover the Jews remember the story of how God gave power to Moses to deliver the ancient Israelites from being slaves in Egypt. Passover is an important information here. When Jews celebrate the Passover, they pray most strongly for a prophet and savior like Moses who would rescue them from Rome. In this story and in the next stories, Jesus will show that he is the savior like Moses that the people are waiting for.

When Jesus lifted his eyes, or when he saw that a large crowd was following him, Jesus talked to his disciple, Philip. Jesus asked Philip where they could buy bread so that the crowd that followed Jesus may eat. Here, Jesus was not really asking how they could feed the people. Jesus already knew what to do so that the people may eat. But Jesus asked Philip what to do in order to test Philip. He wanted to see if Philip would trust that Jesus could feed the people even though they are so many.

Philip said to Jesus that two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough to feed all of the people. Bread was the common food that people ate every day during that time. A denarius was a silver coin. Most people that worked during that time would receive a denarius a day for their work. Two hundred denarii would be the amount that a working person would earn if he worked for six months. Philip was saying that even if a person bought bread using the money he had earned from working for six months, the bread would not be enough for all the people. Even if they divide the bread into small pieces, not everyone would get a piece because there were so many of them.

Stop here and look at a picture of a denarius as a group. Pause this audio here.

Another one of Jesus' disciples whose name was Andrew came to Jesus. Andrew was the brother of Simon Peter. We don't know who is the older brother and the younger brother between Andrew and Peter. What is clear is that they are brothers. Andrew said to Jesus that there is a young boy who has five barley loaves and two fish. The age of the boy is not clear, but the word here suggests that the boy's age is below thirty years old and he is not an adult male yet. Then Andrew asked Jesus a question: "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" Andrew is saying that the loaves and fishes are not enough to feed all the people. Loaves were small breads. Barley was the grain used to make bread if people could not afford wheat. People who were poor commonly ate barley loaves. The fish may have been cooked already.

Stop here and look at a picture of barley loaves and cooked fish as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus told his disciples to have the people sit down. There was a lot of grass in that place. Grass was a small plant that usually grows just high enough to cover the ground. This made the ground comfortable for people to sit on.

Stop here and look at a picture of a grassy slope as a group. Pause this audio here.

The people sat down as the disciples told them. There were about five thousand men who were there. We don't know how many women and children were there.

Jesus took the loaves from the young boy. Then he thanked God the Father for giving them the loaves to eat. Then, he distributed them to the people who were sitting. He also gave them fish as much as the people wanted. After the people finished eating and were satisfied, Jesus asked his disciples to gather the leftover food so that nothing was wasted. The leftover food refers to the food that the people could no longer eat because they were already full. So, the disciples gather all the leftover food. They were able to fill twelve baskets full of leftover pieces from the five barley loaves. Baskets were containers made from plants that were woven together. It is not clear where the disciples got the baskets, and how big the baskets were. But they may have been big baskets that could hold large amounts of harvested crops.

Stop here and look at a picture of a basket as a group. Pause this audio here.

The people saw this as another sign that Jesus was from God. So, when they saw this sign, they said with excitement that Jesus is truly the Prophet that God would send according to the Law of Moses. A prophet is a person that God appointed to speak his message to the people.

Jesus realized that the people were about to take him by force to make him their king. The people thought that if Jesus has powers to do miraculous signs, it means he also has powers to fight and defeat the Romans who are ruling over them. For these people Jesus would make a great military leader. Because the people are desperate for a savior, they tried to take Jesus by force so they could make Jesus their king. So, Jesus left them and he went again to the mountain by himself.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 6:1-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus goes to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, or the Sea of Tiberias. Together with his disciples and a large crowd following him, Jesus goes up to a mountain.

In the second scene: Jesus sees the many people that followed him. Jesus asks Philip how they could feed the crowd. Andrew comes to Jesus and says there is a boy who has five loaves of bread and two fish. Both Philip and Andrew say that they do not have enough food to feed the people.

In the third scene: Jesus takes the five loaves and the fish from the boy. He gave thanks to God and distributed the loaves and the fish. The people eat and are satisfied. Then Jesus tells his disciples to gather up the leftover food. The disciples filled twelve baskets with leftover food.

In the fourth scene: When the people saw the sign that Jesus performed by feeding many people using only a small amount of food, they said that Jesus is the Prophet who is to come to the world. Then they try to take Jesus by force to make him king. So Jesus leaves and goes to a mountain again alone.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Philip
- Andrew
- A young boy
- A crowd

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In scene one, it is not clear how much time passed between the previous stories and the present story. But it appears to be sometime after Jesus attended a different Jewish feast in Jerusalem. In this first scene, Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee or the Sea of Tiberias. We don't know exactly from where Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee to get to the other side. Jesus walked to the area of the Sea of Galilee from Jerusalem. At some point after that Jesus crossed over the Sea of Galilee to the other side. A large crowd was following him. Make sure to show that the crowd was following Jesus because they had seen the signs that Jesus did when he healed the sick people, and they want to see more signs from Jesus. When they arrived on the other side of the sea, they went up to the mountain. We don't know which mountain it was, but it must have been a short mountain, perhaps a hill. When they reached the top of the mountain, he and his disciples sat down.

In scene two, Jesus lifts up his eyes. This is another way of saying that Jesus looked around. Then Jesus saw that a large crowd was coming up to where they were. Jesus asks Philip where they could buy bread. It is important to show that Jesus only asked Philip because he is testing Philip, whether Philip will trust Jesus. In truth, Jesus already knew how they would feed the people. Philip will tell Jesus that even if a person bought bread using the money he had earned from working for six months, the bread would not be enough for all the people. Even if they divide the bread into small pieces, not everyone would get a piece because there were so many of them. After this, Andrew comes to Jesus and reports that there is a boy among the crowd that has five barley loaves and two fish, but that is not enough.

In scene three, Jesus tells his disciples to have the people sit down on the grass. The people will sit on the grass. The men alone are about five thousand, but there are also women and children there. We do not know how many women and children are there. Jesus takes the loaves and the fish from the young boy and gives thanks to God the Father for the food. Then, Jesus distributes the loaves and the fish, probably to his disciples and helpers, to give to everyone in the crowd. Be sure to show that everyone in the crowd will receive and eat both the loaves and the fish. After they eat and are satisfied, Jesus tells his disciples to collect all food that was not eaten so nothing is wasted. The disciples filled twelve baskets of leftover food.

In scene four, the people will see and talk among each other about the sign that Jesus did. They are amazed and they are convinced that Jesus is the Prophet that is to come into the world. The Law of Moses is not mentioned, but the people realized that Jesus is the Prophet that God would send according to the Law of Moses. So, they come to Jesus and try to seize him. They want to make Jesus their king. We don't know how he found out, but somehow Jesus realized this. So, he escaped and left them. Then Jesus went again to the mountain by himself. The word mountain here is the same short mountain or hill where Jesus did the miracle. This means Jesus was already on a hill. Jesus going to the mountain again may mean that Jesus went farther up the hill. It may also mean that Jesus went to another hill. What is clear is that Jesus did this to escape from the people who were trying to make him their king. The word "again" means that Jesus went off by himself regularly.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

This is the end of the script.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 6:1-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- Philip
- Andrew
- A young boy
- A crowd

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus goes to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, or the Sea of Tiberias. Together with his disciples and a large crowd following him, Jesus goes up to a mountain.

Pause the drama.

In scene two, Jesus sees the many people that followed him. Jesus asks Philip how they could feed the crowd.

Pause the drama.

You may also ask the person playing Andrew, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "There's a boy here that has five barley loaves and two fish, but that is not enough to feed this many people," or "I wonder what Jesus will do since we don't have enough food for all these people?" [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene three, Jesus takes the five loaves and the fish from the boy. He gave thanks to God and distributed the loaves and the fish. The people eat and are satisfied. Then Jesus tells his disciples to gather up the leftover food. The disciples filled twelve baskets with leftover food.

Pause the drama.

You may also ask the person playing Andrew, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I was wrong. I thought the five loaves and two fish were not enough. But Jesus did a miracle so that everyone will be full and satisfied. Jesus is amazing!" [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene four, when the people saw the sign that Jesus performed by feeding many people using only a small amount of food, they said that Jesus is the Prophet who is to come to the world.

Pause the drama.

This is the end of the script.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 6:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Sometime after Jesus was in Jerusalem, he went to the other side of the **Sea of Galilee**. Galilee was an important place. Many of the activities of Jesus happened around Galilee. The Sea of Galilee is found in the region of Galilee. It is also called the **Sea of Tiberias**. Tiberius was the name of a Roman emperor. The sea is named after one of the greatest leaders of Rome. Translate the word Sea of Galilee the same way you have translated this before. You may also refer to the Master Glossary for more information about the Sea of Galilee.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Tiberias**.*

When Jesus went there, a large crowd was following him. They were following Jesus because they saw the **signs** that he was doing on the sick. The signs refer to the miracles that convinced people he is the Son of God. Translate the word signs the same way you have translated this before. You may also refer to the Master Glossary for miracles, signs, and wonders for more information about signs.

It was almost time for the celebration of the Jewish feast called Passover. **Passover** was one of the festivals that the Jewish people celebrated. It commemorated the story of how God gave power to Moses to deliver the ancient Israelites from being slaves in Egypt. Translate the word Passover the same way you have translated this before. For more information on Passover, consult the Master Glossary.

When Jesus lifted his eyes, or when he saw that a large crowd was following him, Jesus talked to his disciple, Philip. Jesus asked Philip where they could buy bread so that the crowd that followed Jesus may eat. Philip said to Jesus that two hundred **denarii** worth of bread would not be enough to feed all of the people. **Bread** was the common food that people ate every day during that time. A denarius was a silver coin. Most people that worked during that time would receive a denarius a day for their work. Two hundred denarii would be the amount that a working person would earn if he worked for six months.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **bread** and denarii.*

After the people finished eating and were satisfied, Jesus asked his disciples to gather the leftover food so that nothing was wasted. They were able to fill twelve **baskets** full of leftover pieces from the five barley loaves. Baskets were containers made from plants that were woven together. Translate the word baskets the same way you have translated this before. You may also check the Master Glossary for more information on baskets.

When the people saw the sign of Jesus feeding so many people with only a small amount of food, they called Jesus the Prophet. A **prophet** is a person that God appointed to speak his message to people. Translate the word prophet the same way you have translated this word before. For more information on prophet you may refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

This is the end of the script.

John 6:1–15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3621321 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 6:16–21

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 6:16–21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 6:16–21 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus and God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 6:16–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous story, Jesus had just fed five thousand people. Jesus saw that all those people wanted to take him by force and make him their king. So Jesus sent his disciples on a boat across the lake and he went to a nearby mountain to pray.

The disciples go down to the lake, also called the Sea of Galilee, in the evening before it is dark.

Stop here and look at a picture of the Sea of Galilee as a group. Pause this audio here.

The disciples climb into a boat and begin crossing the sea or lake, to Capernaum.

Stop here and look at a map of where the disciples leave from and where Capernaum is as a group. Pause this audio here.

The boat that is mentioned here is a fishing boat. The boat had a square sail and wooden oars and was six to nine meters long. The boat was probably made of oak trees or cedar trees.

Stop here and look at a picture of a boat as a group. Pause this audio here.

It is now dark and the disciples are still crossing the lake, but Jesus has not yet come to them. This means the disciples are alone in the boat. A strong wind begins to blow and causes the lake water to become rough. Big waves make the boat rock back and forth. The disciples have now rowed about five or six kilometers. When people row, they dip the end of the oar into the water and pull. This action forces the boat to move forward. Then the disciples see someone coming to them, but they did not know it was Jesus. Jesus was walking on the surface of the water, but the disciples were terrified. John does not tell us why the disciples were terrified, but the Gospel of Mark tells us the disciples thought they were seeing a ghost.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How would you feel if you saw someone doing something that seemed impossible? Tell a story about something unusual happening. How did people respond to this happening? Pause this audio here.

Jesus said, "It is me. Don't be afraid." The disciples are glad that Jesus is there with them. The disciples want Jesus to come into the boat with them. It is unclear in this story if Jesus did get into the boat, but he probably did. Immediately after the disciples' willingness to help Jesus into the boat, the disciples reach the land they are going towards.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when you were afraid of something you saw. How was that fear calmed? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 6:16–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: The disciples get into the boat and begin rowing across the lake.

In the second scene: Jesus walks out on the water to them.

In the third scene: Jesus climbs into the boat and immediately they arrive at the shore.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Disciples

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that this takes place the evening after Jesus had blessed the loaves and fish and fed the crowd of more than five thousand.

Jesus went away by himself to the mountain to pray. The disciples went down to the boat and rowed across the lake to Capernaum.

Stop here and look at a map of where disciples leave from and where Capernaum is. Pause this audio here.

It was dark and Jesus had not yet joined the disciples. A strong wind was blowing and the water became rough with large waves. The disciples had rowed the boat 5 to 6 kilometers. Keep in mind that the disciples had been rowing a long distance during a strong wind or storm.

The disciples saw a person walking on the water toward them and they did not know that it was Jesus walking on top of the water. Jesus walked up to the boat and the disciples were frightened. John uses strong language to say and to show that Jesus walked to the boat and that the disciples were afraid.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story that has a very exciting and scary moment. Pay attention to how you tell your story. What happens to the volume of your voice and the speed of your voice?

Jesus says to the disciples, "I am the one speaking. You can stop being afraid."

The disciples agreed to let Jesus come onto the boat but they immediately reached the shore that the disciples had been rowing toward.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 6:16–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Disciples

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, it is near the end of the day and the disciples get into a boat to sail across the lake. Jesus has gone to a mountain to pray. The disciples begin to row. When it is dark the disciples are still in the boat in the middle of the lake. A strong wind begins to blow and the sea gets rough. Large waves rock the boat.

Pause the drama.

In scene two, the disciples see Jesus walking toward them on the water.

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells the disciples not to be afraid.

In scene three, Jesus gets into the boat and immediately they arrive at their destination.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 6:16–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **disciples** went down to the lake, also called the **Sea of Galilee**, in the evening before it was dark. A disciple is a student who studies and learns from a teacher. The disciples here refer to 12 men Jesus picked to follow him closely. Refer to the Master Glossary and use the same word as translated previously. The Sea of Galilee is a large lake. Use the same word as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Sea of Galilee, refer to the Master Glossary.

The disciples climbed into a **boat** and began crossing the lake to **Capernaum**. A boat was a vessel about 7 to 9 meters long and used primarily for fishing. Use the same word or phrase for boat as you used in previous passages. For more information on a boat, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a picture of a boat as a group. Pause this audio here.

Capernaum was an important trading town on the Sea of Galilee.

Stop here and look at a map of Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee as a group. Pause this audio here.

For more information on Capernaum, refer to the Master Glossary.

The disciples were still crossing the lake when it was dark, but Jesus had not yet come to them. A strong wind began to blow and caused the sea/water to become rough. Big waves made the boat rock back and forth. The disciples had rowed about three or four miles, five or six kilometers. Then the disciples saw Jesus coming to them. Jesus was walking on the surface of the water, but the disciples were terrified.

Jesus said, "It is me. Don't be afraid." The disciples helped Jesus climb into the boat and immediately the disciples reached the town they were going towards.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 6:16–21

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 6:22–27

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 6:22–27 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 6:22–27 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus and God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 6:22–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous story Jesus and the disciples left a large crowd. Jesus went to a mountain to pray, and the disciples rowed across the Sea of Galilee. Jesus met the disciples at the boat in the middle of the lake and brought them to the shore.

It is now the next day. The people Jesus had been preaching to the day before saw or remembered there had only been one boat the night before. The crowd also knew the disciples were alone in the boat. The word alone means Jesus was not with them. "Boat" here refers to a small fishing boat.

Stop here and look at a picture of a fishing boat. Pause the audio here.

Then at some time, we don't know exactly when, some boats from Tiberius arrive at the place where the people had eaten bread the day before when Jesus, the Lord or master, had miraculously fed five thousand people. It

is unclear when the boats arrived. The boats may have arrived before Jesus and the disciples left. Or the boats might have blown in because of the storm. What is important here is that the crowd did not know where Jesus was or how he might have crossed the Sea of Galilee. The boats from Tiberius are the same type of small fishing boats the disciples used. Tiberius was a town located across the lake.

When the crowd sees, or knows or recognizes, that Jesus and the disciples are not in these boats, the crowd gets into those boats and sails or rows to Capernaum to look for Jesus.

Stop here and look at a picture or map of the Sea of Galilee as a group. Take note of where the crowd is, where Capernaum is, and where Tiberius is. Pause this audio here.

The word "crowd" probably does not mean all of the people in the crowd, but instead many of the people in the crowd. The rest of the crowd probably walked around the lake. Capernaum was a town on the west side of the lake where Jesus and his disciples had gone the night before.

When the crowd arrives in Capernaum, they look for Jesus. When the crowd finds Jesus, they say, "Rabbi, teacher, when did you come here?" Jesus was not lost, rather the crowd did not know where Jesus was. The crowd asks the question because they are surprised to find Jesus in Capernaum. The crowd knew he did not get into a boat the night before and the crowd did not expect to find Jesus in Capernaum. The crowd wants to know when Jesus arrived in Capernaum.

Jesus knows the real reason the crowd is looking for him. But Jesus does not answer their question; instead, he rebukes the crowd. Jesus tells the crowd they are looking for him not because of signs, or miracles, but because they want more loaves of bread, or food.

Jesus is rebuking the crowd because they are more concerned with food than with spiritual matters. Jesus emphasizes that the people are only concerned with more bread to eat. The people are more concerned about Jesus fulfilling their physical needs and less concerned about Jesus meeting their important spiritual needs.

Stop here and look at a picture of barley loaves as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells the crowd not to work for the food that spoils, but for food that endures for eternal life. Jesus is not saying don't work. He is saying do not work only for food that will someday spoil because it does not last forever, but also spiritual food, or spiritual things, that will last forever and never spoil. Jesus tells the crowd the Son of Man will give them this food. Jesus is talking about himself. Jesus says the reason is because God the Father has set his seal on the Son of Man. To set a seal on something means to show approval for it. A king or ruler would often dip a special ring into wax and then press it on to paper at the end of a letter. This showed that the king or ruler approved what the letter said. God has shown approval on Jesus and what Jesus does and says. God approves of Jesus' ministry, and therefore people should come to Jesus to hear how he can give them eternal life with God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture show they approve of something or someone? Tell a story of a time a leader in your community gave their approval of someone. How did this affect your community's thoughts of the person?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 6:22–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: The crowd of people look for Jesus but could not find him. The crowd discovered that the disciples and Jesus are no longer on the same side of the lake where the crowd ate and were taught by Jesus the day before.

In the second scene: The crowd of people come across the lake in boats and find Jesus and the disciples.

In the third scene: The crowd of Jews ask Jesus a question and Jesus answers the crowd.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The crowd of people
- Disciples

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that the day before, Jesus and the disciples had been on the other side of the lake and fed the five thousand people with the five loaves of bread and two fish. The night before, the disciples had left on a boat without Jesus. Jesus walked out on the water to the disciples and they arrived at their destination after the disciples invited Jesus to get into the boat.

It is important to remember that even though the disciples are not directly mentioned in this story, they are there with Jesus on that side of the lake and listening to Jesus teaching the crowd of Jews.

In scene one, the crowd was searching for Jesus on the side of the lake where they had been taught and had eaten.

In scene two, the crowd did not find Jesus on the side of the lake that they were on. The crowd of Jewish people took boats across the lake to look for Jesus. We do not know when exactly these boats arrived where the Jewish people were. The entire crowd probably did not sail to Capernaum, just some of the crowd sailed. The rest of the crowd probably walked around the lake. Capernaum was a town on the west side of the lake where Jesus and his disciples had gone the night before. It is important to note that the location where the crowd of Jews and Jewish Leaders found Jesus is the synagogue in Capernaum where Jesus was teaching. We know this from a later story.

Stop here and look at a picture or map of the Sea of Galilee as a group. Take note of the routes the crowd traveled to get to Capernaum either by boat or by walking. Pause this audio here.

In scene three, the crowd asked Jesus when he arrived, not how he got there. The crowd was probably thought Jesus walked to Capernaum and were surprised Jesus got to the city so quickly, and Jesus did not directly answer the crowd's question but went deeper into what the people were really needing from Jesus. When Jesus used the phrase "very truly," he was emphasizing what he was about to say. Jesus taught the crowd about the difference between physical food, which will eventually spoil, and spiritual food, which will last forever. Jesus tells the crowd the Son of Man will give them this food. Son of Man is a title that Jesus used to refer to himself.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 6:22–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The crowd of people
- Disciples

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, the crowd realized Jesus was no longer in the area. Jesus had fed this crowd the day before. The crowd also remembered there was only one boat and Jesus did not get into the boat, only his disciples. That boat was not there anymore.

Pause the drama.

The crowd sees boats landing on shore near where they are, but Jesus is not in any of the boats. Some of the crowd get into the boats.

In the second scene, the crowd in the boats sail to Capernaum to look for Jesus.

Pause the drama.

The rest of the crowd probably walks. The crowd looks all over Capernaum. The crowd finds Jesus.

In the third scene, the crowd asks, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" The crowd is probably surprised to find him.

Pause the drama.

Jesus knows what the crowd is really looking for and tells the crowd. Jesus says, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves."

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells the crowd to work harder for spiritual food that lasts forever, instead of literal food that spoils quickly. Jesus tells the crowd the Son of Man will give them this spiritual food, because God the Father put his seal of approval on the Son of Man, who is also Jesus.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 6:22–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The people Jesus, the **Lord** or master, had been preaching to the day before, saw or remembered there had only been one boat the night before. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word as you used in previous passages.

The crowd also knew the disciples were alone in the **boat**. Use the same word or phrase for boat as you used in previous passages. For more information on boat, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase throughout this passage.

Stop here and look at a picture of boat the crowd would have sailed in as a group. Pause this audio here.

The word "alone" means Jesus was not with them.

Then some boats from **Tiberius** arrived near where the crowd was. Tiberius was a Roman town named after emperor Tiberius.

Stop here and look at a map of the Sea of Galilee as a group. Take note where Tiberius is on the map, where the crowd is, and where Capernaum is. Pause this audio here.

The crowd got into the boats and sailed or rowed to **Capernaum** to look for Jesus. For more information on Capernaum, refer to the Master Glossary.

When the crowd found Jesus, they said, "**Rabbi**, when did you come here?" Rabbi is another name for teacher. Use the same word for Rabbi as you have in previous passages. For more information on Rabbi, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus knew the real reason the crowd was looking for him. Jesus responded by telling the crowd they were looking for him not because of **signs**, or **miracles**, but because they wanted more food. A sign or miracle is an act that only God can do. For more information on miracles, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word as used in previous passages.

Jesus tells the crowd not to work for the food that spoils, but for food that endures for **eternal life**. Eternal life means a life with God that never ends. For more information on eternal life, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word used in previous passages.

Jesus told the crowd the **Son of Man** will give them this food. Son of Man is a title that Jesus used to refer to himself. Use the same term for Son of Man as you did in previous passages. For more information on Son of Man, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus said this is because **God the Father** has set his **seal** on the Son of Man. To seal something means to put a mark of approval on it.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **seal**. It might be helpful to recall the earlier passage when John the Baptist baptized Jesus and God sent a dove. Pause this audio here.*

God the Father is how Jesus often refers to God in order to describe the close relationship he has with God. For more information on God the Father, refer to Son of God in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 6:22–27

Audio Content

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John 6:28–40

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 6:28–40 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 6:28–40 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus and God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 6:28–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, a crowd, or a group of people, sailed across the Sea of Galilee to a town called Capernaum. The crowd was looking for Jesus because the day before Jesus had performed a miracle and provided food. When the crowd found Jesus, Jesus told the crowd to work for spiritual food that will never spoil. Jesus promised to give the crowd this food. Jesus also said God approved what he was doing.

This story continues the dialog between the crowd and Jesus.

The people ask Jesus, "What must we do to do the works of God?" The people want to know what things or actions they need to do to obey God. The people already knew God approved of Jesus. The people wanted to know what to do so God would approve of them also.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What types of works are required or expected in your family or community? What would happen if you refused to do those works? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says there is only one work the people need to do. That work is to believe or trust in the person God sent to the people. Jesus is talking about himself. Jesus is the one God sent to the people. God wants people to believe in who Jesus is and what he is doing.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of a time when you had to trust someone who was delivering an important message to you from a respected leader. What would happen if you did not believe the messenger? Pause this audio here.

The people then asked Jesus what sign he was going to give them so they, the people, could see the sign and believe Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of a time you saw someone do something amazing or impossible. How difficult or easy was it to believe what you saw? Why was it difficult or not difficult? Pause this audio here.

The crowd asked this question to challenge Jesus to give them another miracle. Remember that the day before, this same crowd saw Jesus feed five thousand people with just five loaves of bread and two fish. The crowd wants to see something new. Or the crowd is hungry again and wants Jesus to feed them again. The crowd wants to see another miracle so they can believe Jesus. Jesus was telling the crowd to believe, or trust, in him, not just believe what he says. The crowd wanted to know what work, or miracle, Jesus was going to perform for them. The people said, "Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness."

This is an event that refers to a story in Exodus when the Jewish people were wandering in the wilderness. God provided manna to the Israelites after they left Egypt. The Israelites ate the manna for 40 years when they wandered in the wilderness. Manna was a white substance that tasted like biscuits or crackers with honey. Manna appeared on the ground every morning except the Sabbath day and was used to make bread. The word "manna" in the Hebrew language sounds like the phrase "what is it?" The people said the Scriptures say that "He gave them bread to eat from heaven, the place where God lives." The people were asking Jesus to give them an even greater sign from God than Moses gave the people. Some Jews believed that the Savior from God would someday provide them manna, so they may be asking Jesus to prove to them that he is the one God sent to them. In Bible times, bread was the most important food people ate.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is the most important food in your culture? What makes that food important? Pause this audio here.

The people were quoting from the book of Psalms. It is unclear if the crowd thought Moses or God gave them the bread. Jesus' response tells us the crowd thought it was Moses. Jesus corrects the crowd.

Jesus said, "Very truly I tell you. Moses did not give you the bread, but my Father who is in heaven gave you the true bread."

Jesus emphasizes what he is about to say by making it very clear he is about to speak the truth. Jesus corrects the crowd's wrong thinking then tells them it was God, not Moses, who gave the bread to their ancestors in the wilderness. The crowd spoke about someone giving bread in the past, but Jesus tells them God continues to give true bread. Jesus is talking about spiritual food, not physical food.

Another way to say this is, "It is my Father, God, who gives the true bread from heaven. You are wrong to think it was Moses who gave you the bread from heaven." Jesus then tells the crowd what the bread is that he is talking about. He says, "The bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

The crowd said, "Give us this bread always." The crowd's response is a polite request, not a demand. The crowd is asking Jesus to give them this bread and never stop giving it. The crowd still does not understand Jesus is talking about spiritual bread. The crowd still thinks Jesus is talking about real bread they can physically eat. Jesus finally tells the crowd in clear terms what he is saying. Jesus says, "I am the bread of life." "I am" is important to the Jewish people. God told Moses that his name is "I Am." When Jesus says "I am," he is saying that he is God. The crowd would have understood this clearly.

Jesus is using the phrase as an example to compare himself to bread. Jesus uses bread as an example because bread was the main food for the Jews. Jesus can satisfy our spiritual needs just like bread can satisfy our physical needs. Anyone who comes to Jesus and believes in Jesus will never be hungry or thirsty. Jesus is saying he can satisfy all our spiritual needs. But Jesus points out to the crowd that they have seen him, but do not believe him. Jesus is reminding the crowd of something he told the crowd earlier. The crowd has seen what Jesus has done and what Jesus has said, but they do not believe him. Jesus says, "Everyone the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will not drive away." Jesus is saying he will not reject the people who come to him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of a time when you made the best plans to do something and those plans either fell apart or succeeded. What caused those plans to fall apart or succeed? How much control did you have in making those plans succeed? Pause this audio here.

If the Father, God, gives someone to Jesus, that person will come to Jesus. That person will believe in Jesus and will follow and obey Jesus. And Jesus will not turn those people away. He will accept those people. Jesus tells the crowd that he came from heaven not to do what he wanted to do, but to do what God wanted him to do. God is the one who sent Jesus. Then Jesus tells the crowd what God wants him to do. Jesus says God wants him to not lose what God has given him, but to raise it up at the last day. God wants Jesus to protect everyone who comes to Jesus for salvation.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time you had to protect someone or something. How did you protect them? What did you do to make sure they were safe? Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells the crowd he will bring back to life people who die who have accepted his message. Those people will live with Jesus forever. Jesus says he will do this at the end of the world when he comes back to judge everyone. Jesus' main point is that the desire of his Father, God, is that anyone who sees his Son, Jesus, and believes in Jesus, will have eternal life. This is a life that never ends. Jesus will raise them up from physical death to live forever when the world ends.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 6:28–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: The crowd of Jews and Jewish Leaders ask Jesus what they should do. Jesus tells them they should believe in the person God sent.

In the second scene: The crowd of Jews and Jewish leaders ask Jesus for a sign to know that Jesus was the person that God sent. Jesus responded to their request.

In the third scene: The crowd of Jews and Jewish leaders ask for Jesus to give them the true bread. Jesus explains that He is the true bread.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The crowd of people
- Disciples

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that the day before, Jesus and the disciples had been on the other side of the Sea of Galilee and fed the five thousand people with the two loaves of bread and five fish. The night before, the disciples had left on a boat without Jesus. Jesus walked out on the water to the disciples and they all arrived at their destination as Jesus climbed into the boat.

Stop here and look at photos of the Sea of Galilee. Pause this audio here.

The previous and the next stories also show that the disciples were present when Jesus was talking to the crowd of Jews here. They do not do or say anything in this story, but they are present, and they are listening to Jesus.

We know from a later story that the crowd of people found Jesus teaching in a synagogue in Capernaum. This is a continuation of the conversation between the crowd of people and Jesus. Remember, in the previous passage, Jesus had just told the crowd to look for spiritual food that does not perish, instead of physical food that will eventually spoil. In this passage, Jesus takes this message further by telling the crowd that this spiritual food that gives life is himself.

Stop here and discuss: Think about a story in two parts or a story that you could divide into two parts. Start telling the second half of the story as if you told the first half yesterday. How do you start the second half of the story so that your audience knows this is a continuation of the first story? Pay attention to the words and phrases that you use to connect the two parts of the story together. Pause this audio here.

In scene one, the crowd of people asks Jesus what they need to do to please God. Jesus tells the crowd that God wants the people to believe in Jesus, the person whom God sent to them. It is important to notice here that the crowd says "works," plural, but Jesus uses the singular "work."

In scene two, the crowd of people responded, asking for Jesus to show them a miraculous sign to prove that Jesus was the one that God sent. The crowd was trying to say that the miracle Jesus had done the day before was not proof enough because Moses gave the people bread from heaven. The crowd was not concerned in learning from Jesus. The crowd was more interested in seeing another miracle or getting more bread. Jesus emphasized here that what he was about to say was the truth.

Stop here and discuss: What words or phrases do you use in your language to emphasize what you are about to say is true? Pause audio here.

Jesus corrected the group and said that it was not Moses that gave the bread. It was Jesus' Father, God, that gave the bread. Jesus went on to explain that God was now wanting to give the crowd the true bread from heaven. Jesus said that the true bread is the person who comes down and gives life to the world.

In scene three, the crowd of people speak to Jesus politely. The crowd asks Jesus to give them the spiritual bread every day. Jesus explains that *He* is the bread of life. This is the most important part of the story. Jesus said that the people who come to or believe in Jesus will never be hungry or thirsty again. He then tells the crowd that even though they see Jesus they do not believe him. Jesus said he would not reject the people who God, his Father, gave to him. Jesus came down from heaven to do the will of God who sent Jesus. Jesus is doing the will of God, not his own will. It is God's will that all who turn from their sinful living and turn to Jesus and believe in him should have eternal life and Jesus will raise them up at the last day. When Jesus talks about the son, which is the Son of God, he is referring to himself. Jesus is telling the crowd he is the Son of God.

"The last day" refers to the end of time when Jesus will bring back to life everyone who trusts in him. We can have eternal life because God wants everyone to know him through his son Jesus.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 6:28–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The crowd of people
- Disciples

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The crowd's question in this passage is related to what Jesus said in the previous story about working for food that does not die. It might be helpful to recall what Jesus said to the crowd in the previous story.

In the first scene, the Jewish crowd asks Jesus, "What are the things God wants us to do?"

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells the crowd, "God wants you to believe in the person he sent to you."

In scene two, the crowd challenges Jesus. The crowd asks Jesus, "What sign are you going to show us so we can see it and believe you?"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Frustrated that the people don't understand or believe me," or "Annoyed that they care more about what I can do for them than to care about me and what I am telling them," or "Compassionate because the crowd truly does not understand and my desire is that they do understand." [!end] Continue the drama.

The crowd reminds Jesus their ancestors ate manna in the wilderness that was given to them from heaven. Jesus tells the crowd Moses did not provide the manna. God provides the true bread from Heaven. Jesus then tells the crowd what this bread is. Jesus says, "The bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the crowd, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "Unbelief because this offer sounds too good to be true," or "Joyful at hearing such wonderful news," or "Surprised that bread can give life to the whole world." [!end] Continue the drama.

The crowd says, "Give us this bread always."

In scene three, Jesus says, "I am the bread of life." Jesus tells the crowd that anyone who comes to him and believes him will never hunger or thirst. But Jesus tells the crowd that even though they have seen him do miracles, they do not believe him.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says that everyone God gives to him, will come to him. And Jesus will not turn those people away. Jesus says he came down from heaven to God's will. God's will for Jesus is that everyone he gives to Jesus will not be lost. And Jesus will raise up those people on the last day.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 6:28–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The crowd asked Jesus what they needed to do to perform the **works of God**. **Works** refer to deeds. "Works of God" means deeds God wants people who follow him to do. Jesus told the crowd that the work of God they need to do is to **believe** in the one whom God sent. Believe means to trust or have faith in someone. Other ways to translate this is to trust in or have faith in the facts about Jesus. If someone believes the facts about Jesus, they will believe in, or trust in, Jesus. Use the same word for believe that you have used in previous passages. For more information on belief, refer to the Master Glossary.

The phrase "in the one he sent" refers to Jesus. Jesus is telling the people that doing the work of God means believing and trusting Jesus. Jesus is saying he was sent by God.

Then the crowd asked Jesus what **sign** he was going to give them. A sign is a signal that something someone says is true. Use the same word for sign that you have used in previous passages. For more information on sign, refer to the Master Glossary.

They told Jesus their ancestors ate **manna** in the wilderness and that the manna was given to them from **heaven**, the place where God lives. Manna was a white substance that tasted like biscuits or crackers with honey and appeared on the ground every day except on the **Sabbath**. God provided the manna to the Israelites for 40 years after they left Egypt. Manna, in the Hebrew language, sounds like the Israelites' question, "What is it?"

Use the same word for Sabbath and heaven that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Sabbath and heaven, refer to the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **manna**. If you have translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word as you used in that book. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus told the crowd it was not **Moses** who gave them the **bread** from heaven. Moses was an important leader and prophet for the Jews in the Old Testament. Jesus said it is my **Father**, God, who gives you the true bread from heaven. Father is a name for God. Jesus said the bread of God comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

The crowd asked Jesus to give them this bread all the time. Jesus said, "**I am** the **bread of life**." God told Moses that his name is "I am." Jesus is saying here that he is God. The crowd would have understood this clearly. Bread of life means the spiritual source to everlasting life.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **bread of life**. Pause this audio here.*

God's will is that Jesus should not lose anything God has given him, but to **raise them up** on the **last day**. To raise up means to bring back to life. The last day refers to the end of the world when God sets up his kingdom on earth and Jesus rules for eternity.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **last day**. Pause this audio here.*

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **raise them up**. Look up resurrection in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

In fact, the **Father's** will is that anyone who sees the **Son** and believes in him would have **eternal life**. Son is another name for Jesus. Use the same word for Son as you have used in previous passages. Look up Son of God in the Master Glossary for more information. Eternal life means a life that never ends. Use the same word for eternal life that you used in previous passages. Look up eternal life in the Master Glossary for more information.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 6:28–40

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 6:41–51

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 6:41–51 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 6:41–51 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 6:41–51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous story, Jesus began talking about himself as the bread of life. In the present story, Jesus will continue talking about himself as the bread of life.

The story begins with the Jews grumbling about Jesus. This is the first time that the Jews spoke since Jesus began teaching here. Jesus has been speaking to the crowd in a synagogue in Capernaum, and probably all of them were Jews. But like before, the Jews here probably refer to the religious leaders or the leaders of the Jewish religion. These Jews grumbled or complained about Jesus. This means that they showed that they were not happy when Jesus said, "I am the bread that came from heaven." The Jews asked each other a question, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" The Jews knew the answer to this question. They asked this because they couldn't believe what Jesus said. Heaven is the place where God lives. Jesus was born to his parents and the Jews knew his parents. So they thought that Jesus was not telling the truth when Jesus said that he came from heaven. Then, Jesus told the Jews that they should not complain about him among themselves.

Stop here and look at a picture of bread as a group. Pause this audio here.

Also, discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture show that they disagree or that they are not happy with what a person is saying?

Jesus also said that no one can come to him unless the Father who sent him draws him to Jesus. The Father refers to God. In the Gospel of John, Jesus regularly calls God, "Father." Jesus said that without the Father's help, no one can come and believe in Jesus. But the person that comes to Jesus becomes worthy of life with God. So, Jesus will raise him up on the last day, or when the time of judgment comes so that he will be with God forever.

Then Jesus said something that is written in the Prophets. The Jews at that time believed that the Old Testament prophets not only announced the words of God, but they also wrote them. The writings that the prophets wrote were called "the Prophets." Jesus thought that if he used the words of the Prophets, it would help convince the Jews because the Jews believed that the writings of the prophets are part of their Scriptures. Jesus said that according to the Prophets, God will teach his people. Jesus also said that everyone who heard and learned from the Father obeys and comes to believe in Jesus. This is how the Father helps people to come to Jesus. But Jesus immediately clarifies that hearing and learning from the Father does not mean that they had seen the Father. Only one person has seen the Father, and that is Jesus who came from the Father, but Jesus does not tell them here that it is him. Then Jesus spoke words to prepare the listeners for the very important speech that he is about to say. Jesus said, "Whoever believes has eternal life." Eternal life refers to the life that Jesus gives to the person who believes in him. A person that has eternal life will rise again after he dies so he can be with God forever. Jesus is saying that those who believe in his teachings receive eternal life.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture imagine or talk about eternal life or a life that never ends? Pause this audio here.

After Jesus explained that the Father helps people to come to him just as it is written in the prophets, and those who come to him will receive eternal life, Jesus tells them again that he is the bread of life. When Jesus said this, he was repeating the "I am" statement that he first mentioned in the previous story. This "I am" reminds his listeners about the name of God in the Old Testament. Jesus is using the words God the Father used when he told Moses his name is "I am." When Jesus said "I am the bread of life" he was comparing himself with bread.

Bread was a common food during the time of Jesus. Most people, especially the poor, ate bread all the time. Bread was the food that gave life to people, especially to the poor. Just as bread gives life, so he also gives life. Then he said that their ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. A wilderness, or a desert, is a place that is dry because it does not rain very often in that place. No people or animals could survive in a desert without water, so no one usually lived there. Here, Jesus was reminding them of the story about their ancestors that is also recorded in the Jewish scriptures. In that story, the Israelites were on their way to the land that God promised to give them. As they were walking in the wilderness, God sent bread from heaven so that they would not be hungry. The people called this bread from heaven, manna. But even though manna gave them life so they would not be hungry, their ancestors still died. This means that manna could not give eternal life to people. But the life that Jesus gives is a life that never ends.

Like the manna from the old times, Jesus is also the bread that God sent from heaven so that people may not die if they ate him. In the same way that people eat bread so they can have the strength to live for another day, Jesus is saying that people should eat him so they may live forever. Remember that Jesus is only comparing himself with bread. So, Jesus is not really saying that people should kill him and eat his physical body. Instead, eating bread, or eating Jesus, is another way of saying that people should believe in him. God sent Jesus so people will believe in him. For those who will not believe in Jesus, God will punish them by not giving them eternal life. As a result, they will remain dead forever. Jesus continues and says again that he is the living bread that came from heaven. If anyone eats this bread or believes in him, he will live forever. Jesus says that the bread he will give for the life of the world is his flesh or his physical body. Here Jesus is referring to the sacrifice that he will make, where he will give his life for all the people in the world by dying on the cross. It is an event that will happen later toward the end of the Gospel. Jesus does not explain that here. That is why the Jews will remain confused and grumbling.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 6:41–51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: The Jews grumbled or complained about Jesus because he said he is the bread of life.

In the second scene: Jesus says that the Father is teaching people so they would learn and believe in Jesus, just as the Prophets said. Those who believe in Jesus will receive eternal life.

In the third scene: Jesus says again that he is the bread of life. Those who eat his flesh will live forever.

The characters in this passage are:

- God the Father
- Jesus
- The Jews or the Jewish leaders
- The disciples

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The next story reveals that Jesus and the Jews were having this conversation in a synagogue in Capernaum. This means that there were other Jewish people around when they were discussing. But the most important thing in this story is the words of Jesus. So be sure to focus on Jesus' words. "The Jews" are most probably referring to the Jewish leaders.

The previous and the next stories also show that the disciples were present when Jesus was talking to the Jews here. They do not do anything in the story, but they are present, and they are listening to Jesus.

In scene one, the Jews (or the Jewish leaders) are complaining about Jesus. This means that they will show that they don't believe what Jesus was saying. They will repeat the words of Jesus when he said, "I am the bread that

came down from heaven." They will also say to each other, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" Jesus will tell the Jews that they should not grumble among themselves.

In scene two, Jesus said that no person can come to him if the Father will not help the person. When the person who comes to Jesus dies, Jesus will raise him back to life on the day of judgment. Then he will be with God forever. Then Jesus said that it is written in the Prophets that God will teach people. The people who heard and learned from the Father will come to Jesus. This is how God helps people to come to Jesus. But Jesus clarifies that this does not mean that the people had seen the Father. Only one person has seen the Father and it is Jesus who is from God. Only Jesus has seen God the Father. Jesus said that only one person has seen God. Although Jesus did not say who it is, he is actually referring to himself. Jesus was the only person who has seen God. People who learn from God do not actually see him. So, it is important to show that when God the Father is teaching people and helping people to believe in Jesus, the people are not seeing God. Then Jesus uses an expression that calls the attention of the listeners because he is about to say something very important. He said, "Whoever believes has eternal life."

In scene three, Jesus again talks about himself as the bread of life. This means that like bread that gives life, Jesus also gives life. He compares himself also with the manna that the ancestors of the Jews ate in the wilderness. Jesus will remind the Jews of this story and tell them that even though their ancestors ate manna, they still died. The story does not say that Jesus pointed to himself, but perhaps you could that Jesus was pointing to himself when he said, "This is the bread that comes from heaven so that one may eat of it and not die." This may help show that Jesus was talking about himself when he speaks of the bread that comes from heaven. Jesus continues speaking and says anyone who eats him will live forever. Remember that Jesus is only comparing himself with bread. When Jesus spoke that people should eat him, what he really means is that people should believe in him, but Jesus will not explain that here. Jesus will then say that the bread of life that he will give to the world is his flesh, or his physical body. Jesus may again be pointing to himself as he says this.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 6:41–51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God the Father
- Jesus
- The Jews or the Jewish leaders
- The disciples of Jesus

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, The Jews grumbled or complained about Jesus because he said he is the bread of life.

Pause the drama.

In scene two, Jesus says that the Father is teaching people so they would learn and believe in Jesus, just as the Prophets said. Those who believe in Jesus will receive eternal life.

Pause the drama.

In scene three, Jesus says again that he is the bread of life. Those who eat his flesh will live forever.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 6:41–51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus said, "**I am** the **bread** that came from **heaven**." The words "I am" are important. These words remind the Jewish listeners of the name of God in the Old Testament. God told Moses that his name is "I am." When Jesus says "I am," he is saying that he is God. See the Master Glossary for more information about I am. **Bread** was the most common food that people ate during that time. **Heaven** is the place where God lives. Translate the words bread and heaven the same way you have translated them before. For more information about heaven, you may refer to the Master Glossary. When Jesus said that he is the bread that came from heaven, the **Jews grumbled** or complained about him. The word **grumbled** means that they disagreed and were not happy with what Jesus was saying. Translate Jews in the same way you have before, and remember that Jews is in the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **grumble**. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus said that no one comes to him unless the Father **draws** the person to Jesus. The word draw means help or guide. The Father does not force people to come to Jesus. Rather, he helps them, he guides them so they would learn about Jesus, and they would believe in him.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **draw them to me**. Pause this audio here.*

Any person that comes to Jesus, Jesus will **raise up** on the **last day**. Here, the word "raise up" means bring back to life. Jesus will give life to the dead people who believed in him. He will do that on the last day, or the day of judgment. Translate the words "raise up" and "last day" the same way you have translated them before.

Jesus said it is written in **the Prophets** that God will teach his people. "The Prophets" refer to the group of books that are part of the Jewish Scriptures. The Jews believed that the Old Testament prophets wrote these books, so they called them "the Prophets."

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **the Prophets**. For more information about prophets, you may refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus also said that those who **believe** in him have **eternal life**. Believing in Jesus means trusting that everything he says is true. It also means following Jesus. Eternal life means living with God forever. Translate believe and eternal life the same way you have translated them before. For more information on believe and eternal life, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus said, "I am the **bread of life**." Jesus explains that the bread he is giving for the life of the world is his **flesh**, or his physical body. Jesus is comparing himself with bread. Just as bread gives life, Jesus also gives life. When Jesus spoke about eating him, he is not really saying that people should kill him and eat his physical body. Rather, eating bread, or eating Jesus, is another way of saying that people should believe in him. Translate "bread of life" the same way you have translated it before.

In speaking about this, Jesus reminds the Jews that their **fathers**, or their ancestors, ate **manna** in the **wilderness**. Manna was the name of the bread that came from heaven when the Israelites traveled through the wilderness on their way to the land that God promised to give them. A wilderness or a desert is a dry place where there is usually no rain. There is no water in that place so people do not normally live there. Translate

wilderness the same way you have translated it before. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary. The people that ate the manna still died. But the bread that Jesus offers will give people eternal life. People who believe in Jesus will live forever with God.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 6:41–51

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3464725 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5832678 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 6:52–59

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 6:52–59 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 6:52–59 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 6:52–59 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous story, Jesus continued talking about himself as the bread of life. He also began talking about how people should eat his flesh. In the present story, Jesus will continue talking about eating his flesh, as well as drinking his blood. But he will not explain what he means, so the Jews will not understand Jesus, and they will be angry at Jesus. Remember that when John speaks of the Jews, he is usually referring to the Jewish leaders.

The story begins with the reaction of the Jews to what Jesus said in the previous passage about eating his flesh. The Jews or the Jewish leaders argued among themselves. They asked, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Most people at that time thought that eating another human was absolutely wrong. For these Jews, Jesus was telling them to do something that was unacceptable. Jesus did not explain what he meant, but he surely did not mean that they should kill him and eat his physical body.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture argue against each other when they disagree with one another? Pause this audio here.

In response to the question of the Jews, Jesus used an expression to tell the Jews that what he is about to say next is true and very important. Then, Jesus said that unless they eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, they have no life in them. Jesus called himself "the Son of Man" here, his favorite title for himself. Son of Man may be his favorite title for himself because in the Old Testament the Jews believed that when the time comes for God to judge all people, God will send a person that is like a son of man to judge all people. Jesus goes on to repeat that we need to eat his flesh and drink his blood. Anyone who does this has eternal life and Jesus will raise him up on the last day when he, the Son of Man, judges all people. He also says that anyone who does this abides in Jesus, and Jesus abides in him. That means, Jesus will be with him, and he will be in good relationship with Jesus.

Any Jew who heard Jesus would be angrier because now, Jesus says that they should also drink his blood. According to the Jewish Scriptures, God forbids Jews from drinking blood or eating meat that has blood in it. Jesus' command to eat his flesh and drink his blood would have sounded like Jesus was telling the Jews to disobey God. Jesus did not explain what he meant, but he surely did not mean that they should kill him, eat his physical body, and drink his blood.

The idea of eating Jesus' flesh and drinking the blood of Jesus the Son of Man is important here. That is why Jesus repeated it several times, even though he does not explain what he means. When Jesus said that people must eat his flesh and drink his blood, Jesus is not really saying that people should kill him, eat his physical body, and drink his blood. Instead, Jesus is using an expression that means that people should believe and trust in him so that Jesus will become part of their lives. It may also be referring to the sacrifice that he will do later which will result in his death. In short, to eat the flesh of Jesus and to drink his blood means to believe and trust in Jesus. Jesus explains that his flesh is true food, and his blood is real drink. For Jesus, his flesh and blood are

what give people the ability to live with God. Believing and trusting in Jesus is the only way that people can really live with God. Those who truly believe in Jesus have eternal life. So that even when they die, Jesus will give them life again on the day of judgment and they will live forever with God. Those who eat his flesh and drink his blood also abide in him. This means that they will stay with Jesus, and Jesus will stay with them. Jesus lives because of the living Father who sent him. Those who feed on his flesh, or those who believe in him will live forever with God even if they die because of Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture imagine or talk about eternal life or a life that never ends? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that his flesh is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread their ancestors ate. Bread was very important to the Jewish people, because they remembered that their ancestors ate bread that God gave the Israelites while they were going to the promised land. Jesus said that bread was not enough to give them eternal life, so their ancestors still died. But the bread that Jesus offers, which is his flesh, can give them eternal life. Anyone who trusts in Jesus will live forever.

Jesus said all these things in the synagogue as he was teaching at Capernaum. A synagogue was a place, usually a house, where Jews would meet to pray and study the Scriptures. Capernaum was an important place for Jesus' ministry. Jesus used to live in Capernaum.

Stop here and look at a picture of a synagogue as a group. Pause this audio here.

It is important to understand that Jesus did not explain why he said that people should eat his flesh and drink his blood. This is why the Jews did not understand Jesus. They thought that Jesus was telling them to do something strange, unacceptable, and unlawful. This is why in this story, the Jews were angry at Jesus. In the next story, many of his disciples will leave because they could not understand and accept Jesus' teaching.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 6:52–59 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: The Jews argued among themselves because Jesus said that people need to eat his flesh.

In the second scene: Jesus responds to the Jews and continues to talk about eating his flesh and drinking his blood.

The characters in this passage are:

- God the Father
- Jesus
- The Jews or the Jewish leaders
- The disciples

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Be sure to show that this story continues from the previous story. Jesus and the Jews were in the synagogue at Capernaum. In a synagogue, there were other Jews. But in this story, Jesus is talking to a specific group of Jews, most probably the Jewish leaders, or the leaders of the Jewish religion. The most important thing in this story is the words of Jesus. So be sure to focus on Jesus' words.

The previous and the next stories also show that the disciples were present when Jesus was talking to the Jews here. They do not do anything in the story, but they are present, and they are listening to Jesus.

Jesus will be speaking some things that will make Jews angry in this story. The Jews will be angry because they think that Jesus is telling them to do something strange, unacceptable, and unlawful. Still, Jesus will repeat this idea, and he will not explain what he means. So, the Jews will be angry throughout the story.

In scene one, the Jews or the Jewish leaders are arguing among themselves. This means that they are angry, and they are fighting over what Jesus means with what he said. They ask, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" When they referred to Jesus as "this man" they were disrespecting Jesus.

In scene two, Jesus responds to the Jews. To begin his response, Jesus uses an expression that calls the attention of his listeners because what he is about to say is true and important. He says that unless they eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, they cannot live with God. He will repeat this idea in this scene and Jesus may be pointing to himself as he says these things because he is referring to himself when he speaks about the Son of Man. Jesus says that those who eat his flesh and drink his blood have eternal life. When they die, Jesus will give them life again and they will live forever with God. Jesus also says that they will remain in a good relationship with Jesus. Jesus will be with them, and they will be with Jesus. The living Father sent Jesus, and Jesus lives because of the Father. In the same way, those who eat Jesus will live because of Jesus. Again, Jesus may be pointing to himself when he says, "This is the bread that came down from heaven." It is not like the bread that their ancestors ate and died. Those who eat the bread, which is Jesus, will live forever. When Jesus compares himself to the bread that their ancestors ate, make sure to show that Jesus is much greater than that bread.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 6:52–59 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God the Father
- Jesus
- The Jews or the Jewish leaders
- The disciples

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, the Jews disputed or argued among themselves because Jesus said that people need to eat his flesh.

Pause the drama.

In scene two, Jesus responds to the Jews and continues to talk about eating his flesh and drinking his blood.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 6:52–59 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

When Jesus said that people should eat his flesh, the **Jews** argued among themselves. The word **argued** means that they became angry, and they fought and argued among themselves over what Jesus might mean with what he said. Translate Jews in the same way you have before, and remember that Jews is in the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **argue**. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus said that unless they eat the flesh and drink the blood of the **Son of Man**, they cannot truly live with God. Jesus is the Son of Man. This means that Jesus is God's appointed judge of all people. Translate the word Son of Man the same way you have translated this before. For more information on Son of Man refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus also said that anyone who eats his flesh and drinks his blood has **eternal life**, and Jesus will **raise him** on the **last day**. Eternal life means living with God forever. Jesus is saying that the people who believe and trust in him will live forever with God. Even when they die, Jesus will raise them up, or make them alive again. Jesus will do this on the last day, or on the day of judgment. Translate the words eternal life, raise him up, and last day the same way you have translated them before. For more information on eternal life, you may refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus also said that anyone who eats his flesh and drinks his blood **abides** in him, and Jesus abides in him too. The word "abides" means to remain in a close relationship with Jesus. This means that they will stay with Jesus, and Jesus will stay with them.

Jesus said these things in the **synagogue** as he was teaching at **Capernaum**. A synagogue was a place where Jews in a certain community would meet to pray and study the Scriptures. Capernaum was an important place for Jesus' ministry. Jews and Gentiles lived there at that time. Jesus also used to live there. Translate synagogue and Capernaum the same way you have translated them before. For more information about the synagogue and Capernaum, you may refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 6:52–59

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2835531 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (4769013 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 6:60–71

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 6:60–71 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 6:60–71 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 6:60–71 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous story, Jesus said that people should eat his flesh, as well as drink his blood. He said that it is not like the bread that their ancestors ate, because his flesh and blood give eternal life. But Jesus did not explain what he meant, so the Jews misunderstood Jesus. The present story is about the reaction of the disciples of Jesus when they heard this teaching from Jesus.

The disciples heard that Jesus said that people should eat his flesh, as well as drink his blood. The disciples mentioned here are not only referring to the 12 disciples. It also includes other people that decided to follow Jesus. But not like the 12 disciples that Jesus called, Jesus did not call these people to follow him. Still, they were called disciples here, but these disciples will turn away from Jesus as we will see in the story. They said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" This means that these disciples did not understand what Jesus was saying. Like the Jews, they probably thought that Jesus was telling them to kill him, eat his flesh, and drink his blood. So, the disciples asked this question because they could not accept what Jesus was saying.

No one told Jesus but he knew that the disciples were complaining about his teaching. So, Jesus said, "Do you take offense at this?" Jesus is not really asking a question here. Instead, he is making a statement that means his disciples should not be angry and turn away from him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do people do in your culture when they get angry, or upset, or when they are hurt because of what people said to them? Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus asked another question. He asked, "What if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?" When Jesus asked about the Son of Man, he was referring to himself. Son of Man is a title that refers to Jesus. In the Old Testament, the Jews believed that when the time comes for God to judge all people, God will send a person that is like a Son of Man. This person that is called Son of Man will be the judge of all people. Jesus is the Son of Man. In this second question by Jesus, Jesus is also not asking a question. Instead, he is telling the disciples to think about how they would react if they saw him ascending or going up to where he was before, which is heaven. Will they be happy, or will they be more angry?

Jesus said it is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh is no help at all. The Spirit here probably refers to the Holy Spirit. This means it is the Holy Spirit that helps people understand what Jesus is teaching. The flesh here is not referring to the physical body of Jesus. The flesh refers to the strength that humans have. Jesus is saying that people who rely on their own strength or power cannot understand what Jesus is saying. They cannot receive eternal life. Jesus said that the words that Jesus spoke are spirit and life. This means that the teachings of Jesus are spiritual, which is why it is the Holy Spirit that helps people understand them. They are also life because understanding and believing Jesus' words result in eternal life.

But some of them do not believe in Jesus. Even though no one told Jesus, Jesus knew that some of the disciples were not believing him. From the time when Jesus called his disciples, he already knew those who would not believe him, and he also knew who among the disciples would betray him later. This means that one of his disciples will help their enemies capture Jesus so that he will die. Because Jesus knew all this, Jesus reminded them of what he said earlier. Jesus said that unless the Father helps a person to come and believe in Jesus, he cannot believe in Jesus by his own will or strength. This explains why some of the disciples were not believing, and one of his disciples will betray him.

After Jesus said these things, many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. These disciples that left Jesus are the larger group of the disciples, not the 12 disciples. This larger group of disciples went away and never followed Jesus again.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when a large group of people stopped following a leader. What happened? How did they leave?

Then, Jesus said to the twelve disciples, "Do you want to go away as well?" These twelve disciples were the disciples that Jesus himself called. They were his closest disciples. Jesus asked this question expecting that his disciples would say that they do not want to go away.

Simon Peter, who is one of the twelve disciples, answered Jesus on behalf of the group. He said, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" When Simon Peter called Jesus "Lord" he was using the highest form of respect to call Jesus. This may also mean that Simon Peter recognizes that Jesus is divine. Also, he is saying that they have no other place to go. He also said that Jesus has the words of eternal life, which means that Jesus' teachings are guiding them so they can receive a life that never ends.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture imagine or talk about eternal life or a life that never ends? Pause this audio here.

The disciples also believed in Jesus, and they have come to realize that Jesus is the Holy One of God. This means that the disciples believe and know that Jesus is holy, or special, because he is the one that God sent to give life to people. Because of this, they will not leave Jesus like the other disciples. This means that they will continue to follow Jesus.

Jesus answered the twelve disciples and said, "Did I not choose you, the twelve?" Here, Jesus is not really asking a question. He is saying that Jesus himself chose the twelve. Yet, Jesus said, one of them is a devil. The devil is a spiritual enemy of God. This is another name for Satan. Jesus is saying that one of the disciples is like a chief over demons or evil spirits. He was referring to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. Judas was among the twelve disciples, and he will betray Jesus later. This means that Judas will help the people who hate Jesus to capture him so he will die. Jesus knew that it was Judas who would betray him, but Jesus did not reveal to the twelve disciples that it was Judas.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 6:60–71 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Many of the disciples could not accept the teachings of Jesus about eating his flesh and drinking his blood. Jesus explains that it is the Holy Spirit that helps people understand his teaching.

In the second scene: Many of the disciples would leave Jesus and stop following him. Jesus asks the twelve disciples if they would leave Jesus too. But Simon Peter said that they will not leave Jesus. Jesus said that he chose them, but one of the twelve obeys the devil. This disciple's name is Judas and he will betray Jesus later.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The larger group of disciples that would leave Jesus
- The 12 disciples who are closest to Jesus
- Simon Peter

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Be sure to show that this story continues from the previous story. Also based on the previous story, Jesus and his disciples may still be at the synagogue at Capernaum. In a synagogue, there were other Jews. But in this story, Jesus is talking to his disciples. The most important thing in this story is the words of Jesus and the reaction of his disciples to his words.

In scene one, the disciples are grumbling about what Jesus said. This means that they are complaining, and they are disagreeing with what Jesus said. They ask, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" Nobody will tell Jesus that the disciples are grumbling but be sure to show that Jesus knows of it. Then, Jesus will ask two questions to make a statement rather than to look for an answer. Jesus asked, "Do you take offense at this? What if you were to see the Son of man ascending to where he was before?" When Jesus speaks about the Son of Man, he is referring to himself. When Jesus mentions ascending, be sure to show that Jesus is showing that he came from heaven. Then Jesus will compare between spirit and flesh. The Spirit refers to the Holy Spirit, and the flesh refers to humans. It will be important to show that it is the Spirit that gives life, not the flesh or humans. Some of the disciples do not believe, but Jesus is not surprised by this. Be sure that you show that Jesus knew from the beginning who among his disciples would not believe, and who would betray him. Jesus will end this scene by reminding his disciples about what he said about the Father. Without the Father's help, no person can come or believe in Jesus.

In scene two, many of the disciples would leave Jesus and stop following him. Jesus asks the twelve disciples if they would leave him too. But Simon Peter said to Jesus that they have no other place to go. They want to

continue following Jesus because Jesus has the teaching that will lead to eternal life. They also know that Jesus is the Holy One of God. Jesus said that he chose them, but one of the twelve is a devil. This means that one of the twelve disciples obeys the devil, the spiritual enemy of God. This disciple's name is Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, and he will betray Jesus later. It is John who gives this information, not any of the characters in the story. John gives this information so that those who read or listen to this story would know the person that Jesus is talking about.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When you're telling a story, how do you add information that is not part of the story, but you think that information might be helpful for your listeners to understand the story? Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 6:60–71 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The larger group of disciples that would leave Jesus
- The 12 disciples who are closest to Jesus
- Simon Peter

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, many of the disciples complained and could not accept the teachings of Jesus about eating his flesh and drinking his blood. Jesus explains that it is the Holy Spirit that helps people understand his teaching.

Pause the drama.

You may also ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like, "I know that these disciples are grumbling because they do not understand my teaching. I knew from the start that they would not believe me. I even know who will betray me," or "The words that I say will only make sense with the help of the Holy Spirit. The flesh cannot help them understand it." [end] Continue the drama.

In scene two, many of the disciples would leave Jesus and stop following him.

Pause the drama.

You may also ask the person playing Simon Peter or the 12 disciples who are closest to Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like, "Jesus' teachings will lead us to eternal life. So even though we have no place to go, we will follow him," or "We will follow Jesus wherever he goes, and whatever he says

because he is the Holy One of God." Jesus said that he chose them, but one of the twelve obeys the devil. This disciple's name is Judas and he will betray Jesus later.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 6:60–71 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The story begins with the disciples' reaction to what Jesus said. They said, "This is a **hard saying**; who can listen to it?" Here, the "hard saying" refers to what Jesus said when he said that people should eat his flesh, as well as drink his blood. This teaching by Jesus was too hard for some disciples to understand.

Jesus knew in himself that his disciples were grumbling or complaining about what he said. The word **grumbled** means that they disagreed and were not happy with what Jesus was saying. Translate grumble the way you have translated it before. Jesus said to his disciples, "Do you **take offense** at this?" When a person "takes offense" at something, he becomes angry and he either takes revenge or leaves the person who offended him. Jesus is making a statement that means his disciples should not take offense or be angry at him, or leave him.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or words you will use for **take offense**. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus also asked, "What if you were to see the **Son of man** ascending to where he was before?" Jesus is the Son of Man. This means that Jesus is God's appointed judge of all people. Translate the word Son of Man the same way you have translated this before. For more information on Son of Man refer to the Master Glossary. When Jesus spoke about the Son of Man **ascending to where he was before**, Jesus means that he will go up again and return to the place where he came from, which is heaven.

Jesus also said that anyone who eats his flesh and drinks his blood has **eternal life**, and Jesus will **raise him** on the **last day**. "Eternal life" means living with God forever. Jesus is saying that the people who believe and trust in him will live forever with God. Even when they die, Jesus will "raise them up," or make them alive again. Jesus will do this on the "last day," or on the day of judgment. Translate the words eternal life, raise him up, and last day the same way you have translated them before. For more information on eternal life, you may refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus also said it is the **Spirit** who gives life; the **flesh** is no help at all. The Spirit here probably refers to the **Holy Spirit**. This means it is the Holy Spirit that helps people understand what Jesus is teaching. The flesh refers to the strength that humans have. Jesus is saying that people who rely on their own strength or power cannot understand what Jesus is saying. Translate flesh the same way you have translated them before. Then, stop here and discuss what word or words you will use for spirit when it is actually referring to the Holy Spirit. For more information on the Holy Spirit, you may refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

When many of the disciples left Jesus and stopped following him, Jesus talked to the **Twelve**. The Twelve disciples are the first and closest disciples of Jesus because Jesus himself called them when he was starting his work. Simon Peter said that Jesus has the words of eternal life. Peter also said that they believe that Jesus is the **Holy One of God**. This is a title for Jesus that means Jesus is special, or set apart because he is the one that God sent to the world to give life to all the people in it. Translate "Holy One of God" the same way you have translated it before.

But Jesus said that one of the twelve is a **devil** and he would later **betray** Jesus. The devil is God's spiritual enemy. The devil is also another name for Satan. The word devil is sometimes used as a name for a chief over demons, or evil spirits. This disciple whose name is Judas will betray Jesus. This means that he will help their enemies or the people who hate Jesus to capture Jesus so they could kill him.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the words **devil** and **betray**. For more information on devil, demons, or Satan, you may refer to the Master Glossary.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 6:60–71

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3524296 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5948245 KB)

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John 7:1–10

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 7:1–10 and put it in your heart.

Listen to an audio version of John 7:1–10 three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God, and about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 7:1–10 in the easiest to understand version.

In the last passage, Simon Peter said that the disciples understood that God sent Jesus to give them what they needed to know about eternal life. But many of Jesus' other followers stopped following him. Then Jesus traveled around in Galilee. Galilee is an area of Israel. So, Jesus walked around visiting and teaching people and staying in various towns and villages in Galilee. Jesus did not want to visit Judea because the Jews there were looking for a way to kill Jesus. Here, John is talking about the Jewish leaders like the teachers of the law. Jerusalem is located in the area of Judea, and Jewish religious leaders mainly lived and taught in Jerusalem.

Stop here and look at the map of Galilee and Judea in Israel as a group. Pause this audio here.

It was close to the time of the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles or Feast of Tabernacles. This Festival of Tabernacles is also called the Festival of Shelters, or booths. It is an eight day festival that happens during the grape harvest. The Jewish celebrate it by living in the vineyards in temporary huts, or shelters, made of tree branches. The original purpose of living in the vineyards during this period was to guard the grape harvest against damages or destruction of animals. But later, this festival reminded the Jewish people of when they lived in tents while they wandered in the desert.

Stop here and look at the photo of shelters made of tree branches.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what are some harvest festivals your people often remember and celebrate? How do you celebrate these festivals? Pause this audio here.

Many Jews went to Jerusalem during the Festival of Tabernacles. If Jesus also went to Jerusalem, this would seem to be a good time for Jesus to teach many people. Jesus' brothers advised Jesus to leave Galilee and go to Judea so that his disciples there may see the works he is doing. A disciple can be any person who follows and learns from a specific religious teacher. In this case, Jesus' brothers are talking about others, besides the closest 12 disciples, who listen to Jesus. Jesus' brothers, sons of Mary and Joseph, are advising Jesus to go to Jerusalem because they misunderstand what Jesus is coming to do. Jesus' main purpose was to reveal who God is to people. Jesus' main purpose was not to make a public display of his power or prove who he was by doing a lot of miracles. However, Jesus' brothers think that Jesus needs to do a lot of miracles. They say, "No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these miracles, show yourself to the world." Jesus' brothers did not believe in him and why he even came.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story you know about family members who do not believe in another family member. Or, tell a story about family members who advise another family member to do something that they don't want to do. Pause this audio here.

Jesus told his brothers, "This is not the right time for me to go to Judea, but for you any time is good for you to go to Judea." Jesus is saying that he wants to choose the time carefully when he goes to Jerusalem. Jesus wants to make sure that he goes at a time that will be most effective for what he needs to do there.

Jesus tries to explain to his brothers that his role in the world is different from theirs. People do not have a reason to hate Jesus' brothers. However, Jesus tells people that their actions are evil, or against God. Therefore, people in the world hate Jesus. Then Jesus says, "You go to the Festival of Tabernacles. I am not going to this

festival, because this is still not yet the right time for me." Here Jesus may be saying that he will not go to Jerusalem in time for the first day. Jesus thinks it will be better to arrive after everyone else is already at the festival and ready for teachers to come and teach them. Jesus wants to go to the feast as a teacher. The teachers in that culture usually did not come to teach at a festival like this until everyone else had gathered. After Jesus had said this, he stayed in Galilee. However, after Jesus' brothers had left for the Festival of Tabernacles, Jesus also went to the festival, without people knowing he was going there secretly.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe religious festivals in your culture. When do teachers teach? When do teachers arrive? Where do people go, and what do people do during your religious festivals? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 7:1–10 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This story has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: John tells us that Jesus traveled around Galilee teaching. Jesus did not go to Judea because the religious leaders were looking for an opportunity to kill him.

In the second scene: The Jewish people will soon celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles in Jerusalem in Judea, and Jesus' brothers advised Jesus to go to Judea and show his miraculous power.

In the third scene: Jesus told his brothers that he is different from them. Jesus said that this is not the right time for him to go to Judea.

In the fourth scene: Jesus' brothers went to Judea, and later, Jesus secretly went also.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' brothers

This story begins some time after Jesus' closest disciples understand that God sent Jesus. We do not know how long after. In scene one, John says that Jesus visited and taught people and stayed in various towns and villages in Galilee. It is important to remember that Jesus would not go to Judea because the Jewish authorities were looking for an opportunity to kill him. Also remember that the area of Judea is where the Jewish religious leaders mainly lived and taught in the main city of Jerusalem.

Stop here and find an object to represent Jesus. Maybe you can use a male figure item or a stick.

Stop here and find an object to represent various towns and villages. Maybe you can use boxes or some stones. Pause this audio here.

In scene two, this Festival of Tabernacles is a Jewish celebration for eight days, with the first and eighth days both meant to be holidays and days of rest. The festival happens during the grape harvest. It is important to remember the Feast of Tabernacles is the most popular of all Jewish festivals. Therefore, the Jewish people celebrate this festival by living in the vineyards in temporary huts made of tree branches during this period in order to guard the grape harvest against damages or destruction of animals. Jesus' brothers wanted Jesus to show himself to the world during the most popular of all Jewish festivals by doing some miracles. They thought it would be good for him for people to recognize he has power. It is important to remember that Jesus' brothers who are younger than him misunderstood the nature of Jesus' mission. Jesus' purpose was to reveal the true nature of God. Jesus' own brothers did not even believe in His mission.

Find an object to represent the Festival of Tabernacles. Maybe you can use festival items in your culture or some items like clothes.

Find characters to represent Jesus and some people to represent Jesus' brothers. Maybe an older person or younger person.

Find objects to represent various vineyards and huts made of tree branches.

In scene three, Jesus explained to his brothers why he did not want to go to the festival in Judea at that time. Jesus did not think that it was best for him to walk into the festival at the same time as everyone else. But his brothers could go to the festival any time they wanted. Jesus speaks of the world as his enemy. It is important to remember that Jesus' teaching and attitude were different from most people. People in general had no reason to hate Jesus' brothers because their attitude agreed with that of the world. Jesus stayed in Galilee.

However, after Jesus' brothers left for Jerusalem, Jesus did go to the Festival, though he went secretly and in his own way.

Now, tell the passage with the help of the objects you collected. You can also make a storyboard of the passage and then tell the passage again. Maybe you can even think of another way to visualize the passage! Pause the audio and do this activity.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 7:1–10 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus
- Jesus' brothers

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, find a way to act out that Jesus traveled around visiting and teaching people and staying in various towns and villages in Galilee. Jesus did not want to go to Judea because the Jewish religious leaders who live in Judea were looking for an opportunity to kill him.

Pause the drama.

In scene two, find a way and do some activities showing that during the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles Jesus' brothers advised Jesus to leave Galilee and go to Judea so that his disciples there may see the works He is doing, because no one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. They say, "Since you are doing these miracles, go and show yourself to the world." Jesus' own brothers did not even believe in His mission.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Jesus' brothers, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Who does Jesus think he is? Just because he did some miracles, he is already feeling like a superstar. Now here is the most popular festival, let's see if he can do another miracle," or "If Jesus is really the Messiah, he needs to show everyone! He shouldn't be acting in secret here! He should show everyone in Jerusalem!" [!end] Restart the drama.

In the third scene, Jesus told his brothers that this is not the right time to go to Judea, but for them any time is good for them to go to Judea. Jesus said, "The people of the world cannot hate you, but for me, they do hate me

because I tell them that their deeds or works are evil." After Jesus had said this, he stayed in Galilee. Later, Jesus also went to the festival secretly.

Stop the drama.

Ask the people playing Jesus' brothers, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Well! We hope we will later understand what he meant when he said the people of the world cannot hate us." [!end] Restart the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 7:1–10 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus was going through **Galilee** and did not want to go to **Judea**. Both Galilee and Judea are in the Master Glossary. Jesus did not want to go about in Judea because the **Jews** who live in Judea were looking for a way to kill him. The Jews were the Jewish leaders who were teachers of the law or scribes as the people who wrote down the law. They were scholars and experts on the interpretations of the law from the Holy Scriptures.

*Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **Jewish leaders**. Pause this audio here.*

The Jewish **Festival of Tabernacles** was near. This festival is also called the Festival of Shelters, or Booths, which reminds Jews how they lived in tents while they were wandering in the desert after God rescued them from slavery in Egypt. Look up Festival of Tabernacles in the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss what word you will use for Jewish **Festival of Tabernacles**. Pause this audio here.*

So, Jesus' brothers advised Jesus to leave Galilee and go to Judea so that his **disciples** there may see the miracles and teachings he was doing. A disciple is a person who follows and learns from a specific religious teacher about God, faith, and life. Jesus' closest followers were with him for much of his public ministry, traveling with him everywhere, learning from him, and sometimes being sent out by him to preach the good news of the Kingdom and heal the sick. But the disciples in Judea were not part of the 12 disciples. They were other people who also learned from Jesus and followed him. Remember, disciples is in the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and look up **disciples** in the Master Glossary if needed and use the same word for disciples that you have used in previous passages.*

Therefore Jesus told them, "This is not the right time to go to Judea, but for you any time is good for you to go to Judea. The people of the world cannot hate you, but for me, they do hate me because I tell them that their deeds or works are **evil**. Evil refers to anything that comes against God. It is the opposite of good in that it is not right: it is a wrong thing to do or a bad thing. Remember evil is in the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **evil**. Pause this audio here.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of John 7:1–10 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 7:1–10

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3092473 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 7:11–24

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 7:11–24 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 7:11–24 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 7:11-24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Jesus stayed in Galilee after his brothers had to travel to Jerusalem to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles. Later Jesus went after his brothers quietly, or secretly, to celebrate the festival as well. So, during the festival celebration, the Jewish leaders were looking and asking where that man was, because they had expected Jesus to be at the festival and the Jewish leaders wanted to know where he was. Here John is referring to the Jewish leaders as simply "the Jews." They were the Jewish religious leaders or Jewish authorities who opposed Jesus and wanted to kill him.

So, at that moment the crowd started grumbling a lot about Jesus because many of them were not happy about what Jesus had been saying and doing. They argued about who Jesus was. Some said he was a good man while others said he deceived people. But the crowd refused to say anything publicly about Jesus because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Everyone preferred to wait until the Jewish religious leaders' decision was made public about if Jesus is a deceiver.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: In your culture, what are some of your traditional festivals you celebrate or observe yearly? Pause this audio here.

While the Jewish people were in the middle of celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus went up and entered the temple, the Jewish place of worship in Jerusalem. Jesus began to teach. Perhaps Jesus wanted to enter the festival at the most important time. When Jesus "went up" it refers to going to a higher place, like a hill, because the temple was on high ground. The Jews there were amazed at his teaching and asked, "How did this man get such learning without having been taught?" Here the Jewish religious leaders realized the fact that Jesus' teaching showed that he understood the Jewish Law and Scriptures without a rabbi or professional teacher having taught him.

Stop here and look at a picture of the temple as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then, Jesus answered the Jewish leaders, "My message is not my own ideas, and this message comes from God who sent me here. Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." Here Jesus is trying to let the Jewish leaders know that he is one of the true teachers and an example of a true teacher, even though no rabbi or religious teacher has taught Jesus. Then Jesus continues to say that a person who expresses his own ideas is trying to find glory or praise for himself. But the true person wants people to glorify or praise God who sent him. And his teaching is not to deceive other people. It is important to remember that Jesus is saying to the Jewish religious leaders that other teachers might use human ideas or authorities as the source for their opinions, but God himself was the source of Jesus' teaching. So instead of assessing Jesus' teaching in terms of what other traditional ideas or authorities had to say on the subject, people should consider how Jesus' teaching related to the will of God. If they really wanted to do God's will, they would be able to come to a correct judgment about what Jesus was teaching. And remember that Jesus also suggested a test they could use to see whether teaching did come from human opinion or traditional ideas or did not come from God. The test was whether the teacher was seeking his or her own glory or the glory of God.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: In your culture discuss situations where a king or chief sent his servant to deliver a message, but the servant went and delivered a different message. Why do you think the servant tells a different message? How does a true servant bring honor and praise to the king or chief when he goes with a message? Pause this audio here.

And Jesus also said to the Jewish leaders, "Has not Moses given you the law? Still, not one of you keeps the law. Why are you trying to kill me?" Here Jesus is trying to tell the Jewish leaders that it was Moses who long ago gave them the law of God. Not one of the Jewish leaders obeys the law or does what Moses taught them. Then Jesus said, "Why are you looking for an opportunity to kill me?" Jesus was pointing out that wanting to kill him was against the law of Moses that said, "You shall not murder." So, all the people who had been speaking or arguing among the crowd said to Jesus, "You are possessed by a demon." Here the crowd was saying that an evil spirit caused Jesus to think that people wanted to kill him. A demon refers to a spiritual being who serves Satan.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In your culture, what happens when a religious leader breaks religious law? What happens to a person who points out that the religious leaders are wrong? Pause this audio here.

Jesus replied to the crowd, "I did that one miracle on the Sabbath and you were all surprised or amazed." Sabbath here means the religious day of worship and rest, which begins from Friday evening to Saturday evening in the Jewish culture. So, Jesus further said to the crowd, "Moses ordered you to circumcise your sons on the Sabbath." Circumcision is a sign that the male is an inheritor of the covenant made between God and Abraham. Circumcision was a sign that the boy was a part of God's chosen people Israel and that God's promises applied to him. Circumcision is the Jewish custom of cutting off the loose skin at the end of a boy's penis. This was usually performed by the father or a man who specialized in it one week after the baby boy's birth. Jesus goes on to say, "Now if a boy can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing a man's whole body on the Sabbath?" Here Jesus is saying that Moses commanded Jews to circumcise their sons on the eighth day, a command that Moses inherited from his ancestors like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are the founders of the Jewish nation. According to Jewish teaching, the law of circumcision had priority over the law of the Sabbath day. So, Jesus argues that it is more than just circumcision that has priority over the law of the Sabbath. Then Jesus said that the law of mercy has priority over the Sabbath day, since it concerns a man's whole body. So, Jesus said to the Jewish leaders, "Stop judging by what you see on the surface. Instead judge according to the truth, justice, or fairness."

Stop here and discuss as a group: Talk about situations in your culture when someone tried to save a life, but they were condemned for it instead of thanked. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 7:11–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: The Jewish religious leaders were looking for an opportunity to kill Jesus during the celebration of the Festival of Tabernacles.

In the second scene: Jesus went into the temple to teach and the Jewish people were amazed at his teaching.

In the third scene: Jesus challenged the Jewish religious leaders that his teaching is not from human idea but God's idea, but they still wanted to kill him.

In the fourth scene: Jesus reminded the Jewish religious leaders the Law God gave to Moses on the practice of circumcision and the day of Sabbath.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Jewish religious leaders
- The crowd in the temple

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, John says that during the celebration of the Festival of Tabernacles, the Jewish leaders were looking for Jesus and asked people, "Where is he?" It is important to remember that the Jewish religious leaders were asking people to tell them where Jesus was. And remember that they Jewish leaders say, "Where is he?" or "Where is that man?" This is a way to insult Jesus or show he has no respect, and it shows that the Jewish leaders did not think that Jesus was a good man. So, at that moment the crowd started grumbling a lot about Jesus. It is important to remember that the crowd was whispering to each other during the arguments for fear of the Jews authorities. And remember that someone might get into trouble with the Jewish authorities for saying openly that Jesus was a good man.

In the second scene, John tells us that Jesus entered the temple and he began to teach. Remember that Jesus came "midway through the festival," which means that Jesus probably came 2 to 4 days after the eight day festival had begun. The Jews there were amazed at his teaching and asked, "How did this man get such learning without anyone teaching him?" It is important to remember that the Jewish religious leaders knew that Jesus was a Galilean carpenter who had no formal education in theology. But what he was saying showed that Jesus knew what he was talking about. And remember that Jewish religious leaders came to realize Jesus had learned so much about the Law or Scriptures without studying under them.

In the third scene, Jesus answered the Jewish leaders, to explain why he knew so much without being taught by them: "My message is not my own ideas, and this message comes from God who sent me here. Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." Then Jesus continues to say that a person who expresses his own ideas is trying to find glory or praise for himself. But the true person wants people to glorify or praise God who sent him. And Jesus' teaching is not to deceive other people.

In the fourth scene, Jesus also reminded the Jewish leaders that, "It was Moses who gave you the law. Still not one of you keeps the law. Why are you trying to kill me?" Jesus does not expect them to answer these questions. Jesus is saying that Moses gave the people the law, and they do not keep it. Instead, they are trying to kill him. So, all the people who had been speaking or arguing among the crowd said to Jesus, "You are possessed by a demon who makes you think that people are trying to kill you." It is important to remember that the people used a strong statement here that Jesus was wrong, that no one is trying to kill Jesus. And remember that they thought it was the evil spirit that entered him that made Jesus think like that. Then Jesus replied to the crowd, "When I did that one miracle on the Sabbath you were all surprised or amazed." So, Jesus further said to the crowd, "Moses ordered you to circumcise your sons on the Sabbath."

Now John stops the story and gives a bit of background information. John says that circumcision actually started before Moses' time, with the patriarchs, or the founding fathers of Israel. These men-Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob-lived hundreds of years before Moses!

Jesus goes on to say, "Stop judging by what you see on the surface. Instead judge according to the truth, justice, or fairness." It is important to remember that the people were angry with Jesus because he made someone completely well on the Sabbath. And remember that Jesus was rebuking the people for making judgments based on what things look like on the outside or their appearance as opposed to how they thought in their hearts and their intentions.

As a group, find a plain sheet or card board paper and draw.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it. You may want to think of other ways to better visualize the passage when you draw.

Pause the audio and collect your materials for your activities.

Pause the audio and do this activity.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 7:11-24 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 4 scenes.

The character in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Jewish religious leaders
- The crowd in the temple

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, during the celebration of the Festival of Tabernacles, the Jewish leaders were looking for Jesus and asked people, "Where is Jesus-where is that man?" So, at that moment the crowd started grumbling a lot about Jesus. They argued about who Jesus was: Some said he was a good man while others said he deceived people.

Stop the action.

Ask the people playing in the crowd, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "We are afraid we don't want to get into trouble with our religious authorities. It is better to keep quiet." [!end] Continue the drama.

In the second scene, Jesus entered the temple and he began to teach. The Jews there were amazed at his teaching and asked, "How did this man get such learning without having been taught by a teacher?"

Stop the action.

Ask the people playing the Jewish people, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Wow! His teaching shows that he understands and has a good knowledge of what he is teaching." [!end] Continue the drama.

In the third scene, Jesus answered the Jewish leaders, "My message is not my own ideas, and this message comes from God who sent me here. Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. And a person who expresses his own ideas is trying to find glory or praise for himself. But the true person wants people to glorify or praise God who sent him. And his teaching is not to deceive other people."

Stop the action.

Ask the people playing the Jewish religious leaders, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "This Jesus is trying to deceive people and get praise from them." [!end] Continue the drama.

In the fourth scene, Jesus said to the Jewish leaders that, "It was Moses who gave you the law and none of you keeps the law. Why are you trying to kill me?"

So, all the people who had been speaking or arguing among the crowd said to Jesus, "You are possessed by a demon who makes you think people are trying to kill you."

Then Jesus replied to the crowd, "I did that one miracle on the Sabbath and you were all surprised or amazed. And Moses ordered you to circumcise your sons on the Sabbath. Stop judging by what you see on the surface. Instead judge according to truth, justice, or fairness."

Stop the action.

Ask the people playing the Jews, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "We are really angry with Jesus because he broke our law by healing someone on the Sabbath." [!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 7:11–24 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

During the celebration of the Festival of Tabernacles, the **Jewish leaders** were looking for Jesus and asked people, "Where is Jesus?" The Jews were the Jewish leaders who were teachers of the law or scribes as the people who wrote down the law. They were scholars and experts on the interpretations of the law from the Holy Scriptures. Use the same phrase for Jewish leaders that you used in previous passages.

Jesus entered the **temple** and he began to teach. Temples are usually the name given to a place of worship where sacrifices are made to honor the god of the temple. Temple can be translated as the home where God lived among his people. The Jewish priests made sacrifices in the temple so that God would forgive the people's sins, and to give thanks to God. The temple was built so that people could worship God and special priests could bring sacrifices to God. Translate temple in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that temple is in the Master Glossary.

A person who expresses his own ideas is trying to find **glory** or praise for himself. But the true person wants people to glorify, or praise, God who sent him. Glory can sometimes be translated as to speak well about someone or to give them honor. It is most often used when talking about praising, honoring, and speaking well about God. To glorify or praise God means to recognize that God deserves honor and then to speak well of him. Translate glory in the same way you did in previous passages, and remember that glory is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus said to the Jewish leaders that, "It was Moses who gave you the **law** and none of you keeps the law." The **law of Moses** can be translated as the rules from God that Moses shared with the Jewish people to tell them how to live. Sometimes the word law is mentioned alone, but it refers to the law God gave the Jews through Moses. Translate law in the same way you did in previous passages, and remember that law is in the Master Glossary.

The people who had been speaking or arguing among the crowd said to Jesus, "You are possessed by a **demon** who is trying to kill you. A demon can be translated as evil spiritual beings who serve Satan as his agents and are under his authority. These spiritual beings have the power to oppress a human being and even take control of him.

Stop here and look up demon in the Master Glossary. Discuss what word you will use for demon. Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus replied to the crowd, "I did that one **miracle** on the Sabbath and you are all surprised, or amazed." Miracles refers to powerful actions that only God can do, and make people be in awe of God. Miracles, signs, and wonders all sometimes mean the same thing that happens in order to show people something important to them.

*Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **miracles**. Remember that miracles are in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus told the people, "Moses ordered you to **circumcise** your sons on the Sabbath." Circumcision is the Jewish custom of cutting off the loose skin at the end of a boy's penis. This was usually performed by the father or a man who specialized in it one week after the baby boy's birth.

*Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **circumcision**. Remember that circumcision is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.*

Use the same word for **Sabbath** as you have previously. The Jewish people observed the Sabbath day as a day of rest and worship from the time that God gave them this command. This was considered the seventh day of the week. This was also the day that people went to the synagogue to worship. Remember that Sabbath is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in their own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 7:11–24

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3929277 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 7:25-36

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 7:25-36 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 7:25-36 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 7:25-36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage John tells us that Jesus went to the festival in Jerusalem and began to teach in the temple. Everyone was amazed at how well he taught. Now some of the people living in Jerusalem began to ask, "Is not this Jesus whom our leaders or rulers are trying to kill? And look, he is speaking publicly and no one has said anything to challenge or rebuke him. Is it possible that our Jewish leaders or rulers have decided that Jesus really is the Messiah or Christ?"

Messiah means someone whom God has anointed, or appointed for a special task. Here John is trying to tell us that people or citizens living in Jerusalem were surprised and began to talk about Jesus' teaching. The people were confused because they did not understand why the Jewish leaders allowed Jesus to teach in public. They expected the Jewish leaders to arrest and kill Jesus. They wondered if the Jewish leaders now believed that Jesus was the Messiah. Then the people continue to say that they know where Jesus comes from, but when the real Messiah or Christ arrives they will not know where he comes from. Some Jewish people interpreted their Scriptures to say that people would not know details about where the Messiah would come from. Here the people talking among the crowd did not think that Jesus was the Messiah, but some other prophet. People talking about Jesus thought that the Messiah had not yet come. So, they are still waiting for the Messiah to come. They had thought that the Messiah would just come or appear and no one would know where he had come from.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group:

- In your culture, how would people react to someone who tells the truth to traditional leaders or rulers who oppose them?
- How would the leaders react to them?
- How would people in your community react to leaders who hate the truth? Pause this audio here.

So, while Jesus was still teaching the people in the temple, then Jesus spoke out loudly so that everyone could hear. Jesus said, "You think that you know me and know where I came from. I did not come here on my own decision. Rather, I am sent by God, the one who is trustworthy and reliable. You do not know him. I am the one who knows God because I came from him and he sent me to you." Here Jesus is saying that the people talking about him in Jerusalem knew his human parents, but they did not know God, who had sent him into the world. Jesus, however, does know God because he is from God. As a person speaking on behalf of God who is true, he has an important message that everyone should listen to him. So, after Jesus said this, the Jewish people tried to grab him, but not one of them could grab him or seize him because it was not yet the time God had appointed

for Jesus to be arrested. Jesus is in control of what happens to him, because God sent him and God is in total control. But among the crowd there were many people who believed in Jesus. They said to one other, "When Messiah appears on earth, he will not do any more signs or miracles than Jesus has already done." Here John is saying that even though some of the people and their leaders oppose Jesus and attempt to seize or grab him, many people in the crowd believed in Jesus. They believed that Jesus had done what the Messiah would do and that there was no way anyone else could do more miraculous signs than what Jesus had done. Because of these miraculous signs, Jesus must be the Messiah.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In your culture, discuss situations when a king or chief sent his servant to deliver an important message, and some people believe his message while other people don't want to listen to the servant because the servant did not come from an important family or village.

Then the Pharisees heard the crowd speaking quietly among themselves about Jesus. So, the chief priests and the Pharisees sent temple guards to arrest Jesus and take him to prison. Jesus said to the crowd, "I am only here for a short time to be with you and after that I will go back to God who sent me to you. You will look for me, but you will not be able to find me. Where I will be, you will not be able to come." Jesus has been with God from eternity past, is present with him as he speaks, and will be with him in eternity. He would go to his Father in heaven, and that was why those who were listening to Jesus would not be able to find him. When Jesus said the time was indeed short, Jesus said that almost six months before his crucifixion. Jesus said that the Jews might try to arrest him now, but soon they would not even be able to find him to arrest him because Jesus' time on earth as a human would be ended. Therefore, the Jewish leaders asked each other, "Where does Jesus plan to go to prevent or keep us from finding him? Does he mean that he will go to the Gentiles or Greek people who live abroad, among foreigners and teach those foreign people?" Gentiles refers to non-Jewish people. What could he mean when he said, "You will look for me, but you will not be able to find me," and "Where I am, you cannot come?" The Jewish leaders did not ask this question in order to learn the answer. Instead, they were saying that Jesus did not make sense.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time when your community received a message from a messenger, but they did not understand it. It did not make sense to them. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 7:25-36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus is still in the temple courts teaching. The people living in Jerusalem were surprised at Jesus' teaching.

In the second scene: Jesus said, "You know me and you know where I am from. God sent me."

In the third scene: The chief priests and the Pharisees sent temple guards to arrest Jesus and take him to prison.

The character in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Jewish religious leaders
- The crowd

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This scene continues the previous passage. Jesus is still in the temple teaching. The Jewish people living in Jerusalem were surprised by Jesus' teaching. They began to talk with each other. John says that some of the people living in Jerusalem were surprised and began to publicly talk about Jesus' teaching, or preaching. It is important to remember that the Jewish authorities did not believe that Jesus was the Christ and were actually

trying to kill Jesus. And remember that the people in Jerusalem were very surprised that the Jewish authorities allowed Jesus to teach or preach publicly and they did not stop him.

In the second scene, Jesus was still teaching the people in the temple, then Jesus spoke out loudly so that everyone could hear him. It is important to remember that Jesus was not trying to avoid the Jewish authorities by teaching in secret. The Jews know the Messiah would be the anointed one and used this title to refer to the person whom God appointed and promised to send as king and savior. But the people all knew that Jesus was from the town called Nazareth in Galilee and he was often called "Jesus of Nazareth." And remember that the people did not think that Jesus was the Messiah, so they thought that the Messiah had not yet come. Some of the people listening were angry and wanted to grab Jesus, but many others believed that he was the Messiah. They ask a question that they do not expect an answer to. They ask, "When the Messiah comes, will he do more miracles than this man?" They are saying that Jesus has done many miracles, so he must be the Messiah.

In the third scene: So, the chief priests and the Pharisees sent temple police to try to arrest Jesus, but they could not do it at that point. It is important to remember that it was because it was not the right moment or hour for Jesus to be arrested. Then Jesus said to the crowd, "I am only here for a short time to be with you, and after that I will go back to God who sent me to you. You will look for me, but you will not be able to find me." And remember that the people who believe in Jesus as the Messiah will want Jesus to help them in some way. The Jewish leaders asked each other, "What does he mean by 'you will look for me, but you will not be able to find me'?" It is important to remember that the Jewish religious leaders did not think that Jesus could go somewhere that they could not find him.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it. You may want to think of other ways to better visualize the passage when you draw.

Pause the audio and collect your materials for your activities.

Pause the audio and do this activity.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 7:25-36 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

The character in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Jewish religious leaders
- The crowd in the temple

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, the crowds began to believe that Jesus was the Messiah but the Jewish religious leaders tried to arrest Jesus and kill him. Then some of the people living in Jerusalem began to ask, "Is not this Jesus whom our leaders or rulers are trying to kill? And look, he is speaking publicly and no one has said anything to challenge or rebuke him. Is it possible that our leaders or rulers have decided that Jesus really is the Messiah?"

Then the people continue to say, "We know that this Jesus comes from Nazareth, but when the real Messiah arrives we will not know where he comes from."

Stop the action.

In the second scene, while Jesus was still teaching the people in the temple, then Jesus spoke out loudly that everyone could hear saying, "You think that you know me and know where I came from. I did not come here on my own decision. Rather, I am sent by God, the one who is true and you do not know him. I am the one who knows God because I came from him and he sent me to you."

After Jesus said this, the Jews tried to arrest him, but not one of them could grab him or seize him because it was not yet the time God had appointed for Jesus to be arrested. But among the crowd there were many people who believed in Jesus. They said to one other, "When Christ appears on earth, he will not do any more signs or miracles than Jesus has already done?"

Stop the action.

Ask the people playing the Jewish people or crowd, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Well! Some of us believe that Jesus is the Messiah from his teaching and miraculous signs." [!end] Continue the drama.

In the third scene, The Pharisees heard the crowd speaking quietly among themselves about Jesus. So, the chief priests and the Pharisees sent temple guards to arrest Jesus and take him to prison. Jesus said to the crowd, "I am only here for a short time to be with you and after that I will go back to God who sent me to you. You will look for me, but you will not be able to find me. Where I will be, you will not be able to come." Then Jewish leaders asked each other, "Where does Jesus plan to go to prevent or keep us from finding him? Does he mean that he will go to the Jewish people who live abroad, among foreigners, and teach those foreign people? What could he mean when he said, 'You will look for me, but you will not be able to find me' and 'Where I am, you cannot come'?"

Stop the action.

Ask the people playing the Jewish religious leaders, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "This Jesus kept deceiving people because all he had been saying doesn't make any sense." [!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 7:25-36 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Now some of the people living in **Jerusalem** began to ask, "Is not this Jesus whom our leaders or rulers are trying to kill?" Jerusalem is the name of the religious capital of the Jewish people. The official place where Jews went to sacrifice to God, the temple, was located in Jerusalem. This was the holiest place for Jewish people, and the place where the leaders of Jewish religious law met. And remember that Jerusalem is in the Master Glossary.

Now some of the people living in Jerusalem began to ask, "Is not this Jesus whom **Jewish leaders** or rulers are trying to kill?" And look, he is speaking publicly and no one has said anything to challenge or rebuke him. The Jewish leaders were teachers of the law or scribes as the people who wrote down the law. They were scholars and experts on the interpretations of the law from the Holy Scriptures. Use the same phrase for Jewish leaders that you used in previous passages.

"Is it possible that our Jewish leaders or rulers have decided that Jesus really is the **Messiah** or Christ?" Messiah means someone whom God has anointed, or appointed for a special task. Translate Messiah in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Messiah is in the Master Glossary.

While Jesus was still teaching the people in the **temple**, then Jesus spoke out loudly that everyone could hear saying, "You think that you know me and know where I came from." temples are usually the name given to a place of worship where sacrifices are made to honor the god of the temple. Temple can be translated as the home where God lived among his people. The Jewish priests made sacrifices in the temple so that God would forgive the people's sins, and to give thanks to God. The temple was built so that people could worship God and

special priests could bring sacrifices to God. Translate temple in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that temple is in the Master Glossary.

They said to one other, "When Christ appears on earth, he will not do any more **signs** or **miracles** than Jesus has already done." Miracles refers to powerful actions that only God can do, and make people be in awe of God. Miracles, signs, and wonders all sometimes mean the same thing that happens in order to show people something important to them.

*Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **miracles**. Remember that miracles are in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.*

So, the **chief priests** and the **Pharisees** sent temple guards to arrest Jesus and take him to prison.

The chief priests were the leading priests. Priests made special sacrifices for the Jewish people in the temple. Priests were God's representative to his people and his people's representative to God. Translate priests and Pharisees in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that priests and Pharisees are in the Master Glossary.

The Jewish leaders asked each other, "Where does Jesus plan to go to prevent or keep us from finding him? Does he mean that he will go to the **Greeks**, or **Gentiles**, people who live abroad, among foreigners and teach those foreign people?" The term Greeks often refers to Gentiles or people who are not Jews. Jews did not have a high opinion of Gentiles because Gentiles were not a part of God's family in their view. And sometimes Gentile really means all nations or all the world including pagans and those who do not know God, and remember that Greeks and Gentiles are in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in their own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 7:25-36

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3161043 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5393747 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 7:37-44

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 7:37-44 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 7:37-44 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 7:37-44 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Jesus is in Jerusalem for the Festival of Tabernacles. John tells us that the people in Jerusalem wondered if Jesus was the Messiah. Now, the last day of the feast is the most important day of the Festival of Tabernacles or Shelters. This day is the seventh or eighth day of the festival. This festival usually happens towards the coming of the end of the long dry season in Israel and is also an occasion for prayers for rain. Each day of the festival, a procession would go down to the Gihon spring on the southeast side of the temple hill. There a priest would fill a golden pitcher with water, and the choir would repeat the words, "With joy you will draw water from the well of salvation." Then the procession would go up to the temple through the gate called the Water Gate.

The priest would go up the sloping surface to the altar and pour the water into a silver funnel, through which it would flow to the ground. It may have been at this point that Jesus stood and made a public declaration. Jesus

used physical thirst to represent spiritual thirst. Jesus said, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as it is written in the Scriptures, from inside of him will flow water that brings life." Most likely, Jesus is saying that anyone who wants to know more about God can come to Jesus, and he will provide what is needed to believe, just like water provides what is needed for a thirsty person. Then, Jesus seems to say that when people believe in Jesus, they also become a source for life-giving water for other people. Jesus says that the Jewish Scriptures explain this, although Jesus does not tell us where we can find this information in the Scriptures. Some Bible scholars believe that the water that brings life will flow from Jesus himself. However, we know that every believer in Jesus has God's Holy Spirit, so it could be possible that the water that brings life flows from believers, because they believe in Jesus and have God's Spirit.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Talk about a time when a respected teacher in your culture made a public promise during a cultural or religious festival. Pause this audio here.

Now John gives us an explanation of what Jesus is saying. When Jesus spoke about the living water, Jesus was talking about God's Holy Spirit whom the people who believed or trusted in him would later receive. At that time, Jesus had not yet given God's Spirit, because Jesus had not yet returned to heaven to receive glory or honor from God the Father.

When the people heard Jesus' words, some of them began to say, "Jesus must be the Prophet that Moses wrote about long ago." Some people said, "Jesus must be the Messiah, the Promised Savior!" But other people disagreed and they said, "How can the Messiah come out of the area of Galilee? Do you not know that the Scriptures say that the Messiah will be descended from King David and that he will be from Bethlehem, David's village, or town?" A Jewish prophet had predicted many years before Jesus that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. These people are surprised, because they only know that Jesus is from Galilee. They did not realise that Jesus was in fact born in Bethlehem and was a descendant of King David!

Stop here and show the map of Galilee and Bethlehem. Pause this audio here.

So, the people could not agree with each other about Jesus. Some of the people wanted the authorities to seize or arrest Jesus, but they did not do anything to him. Here the words of Jesus split the crowd. There were those who said Jesus was the Prophet who they thought would prepare the way for the Messiah. Some said Jesus was the Messiah they had been waiting for. Some said that Jesus could not be the Messiah because he came from Galilee and not from Bethlehem, the town of David.

Stop here and show the map of Galilee. Pause this audio here.

These people did not know the story of his birth. These were the people who did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah. They wanted to stop him from teaching the people by getting the police to arrest him. They did not want to arrest Jesus themselves, but rather they wanted the temple police to arrest him.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Talk about times in your culture where someone fulfilled a promise. However, the promise, which should have been a good thing, caused disagreement and division among your people. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 7:37-44 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus promised the people living water.

In the second scene: The people were divided about who Jesus really was.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The crowd

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the previous passages, John tells us that the people in Jerusalem wondered if Jesus was the Messiah. Now, the last day of the feast is the most important day of the Festival of Tabernacles, or Shelters. It is important to remember that during the Festival of Tabernacles the Jewish people remembered how God provided what they needed. God provided water for them in the past and continued to do so. So, Jesus stood up and declared publicly, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink, whoever believes in me as it is written in the scriptures, 'From inside him will flow the water that brings life.'" Jesus is using picture language. Jesus is saying that water is like full life that lasts forever with God. Jesus compares being thirsty for water to wanting to know God and have life forever with God.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Find examples in your language of how you talk about wanting something very much. Maybe tell a story about someone who wanted knowledge very much. What kinds of words or phrases do you use to talk about that? Pause this audio here.

Now Jesus spoke about the living water. Jesus was talking about God's Holy Spirit whom the people who believed or trusted in him would later receive. Jesus says that the living water will flow out of people who believe and drink from the water that Jesus gives. This means that people will have the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit will affect how they treat others. Jesus says that the living water will flow from their heart. The heart represents the place where emotions and intentions are in a person.

Stop here and discuss as a team: How do you talk about the innermost parts of a person-about their thoughts and emotions? Pause this audio here.

John now gives the reader extra information about what the living water symbolizes so that they will understand what Jesus said. John also gives us more explanation about the Holy Spirit. At that time, Jesus had not yet given God's Spirit because Jesus had not yet returned to heaven to receive honor from God the Father.

In the second scene, when the people heard his words, some of them began to say, "Jesus must be the Prophet that Moses wrote about long ago." It is important to remember that some believers believed the facts about who Jesus was as the Messiah and what he did. But other people disagreed and they said, "How can the Messiah come out of the area of Galilee? Do you not know that the Scriptures say that the Messiah will be descended from King David and that he will be from Bethlehem, David's village or town?" The people expected the answer to these questions to be "yes." The people are surprised, because they think that Jesus is not descended from King David and that he is not from Bethlehem, and therefore he can't be the Messiah. They do not have full information about Jesus. So, the people could not agree with each other about Jesus. Some of the people wanted the authorities to seize or arrest Jesus, but they did not do anything to him. Jewish people did not all understand the Scriptures in the same way.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 7:37-44 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatize the story.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus promised the people living water.

In the second scene: The people were divided about who Jesus really was.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The crowd

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the previous passage, the people in Jerusalem wondered if Jesus was the Messiah. Now the last day of the feast is the most important day of the Festival of Tabernacles, or Shelters. Jesus stood up and declared publicly, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as it is written in the scriptures, 'From inside him will flow the water that brings life.'"

Pause the action.

Then John gives us extra information. John says that when Jesus was talking about living water, Jesus was talking about God's Holy Spirit whom the people who believed or trusted in him would later receive. At that time, God's Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet returned to heaven to receive honor from God the Father.

In the second scene, when the people heard his words, some of them began to say, "Jesus must be the Prophet that Moses wrote about long ago." But other people disagreed and they said, "How can the Messiah or Christ come out of the area of Galilee? Do you not know that the Scriptures say that the Messiah will be descended from King David and that he will be from Bethlehem, David's village or town?" So, the people could not agree with each other about Jesus. Some of the people wanted the authorities to seize or arrest Jesus, but they did not do anything to him.

Pause the action.

Ask the people playing the crowd, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Well, as you can all see there is a huge disagreement among us which has already caused a division. We all need to come to the understanding of what the Scriptures had said about the Messiah. We are confused, we are angry with the others who disagree with us."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 7:37-44 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The last day of the feast is the most important day of the **Festival of Tabernacles**. This festival is also called the Festival of Shelters or Booths. The festival reminds Jews how they lived in tents while they were wandering in the desert after God rescued them from slavery in Egypt. Translate **festival** in the same way you have in previous passages. In this passage, the full name-Festival of Tabernacles-is not given. You may just say festival, or you may say the full name of the festival. Festival of Tabernacles in the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **festival**. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus stood up and declared publicly, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as it is written in the **scriptures**, 'From inside him will flow the water that brings life.'" Translate scriptures in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that scripture is in the Master Glossary.

So, when Jesus spoke about the living water, Jesus was talking about God's **Holy Spirit** whom the people who believed or trusted in him would later receive. The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit which he gives to people in order to equip them with his presence, wisdom, authority, and power. In this passage, the Holy Spirit is simply called "Spirit." Use the same word for Spirit as you have used in previous passages, and remember that Holy Spirit is in the Master Glossary. You may either say Spirit or Holy Spirit in your translation.

At that time, God's Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet returned to heaven to receive **glory** from God the Father. Glory refer to how God shows his power and splendor or his presence. Translate glory in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that glory is in the Master Glossary.

When the people heard his words, some of them began to say "Jesus must be the **Prophet**." A prophet receives a call and message from God and takes God's message to people. In this case, this is the special Prophet that Moses talked about. You may want to show that the people believe that they believe Jesus is not just any prophet-he is "*the* Prophet." Remember that the word prophet is in the Master Glossary.

The people said, "Do you not know that the Scriptures say that the **Messiah** will be descended from King David and that he will be from Bethlehem, David's village or town?" Messiah, or Christ, is someone whom God has anointed, or appointed for a special task. Translate Messiah in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Messiah is in the Master Glossary.

This passage uses David's name without his title "king." You may add the title "King David" if it is helpful for your audience to remember that King David is a famous Jewish king.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in their own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 7:37-44

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2914933 KB)

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John 7:45-53

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 7:45-53 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 7:45-53 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 7:45-53 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, the crowd disagreed about who Jesus was. Some thought that he might be the Messiah and others said that it was impossible because Jesus was from Galilee. Then the temple police or guards returned to the chief priests and Pharisees. Here the chief priests means the religious heads of Israel who made special sacrifices for the Jewish people. The Pharisees were a group of religious leaders who were devoted to God's law. They recognized both the written and oral religious traditions and law. The Pharisees looked down on people who did not follow all of their rules.

Then the Pharisees asked the temple police or guards why they had failed to arrest Jesus. The guards answered, "No one ever spoke the way Jesus does."

"So, you have let Jesus deceive or fool you also!" answered the Pharisees. "Has any one of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him? No! This crowd knows nothing of the law. There is a curse on those people," said the Pharisees. The Pharisees challenged the guards by asking two questions. The first was, are you also deceived? As temple police officers, the guards were expected to protect the interests of the temple. In speaking well of Jesus, they were behaving just like the crowd. The second question was, has any of the rulers, or religious leaders, or the Pharisees believed in him? The expected answer was no. That being the case, the guards were wrong, because the rulers and Pharisees were the ones who determined correct belief and practice. This attitude explains why the religious leaders did not like the ordinary people who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah. Then Pharisees concluded that the temple police or guards are as disrespectful as the crowd that knows nothing of the law. The Pharisees thought that people who had not studied the religious law didn't know anything about God and had a curse on them.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: In your culture, how would traditional leaders or rulers react when they send their guards or police to complete an assignment but fail? How would people who are supposed to follow leaders in your community react when they are told something that they do not expect? Pause this audio here.

Nicodemus, who had visited Jesus earlier, and who was one of the religious leaders, challenged the other religious leaders and said, "Does our law judge a person guilty before listening to him to find out what he is doing?" Nicodemus's question was meant to make his fellow Pharisees think carefully. The law did not allow someone to decide that a person was guilty without letting him defend himself, but the Pharisees did not consider that. They had already made up their minds. Rather than dealing with Nicodemus's question, they ridiculed him. They knew that Nicodemus was from Judea, but they were implying that no Judean could possibly be taken in by Jesus. They said, "You sound like you are from Galilee. But if you read the Scriptures carefully, you will learn not to expect a prophet from Galilee." A prophet is God's messenger who knows that his most important job is to bring the Word, or message, of God to people. Galilee is a district or province in northern Israel. The religious leaders were saying that the Galileans were not the type of people to produce prophets. Galilee was an unimportant area of Israel, and the religious leaders did not consider Galileans intelligent or important. The Judeans thought they were smarter and more important than anyone from Galilee. The Pharisees were probably not denying that any prophet had ever come from Galilee, just that they would not consider someone from Galilee as having anything important to say. Nicodemus did not respond. Either Nicodemus was not given an opportunity to respond or he decided to remain silent. He may not have wanted his colleagues to become suspicious of his continued opposition to their plans. When they finished talking all the Jewish leaders went home.

Stop here and look at the map of Galilee in relation to Jerusalem. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and tell a story about a time when someone avoided doing the right thing in order to cover up their evil plans. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 7:45-53 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: The Chief Priests and Pharisees asked the temple police or guards why they failed to arrest Jesus.

In the second scene: Nicodemus challenges members of his religious leaders if the law decide that a person was guilty without letting him defend himself.

The characters in this passage are:

- temple guards
- The Chief Priests
- The Pharisees
- Nicodemus

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, John tells us that the temple police or guards returned to the chief priests and Pharisees. Then the religious leaders asked why they had failed to arrest Jesus. The temple police spoke well of Jesus. Then the Pharisees said, "Has Jesus deceived you too? Has any one of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in Jesus?" The Pharisees expect the temple police to say no to this question. The Pharisees say the crowd of people in Jerusalem knows nothing about God's law. Therefore, there is a curse on the crowd. Remember that the Pharisees thought that they understood things of God much better than ordinary Jews did, and they looked down on the ordinary Jewish people. It is important to remember that the temple police or guards were expected to protect the interests of the temple and the religious leaders, so they were going against the religious leaders by speaking well of Jesus.

In the second scene, Nicodemus, who had visited Jesus earlier, and who was one of the religious leaders, challenged the other religious leaders. He said, "Does our law judge a person guilty before listening to him to find out what he is doing?" The other religious leaders mocked him and said, "You sound like you are from Galilee. But if you read the Scriptures carefully, you will learn not to expect a prophet from Galilee." It is important to remember that Nicodemus challenged the Pharisees that the law did not allow them to decide that a person was guilty without letting him defend himself. The Pharisees did not give Nicodemus an opportunity to respond to them because they suspected that Nicodemus would oppose their plans. When they finished talking, all the Jewish leaders went home.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 7:45-53 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatize the story.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: The Chief Priests and Pharisees asked the temple police or guards why they failed to arrest Jesus.

In the second scene: Nicodemus challenges members of his religious leaders if the law decide that a person was guilty without letting him defend himself.

The character in this passage are:

- Nicodemus
- temple guards
- Chief priest
- Pharisees

Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, the temple police, or guards, returned to the chief priests and Pharisees. Then the religious leaders asked the temple police or guards why they had failed to arrest Jesus. They answered, "No one ever spoke the way Jesus does."

"So, you have let Jesus deceive or fool you also!" answered the Pharisees. "Has any one of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him? No! This crowd knows nothing of the law. There is a curse on those crowd," said the Pharisees.

Stop the action. Stop the action.

In the second scene, Nicodemus, who had visited Jesus earlier, and who was one of the religious leaders, challenged the others religious leaders and said, "Does our law judge a person guilty before listening to him to find out what he is doing?" The other religious leaders mocked him and said, "You sound like you are from Galilee. But if you read the Scriptures carefully, you will learn not to expect a prophet from Galilee." When they finished talking all the Jewish leaders went home.

Stop the action.

Ask the people playing the religious leaders, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Well! We just need to distract this colleague of ours because he is beginning to be suspicious of our plans." [!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 7:45-53 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Then the **temple** police or guards returned to the chief priests and Pharisees. Temples are usually the name given to a place of worship where sacrifices are made to honor the god of the temple. Temple can be translated as the home where God lived among his people. The Jewish priests made sacrifices in the temple so that God would forgive the people's sins, and to give thanks to God. The temple was built so that people could worship God and special priests could bring sacrifices to God. Translate temple in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that temple is in the Master Glossary.

Priests in the Jewish religion connected the people with God by doing sacrifices for them to God, educating the people, and taking care of God's temple. Priests were God's representative to his people and his people's representative to God. The high priest led the entire Jewish religious court of law. These were leading priests who helped do administration in the temple in Jerusalem. Translate chief priest or leading priest in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that priest is in the Master Glossary.

The name **Pharisee** means to be separated. The Pharisees thought that the way to be right with God was by keeping themselves separate from ordinary people and following hundreds of rules about how to be pure. The Pharisees were the most influential group of religious leaders in Israel. Some of the Pharisees were also teachers of God's law. Translate Pharisees in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Pharisees is in the Master Glossary.

The religious leaders told Nicodemus that he should not expect a **prophet** to come from Galilee. A prophet receives a call and message from God and takes God's message to people. Translate prophet in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that prophet is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in their own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 7:45–53

Audio Content

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John 8:1–11

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 8:1–11 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 8:1–11 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 8:1-11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, John tells us that all the chief priests, Pharisees, and temple police finished talking and left without believing in Jesus. Scribes added this next story about Jesus and the woman caught in adultery here, but we do not know when this story actually happened. It probably did not happen at this time. John also probably did not write this story. However, this story describes very much the kind of thing that Jesus would do, and most people believe that this story really happened.

Jesus left Jerusalem and went to the Mount of Olives. The Mount of Olives gets its name from the olive trees that grow on it. Olive trees are a common tree in Israel. The fruits are used especially for production of oil. When Jesus went to Jerusalem, he usually stayed near the Mount of Olives each night and then went back into Jerusalem during the day to teach.

Stop here and show a photo of the Mount of Olives. Pause this audio here.

Early in the morning, when the sun rose, Jesus came back to the temple court. The temple court was the area outside where the general population could enter and remain. Only certain priests at certain times could enter into the innermost parts of the temple. Many people in the temple court area gathered near Jesus and he sat down and began to teach them. Jewish teachers in Jesus' day normally sat down to teach or preach.

Then some teachers of the law and Pharisees brought to him a woman whom someone caught in adultery, which means that they had seen her having sexual relations with a man who was not her husband. Remember that teachers of the law, or scribes, were men who studied God's law that he gave his people through Moses. Many Pharisees were also teachers of the law, and therefore Pharisees and teachers of the law often acted together. These religious leaders forced the woman to stand in front of everyone in the temple courts.

The religious leaders said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw this woman committing adultery with a man who is not her husband." The religious leaders wanted to look like they respected Jesus, even though they didn't, so they used a respectful form of title for Jewish men who were teachers of Moses', or God's, law and had disciples or students. They reminded Jesus that Moses' law required them to stone people who committed adultery. According to Jewish religious law, adultery means two things. A married woman commits adultery anytime she has sexual relations with a man who is not her husband and a married man commits adultery when they have sexual relations with a woman who is married to someone else. The punishment for the sin of adultery is death. Jewish law required that if people catch a couple in the act of adultery, they should execute both the man and the woman. Interestingly, the religious leaders did not bring the man they caught in adultery with them. It is also interesting that the Jewish law did not specify how they should execute the people caught in adultery. Jewish law did not mention stoning-the Jewish leaders added that when they spoke to Jesus. Stoning means to throw stones at someone in order to kill that person. This was the normal way people in ancient Israel used to punish someone with death.

It is obvious that these religious leaders were setting up a situation where Jesus would have to make a difficult decision. They asked Jesus, "What do you say or think that we should do to her?" The teachers of the law and the Pharisees were using this question to trap Jesus in order to obtain evidence for accusing him of speaking against the law. They thought that the only options Jesus had were either to say "leave her alone" or "stone her." If Jesus said to leave her alone it would suggest that Jesus did not take her sin seriously enough, and the religious leaders could accuse Jesus of going against Moses' law. If Jesus said to stone her, it would lead people to doubt whether Jesus lived out his message of love and mercy. It would also get Jesus in trouble with the

Roman authorities who ruled over Israel at that time. Roman authorities did not allow Jewish people to decide when someone should receive the death penalty.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: Talk about situations in your culture where a woman or a man was caught in an adultery. And then talk about: What kinds of punishment does your culture have about people who disobey traditional or religious rules? Pause this audio here.

But Jesus bent down and began to write with his finger on the ground. We have no record of what he wrote. He could have been writing words from the law of Moses. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees continued to question him. Finally, Jesus stood up and replied, "If one of you has never sinned or done wrong, he should be the first person to throw a stone at her." Again, Jesus bent to write something on the ground. Jesus surprised the religious leaders with this statement. Most likely the religious leaders had accused the woman without following the proper procedure. According to Jewish law the religious leaders should have brought the man, and they should have given the couple a warning before executing them. Because they did not do these things, the religious leaders would have been afraid to throw the first stone. They each knew that they had sinned, or disobeyed God, in this situation. They also knew that they had all disobeyed God at times in their lives. When the religious leaders who accused the woman heard Jesus' words, they left, one after another starting with the older ones, until only Jesus was left with the woman who was standing in front of him. Jesus stood up and asked the woman, "Woman, where are your accusers?" Have none of them condemned or judged you?" The woman replied, "None of them." Jesus told the woman that he also did not condemn her. However, Jesus does not want the woman to think that her actions were good. Jesus tells her that she can go, but that she should stop sinning in her life. Jesus wants her to live a life that follows God. So, Jesus commanded the women to go and begin a new life.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: Jesus showed this woman mercy. Talk about a time when someone, or perhaps God himself, showed someone else mercy even though they didn't deserve it. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 8:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus came back to the temple and was teaching.

In the second scene: Some teachers of the law and Pharisees brought to him a woman whom someone caught in an adultery. They reminded Jesus that the law of Moses says they should stone her to death. Jesus asks the man who has never sinned to throw the first stone. They each leave, starting with the oldest first, until only Jesus and the woman are left.

In the third scene: Jesus stands up and talks to the woman.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Scribes, or teachers of the law
- The Pharisees
- The crowd in the temple court and Jesus' disciples
- The woman caught in adultery

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In scene one, John says that Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. It is important to remember that when Jesus was in Jerusalem, he would usually go out to sleep near the Mount of Olives every night, and then come back into

Jerusalem during the day to teach. Then early the next morning Jesus came back to the temple court as he usually did, and many people gathered near him. Jesus sat down and began to teach them. Jewish teachers in Jesus' day normally sat down to teach or preach.

In the second scene, some teachers of the law and Pharisees brought a woman who was caught in adultery, or had been seen having sexual relations with a man who was not her husband. She was forced to stand in front of everyone. Then the teachers of the law and Pharisees said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw this woman committing adultery. Moses' Law says that we must throw stones at women who do such things to kill them as punishment. So, what do *you* say or think that we should do to her?" The religious leaders are emphasizing that they want Jesus to answer the question: they place emphasis on the "you" in the question. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees were using this question to trap Jesus in order to obtain evidence for accusing him of speaking against the law. It is important to remember here that the religious leaders spoke to Jesus with the respectful title of "Teacher." They wanted Jesus to listen to them. The words they used to describe catching the woman in adultery made it very clear that the woman was guilty.

Jesus bent down and began to write with his finger on the ground. It is important to remember that we do not know what Jesus was writing. But the teachers of the law and the Pharisees continued to question him. Suddenly, Jesus stood up and said to them, "Whichever one of you has never sinned or done wrong should be the first person to throw a stone at her." So, Jesus bent the second time to write something on the ground. Then the teachers of the law and the Pharisees who accused the woman began to leave one after another, starting with the older ones, until only Jesus was left with the woman. It is important to remember that what Jesus wrote may have been the sins of her accusers or Scriptures focusing on mercy and kindness, but we do not know for sure. The older teachers of the law and Pharisees left first.

In the third scene, Jesus says "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" Jesus uses a normal title for the woman by simply calling her "woman." Remember that Jesus did not condemn or judge the woman to be punished but said to her, "go and do not sin again." It is important to remember that Jesus is talking about more than just the woman's sin of adultery-he is telling her to stop sinning in general and to obey God.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 8:1-11 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatize the story.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Scribes, or teachers of the law
- The Pharisees
- The crowd in the temple court and Jesus' disciples
- The woman caught in adultery

Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early the next morning he came back to the temple court in Jerusalem. Many people, or a crowd, gathered near him and he sat down and Jesus began to teach them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the crowd, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "We really want to listen to Jesus' teaching. As you can see we are all gathered and very near to Jesus because we don't want to miss any single words of his teaching." [!end] Continue the drama.

In the second scene, some teachers of the law and Pharisees brought to him a woman whom someone caught in adultery, or had seen in bed with a man who was not her husband. The teachers of the law and Pharisees forced her to stand in front of everyone. Then they said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw this woman committing adultery, or having sexual relations with a man who is not her husband. Moses' Law says that we must throw stones at women who do such things to kill them as punishment. So, what do you say or think that we should do to her?" The teachers of the law and the Pharisees were using this question to trap Jesus in order to obtain evidence for accusing him of speaking against the law.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the teachers of the law and Pharisees, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Yes! This is a good opportunity to accuse Jesus and have good evidence of him speaking against the Law." [!end] Continue the drama.

In the third scene, Jesus bent down and began to write with his finger on the ground. But the teachers of the law and the Pharisees continued to question him. Suddenly, Jesus stood up and said to them, "Whichever one of you has never sinned or done wrong should be the first person to throw a stone at her." So, Jesus bent the second time to write something on the ground. When the teachers of the law and the Pharisees who accused the woman saw what he wrote, they left one after another, starting with the older ones, until only Jesus was left with the woman.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the teachers of the law and Pharisees, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "This Jesus can really embarrass people when one least expects it. We thought we could trap and accused him." [!end] Continue the drama.

Jesus stood up and asked the woman, "Woman, where are your accusers?" Have none of them condemned or judged you?" The woman replied, "None of them." Jesus told the woman that he also did not condemn her. Jesus said, "Go and stop sinning."

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 8:1–11 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Early in the morning, when the sun rose, Jesus came back to the **temple** court. Temples are usually the name given to a place of worship where sacrifices are made to honor the god of the temple. The Jewish priests made sacrifices in the temple so that God would forgive the people's sins, and to give thanks to God. Translate temple in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that temple is in the Master Glossary.

Then some **teachers of the law** and **Pharisees** brought to him a woman whom someone caught in **adultery**, which means that they had seen her having sexual relations with a man who was not her husband. God considers it a sin whenever people have a sexual relationship with someone to whom they are not married.

*Stop here and discuss as a team: What word will you use for **adultery**? Look up adultery in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.*

Teachers of the law were scholars and experts on the interpretations of the law from the Holy Scriptures. These interpretations were not written down, but memorized and taught orally by the teachers. The name **Pharisees** means to be separated. They thought that the way to be right with God was by keeping themselves

separate from ordinary people and following hundreds of rules about how to be pure. Translate teachers of the law and Pharisees in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that teachers of the law and Pharisees is in the Master Glossary.

Then they said to Jesus, "**Teacher**, we saw this woman committing adultery." Teacher means a respectful form of address used by Jewish people for men who were teachers of the things of God and had disciples or students who followed them and listened to their teachings. Translate teacher in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that teacher is in the Master Glossary.

They reminded Jesus that Moses' **law** required them to stone people who committed adultery. Both the man and the woman deserved to die after committing adultery. Moses' Law means the rules from God that Moses shared with the Jewish people to tell them how to live. Translate law in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that law is in the Master Glossary.

Finally, Jesus stood up and replied, "If one of you has never **sinned** or done wrong, he should be the first person to throw a stone at her." Sin refers to an act of disobedience to God. Be sure that the word you use here does not mean that someone has failed to perform a religious act like ritual prayer or following certain religious rules. Translate sin in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that sin is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in their own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 8:1–11

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3380388 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 8:12–20

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 8:12–20 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 8:12–20 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 8:12–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, John tells us that Jesus protected a woman who committed adultery and the teachers of the law and Pharisees wanted to stone her to death. In this passage, Jesus returned to the temple. He taught in the temple court, where the general population could enter. Jesus was probably teaching during the Festival of Tabernacles or Booths. The festival reminds Jews how they lived in tents while they were wandering in the desert after God rescued their ancestors from slavery in Egypt. On the first day of the festival the people lit huge candles in the temple courts. Jesus made a comparison to show people something about himself. Jesus may have used the idea of light because of the candles giving light during the Festival of Tabernacles. He said, "I am the light for the people of the world. Those who trust and obey me will not have to live their lives in darkness or without God. They will have the light that brings true life or eternal life." Then some Pharisees, the influential religious leaders in Israel, challenged Jesus and said, "You should not act as your own witness. What you say about yourself is not acceptable as true or proof."

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group:

- In your culture, how do you celebrate religious festivals?
- How do religious leaders teach or act during religious festivals?
- When religious leaders disagree, how do they confront one another?
- If you have a story in your culture, tell a story of one religious leader confronting another religious leader. Pause this audio here.

So, the Pharisees mocked Jesus, saying that Jesus' testimony or statements about himself could not be relied upon in a court of law. Jewish law stated that someone could not be a witness by himself—he needed other people to also witness the same thing. Jesus had faced this kind of challenge before, and had responded by listing two or three other witnesses, apart from himself. But in this situation, Jesus did not accept their argument but corrected what they said about him. Jesus said that they should accept as true what he says about himself. Jesus knows that he came from God, and that he will go back to God, so Jesus is not his only witness—God is with him. Jesus contrasts what he knows with the Pharisees, who do not know where Jesus came from or where Jesus will go later. The Pharisees judge by human standards. They thought that Jesus was just the son of Mary and Joseph, and they never understood that Jesus had been with the Father long before being with Mary and Joseph. The Pharisees only saw the man from Nazareth when they looked at Jesus. Jesus goes on to say very clearly that he judges no one. Jesus means that he did not come to the world to judge people in the same way that Pharisees judged people by always telling them how they disobeyed the law. The Pharisees were using worldly, or human, wisdom to judge people. However, when Jesus came to the earth he automatically caused judgment because some people accepted him and some people did not accept him. That judgment is what Jesus is talking about when he says, "If I judge someone, my decisions are true or right, because I am not alone when I judge." Jesus now explains to the Pharisees that according to Jewish law Jesus really can state true things about himself, including judging others. Jesus has a second witness, his father, God himself.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: In your culture, what would someone do or say as a proof or reliable statement to show that he is a true and reliable person? Pause this audio here.

When Jesus said that he judges no one, he was speaking within his mission on earth. He had come to save people, not to judge or condemn them. But this did not mean that he would never pass judgment on earth. And at his second coming, he will pass judgment on the basis of what people have done with his offer of salvation. The Pharisees want proof that what Jesus says is true. Then the Pharisees challenge Jesus by asking, "Let us see your father." Jesus answered them, "You do not truly know either me or my Father, because really knowing who I am means that you know my Father." Their lack of true knowledge about Jesus resulted in their not knowing his Father either. If they had realized that the Father he was speaking of was Yahweh, or God, they would not have needed to ask where he was. Jesus said this as he was still teaching in the temple courts. This debate took place in the part of the temple where there were thirteen covered boxes in which people dropped the offerings that supported the various activities of the temple. It was an area where there was a constant flow of people.

This area may have been near where the leading priests had their headquarters. Even so, the authorities did not arrest him, because it was not yet the right time for Jesus to die.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group:

- What happens when a messenger gives a message or command from his leader?
- How does the messenger prove that he is from the leader?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 8:12–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus was teaching at the temple court, possibly during the Festival of Tabernacles. Jesus says that he is the light of the world.

In the second scene: The Pharisees mocked and challenged that what Jesus said about himself could not be valid.

In the third scene: The Pharisees ask Jesus to show them the Father God. Jesus says that they do not know the Father because they do not know Jesus.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Pharisees
- The crowd in the temple
- The disciples are probably in the temple courts with Jesus

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This begins when Jesus returned to the temple court and was teaching, probably during the Festival of Tabernacles or Booths. There were probably many people around. We know from later in the story that Jesus was near where people gave their offerings of money. Many people were probably around, and Jesus spoke to them. Jesus said, "I am the light for the people of the world." Also remember that when Jesus made this statement the whole city of Jerusalem had been brightened with light by huge candles. Jesus is using a comparison between light and darkness. Jesus is like the light because he brings eternal life with God forever. Without Jesus, there is no light. People have to walk in darkness. Most people do not want to walk in the dark, because then they do not know where they are going. Jesus uses this comparison to show how important it is to follow Jesus. Those who trust and obey him will not have to live their lives in darkness, or without God. They will have the light that brings true life, or eternal life. Jesus made a shocking statement about himself.

In the second scene, the Pharisees mocked Jesus because of what he said, saying that Jesus' testimony is not reliable in a court of law. Jesus did not accept the Pharisees' argument but corrected what they said about him. Jesus replied, "Even though I act as my own witness, what I say about myself should be accepted as reliable. For I am sure of where I came from and where I will return. But you do not know where I came from and where I will return." Jesus is saying, "I might be talking about myself, but you should accept it as reliable, because I know where I came from and where I will return." Jesus knows that he came from God himself. Then Jesus again made a contrast with the Pharisees. Jesus emphasized "you" when he said, "*You* judge using worldly wisdom and I am not judging anyone. Jesus is really saying that he does not condemn anyone. Jesus goes on to make more comparisons between him and the Pharisees. Jesus said that *if* he judged someone, his decisions would be right. But Jesus is not judging anyone until the end of time. Jesus is talking about something that is not happening right now.

Jesus reminds the Pharisees that God is with him, so he has the right to state the truth. Jesus reminds them that "their own law" requires two witnesses to state the truth, and Jesus is following the law because he has God who agrees with him.

Then the Pharisees challenged Jesus by asking, "Let us see your father," or "Where is your father?" The Pharisees do not expect an answer to this question. They are challenging Jesus and not showing him respect. Jesus answered them, "You do not truly know either me or my Father, because knowing me means that you know my Father." When Jesus talks about knowing him, he means a deep knowledge. Jesus is saying that they do not truly know who Jesus is, and they do not truly know who the Father is.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you talk about the difference between knowing about someone or something and knowing someone or something very deeply? Pause this audio here.

Jesus was near the place in the main temple courts where the people placed their gifts or offerings of money. There were probably many people around when Jesus was having this conversation with the Pharisees. This

was probably near the Jewish religious leaders' headquarters in the temple, but the Jewish authorities did not arrest him, because it was not yet the time that God had planned.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 8:12–20 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Pharisees
- The crowd in the temple
- The disciples are probably in the temple courts with Jesus

Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, Jesus returned to the temple court and was teaching probably during the Festival of Tabernacles or Booths. Then Jesus spoke to the people who had gathered for the festival, "I am the light for the people of the world. Those who trust and obey me will not have to live their lives in darkness or without God. They will have the light that brings true life, or eternal life."

Then some Pharisees challenged Jesus and said, "You should not act as your own witness. What you say about yourself is not acceptable as true or proof."

Pause the action.

Ask the people playing religious leaders, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, we don't believe in Jesus' statements and we can't accept these as a proof of his mission. [!end] Continue the drama.

In the second scene, the Pharisees mocked Jesus, saying that no one could rely on Jesus' testimony in a court of law. Jesus had faced this kind of challenge before, and had responded by listing two or three other witnesses, apart from himself. But in this situation, Jesus did not accept their argument but corrected what they said about him. Jesus replied to the Pharisees, "Even though I act as my own witness, what I say about myself should be accepted as true or reliable. For I am sure of where I came from and where I will return. However, you do not know where I came from and where I will return. You judge in a human or worldly wisdom and I am not judging or condemning anyone. But if I judge someone, my decisions are true or right, because I am not alone when I judge, I judge as God the Father helps or supports me. He sent me here. Your own law says that when two people give evidence, it should be accepted as true or reliable. I am giving a testimony about myself and my Father who sent me is also a witness."

Then the Pharisees challenged Jesus by asking, "Let us see your father."

Jesus answered them, "You do not truly know either me or my Father, because knowing me means that you know my Father." Jesus said this as he was still teaching in the temple courts. He was near the place where the people placed their gifts or offerings. The authorities did not arrest him, because it was not yet the right time.

Pause the action.

Ask the people playing the religious leaders, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Well! We cannot rely on your testimony just because you have two witnesses!"

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 8:12–20 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Then some **Pharisees** challenged Jesus and said, "You should not act as your own witness." Translate Pharisees in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Pharisees is in the Master Glossary.

So, the Pharisees mocked Jesus, saying that Jesus' **testimony** could not be relied upon in a court of law. Testimony or "to bear witness" means to declare the truth about something from one's own experience. Use the same phrase for testimony that you used in previous passages and remember that testimony is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus said this as he was still teaching in the temple courts. He was near the place where the people placed their **gifts**, or **offerings of money**. Offerings can be made for many reasons, including to give thanks.

Jesus returned to the **temple** court and was teaching probably during the Festival of Tabernacles, or Booths. The temple court was the outer area of the temple where the general public could enter. Jesus usually taught in this area, and a crowd would have gathered around him. Translate temple in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that temple is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in their own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 8:12–20

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2927273 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 8:21–30

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 8:21–30 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 8:21–30 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 8:21–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, John tells us that Jesus returned to the temple and said to the people that He is the light of the world. However, we don't have much information about how long this happens after the previous passage.

Now, in this passage, Jesus again said to the Pharisees or Jewish leaders, "I will go away, and you will search for me. But you will die in your sin, and I will go where you will not be able to come to me." Jesus is telling the Jews that their main sin is that they have rejected him. Therefore, they will die and will not be able to go where Jesus is going, because Jesus is going away to his father God. Then the Jewish leaders asked each other, "Will he kill himself? What does he mean when he says that we cannot go where he will go?"

Here, Jesus now returned to a topic he had talked about earlier with the Jewish leaders about his death. The Jews were surprised when Jesus talked about his death. This time, they considered that Jesus might commit

suicide, but they do not really believe that Jesus would kill himself. The Jewish leaders believed that those who committed suicide went to hell. So if Jesus committed suicide, they would not go to hell where he was going, for they were quite sure that they were going to heaven.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: Tell a story about someone who received punishment for something they did wrong. Who tells people that they will be punished? How do they talk about punishment that people will face? Pause this audio here.

Jesus said to the Jewish leaders, "You belong to this earth. I am from heaven. Your home is this world on earth. You belong to this evil or fallen world. This is not my home. I told you that you would die while still in your sins if you do not believe that I am the One sent by God." Here once again, Jesus had to tell the Jewish leaders the difference between himself and the Jews. They had come from two different places. Jesus means to say that everyone in the crowd had been born and lived on Earth. Jesus means to say that the Jewish leaders live completely in this world and have no hope of getting to heaven except through Jesus, because Jesus has come from heaven. However, the Jewish leaders' refusal to accept this fact means that Jesus cannot help them. Jewish leaders are living in sins and they will die in their sins.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: Tell a story about a time when people rejected a messenger. What kinds of things do messengers have to do in order for people to accept the message from the person who sent them? Pause this audio here.

So, the religious leaders said to Jesus, "Tell us who you really are." Jesus said to them, "I have been telling you who I am since I began to teach. I have much to say in judgment of you, but I will not. The one who sent me to this earth is reliable or faithful, and I only tell people what he has told me." It seems that Jesus chose to not say everything that he could judge people for, but instead to only say the things that God told him to say. The religious leaders did not realize that when Jesus was talking about the one who sent him, he was telling them about his heavenly Father. So, Jesus said to them, "When you have raised high the Son of Man, then you will understand who I am." The Son of Man is Jesus' favorite title for himself. You will remember from previous passages that the Son of Man refers to the person that God will send to judge the world. This is Jesus. How do the people lift up or raise high the Son of Man? Most likely, Jesus is talking about when people will lift him up on the cross, but Jesus' listeners right now will not know that is what he is talking about. Then Jesus says, "The one who sent me-God-is with me now and always. He has not abandoned me, because I always do the things that he wants me to do." Some of the people in the crowd listening to these things Jesus said believed in him.

In this passage the Jewish leaders understood that Jesus was saying that he was quite different from them, and so they asked him directly about his identity and where he got his authority. So, Jesus reminded the crowd of what he had been saying before when he was teaching them. The people had heard him claim to be the bread of life, the light of the world, and the one sent from above or heaven. Jesus then reminded the people of four things about himself. He was their judge. He was sent by his father who is reliable. He spoke the things he has heard from the Father. He was God's workmate. Some people who heard Jesus teach chose the path of life and put their faith in Jesus.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: In this passage we see that Jesus and God had a special relationship, and Jesus only did the things God told him to do. Describe a special relationship in your culture between a teacher or leader and his or her messenger or co-worker. How do they help each other? How does the sender or leader take care of his messenger? How do they listen to each other? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 8:21–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus said to the Pharisees, or Jewish religious leaders, that he will die and return to his father God. They will die, but they will not go to God, because they do not believe in Jesus.

In the second scene: Jesus said to the Jewish religious leaders, "I have a lot I could say about you and a lot I could condemn you for, but I will not. But I will only say what God my Father wants me to say."

In the third scene: Many believed in Jesus because they realized that God sent Jesus to the world.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Pharisees or Jewish leaders
- The crowd, which probably included Jesus' disciples

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, John tells us that Jesus said to the Pharisees or Jewish leaders for the second time that He will go away, and the Jewish leaders will search for him. But they will die in their sins, because they do not accept Jesus and Jesus will go where they will not be able to come to him. Then the Jewish leaders asked each other, "Will Jesus kill himself? What does Jesus mean when he says that we cannot go where he will go?" The Jewish leaders expected that the answer to this question would be "No, Jesus will not kill himself." It is important to remember that Jesus said that he will go away to a place that the religious leaders cannot follow. This means that Jesus will go to heaven to be with God his father.

Jesus said to the Jewish leaders that they belong to this world below. It is important to remember that Jesus is telling them that they belong to the earth, not to some place below the earth. They belong to the earth because they do the things that people on the earth who do not accept Jesus do. Then Jesus told them that he was from heaven. Jesus said, "This world is not my home. I told you that you would die while still in your sins if you do not believe that I am." Jesus repeats for emphasis that the Jews will die if they do not accept Jesus. He wants them to understand the importance of accepting him. Jesus says that they must believe that Jesus is "I am." Jesus is using language that reminds the Jews of the personal name for God, Yahweh, which means "I am who I am." Jesus has been using this language often as he teaches about himself. The Jews would understand that Jesus is saying that he has a very close relationship with God, even saying that he is divine.

In the second scene, the religious leaders said to Jesus, "Tell us who you really are." Jesus said to them, "I have been telling you who I am since I began to teach. I have much to say in judgment of you, but I will not. The person who sent me to this earth is reliable, and I only tell people in the world what he has told me to say." The religious leaders did not realize that Jesus was telling them about God in heaven. So, Jesus said to the religious leaders, "When you have raised high the Son of Man, then you will understand that I am who I said I am and you will understand that God and I are working together. You will realize that I do not act based on my own decision. But I say what I have learned from God." Remember that Jesus is probably referring to the people raising him high on the cross, and you may need to say that in your translation if you cannot just say that they "raised him high." Jesus is speaking about himself when he talks about the Son of Man. Again, Jesus uses language like "I am" to remind the Jews that he has been telling them since the beginning of his teachings that he is from God. When Jesus says "you will understand that I am," you could also say, "you will understand that I am who I said I am."

Jesus reminds the Jews that the one who sent him is with him now and always. He has not abandoned Jesus, because Jesus always does the things that God wants Jesus to do. Many who heard Jesus say these things believed in him.

It is important to remember that God and Jesus are one and working together. Remember that Jesus emphasized that people will die in their sins if they do not put their faith in or believe in Jesus.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 8:21–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Pharisees or Jewish leaders
- The crowd, probably including Jesus' disciples

Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, Jesus again said to the Pharisees or Jewish leaders, "I will go away, and you will search for me. But you will die in your sin, and I will go where you will not be able to come to me." Then the Jewish leaders asked each other, "Will he kill himself? What does he mean when he says that we cannot go where he will go?"

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing religious leaders, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "We can't believe Jesus is about to go and hide himself among the Jews and commit suicide." [!end] Continue the drama.

In the second scene, Jesus said to the Jewish leaders, "You belong to this world. I am from heaven. Your home is this world. You belong to this evil or fallen world. This is not my home. I told you that you would die while still in your sins if you do not believe that I am the one God sent to you."

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the religious leaders, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "This Jesus needs to tell us or better explain to us where he is coming from and where he intends to go." [!end] Continue the drama.

In the second scene, the religious leaders said to Jesus, "Tell us who you really are."

Jesus said to them, "I have been telling you who I am since I began to teach. I have much to say in judgment of you, but I will not. The one who sent me to this earth is reliable, or faithful, and I only tell people what he has told me." The religious leaders did not realize that Jesus was telling them about his heavenly Father. So, Jesus said to them, "When you have raised high the Son of Man on the cross, then you will know or understand who I am. You will realize or understand that I do not act based on my own decision. But I say what I have learned from the Father. The one who sent me is with me now and always. He has not abandoned me, because I always do the things that he wants me to do." Many who heard Jesus say these things believed in him.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 8:21–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus again said to the **Jews**, "I will go away, and you will search for me. But you will die in your **sin**, and I will go where you will not be able to come to me."

Here, **Jews** refers to Jewish religious leaders. These are the same people Jesus has been talking with in previous passages. Use the same phrase for Pharisees, Jews, or Jewish leaders that you used in previous passages. Jews is in the Master Glossary.

Sin refers to an act of disobedience to God. Translate sin in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that sin is in the Master Glossary.

So, Jesus said to them, "When you have raised high the **Son of Man** on the cross, then you will know or understand who **I am**."

Son of Man is Jesus' favorite title for himself. Son of Man refers to the humanity of Jesus as well as Jesus' uniqueness in being fully God and fully human. The Son of Man is a title that Jews connected with the Messiah, or Promised Savior that God would send to help them. The Son of Man is the person to whom, in the writings of the prophet Daniel, God gives all authority and power. That would mean that Jesus was saying he had power from God to forgive sins. Translate the Son of Man in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Son of Man is in the Master Glossary.

When Jesus says "then you will understand who **I am**," the words "I am" are important. These words remind the Jewish listeners of the name of God in the Old Testament. God told Moses that his name is "I am." When Jesus says "I am," he is saying that he is God.

Some of the people in the crowd who heard Jesus say these things **believed** in him. To believe and to have faith are the same thing. When someone believes in something, it means that they have great faith and trust God very much. If you believe in God, you accept that God exists and that what God says in the Bible is true. You trust that God will fulfill all his promises, even when it seems as if God is not keeping his promises. Therefore, you are committed to obeying God. Translate believe in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that belief is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in their own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 8:21–30

Audio Content

[webm.zip](#) (2952686 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 8:31–47

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 8:31–47 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 8:31–47 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 8:31–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Jesus told the Pharisees about his death, but they did not understand or believe him. However, some people believed what Jesus told them. In this passage, Jesus spoke to the Jewish people who had believed him. Jews refers to the people group descended from Jacob, grandson of Abraham. This is the group God made a strong promise with to give them the land of Israel. The Jewish people knew that they were special people to God.

Jesus begins to speak to the group of Jewish people who had heard his teaching and may have believed that what he said was true. These people believed, but they were probably not willing to give up everything in order to follow and obey Jesus. So Jesus told them that they needed to obey his teachings in order to truly be his disciples. Remember that a disciple is a person who follows and learns from a specific religious teacher about God, faith, and life. Jesus continued to say, "You will know the truth, and believing what is true will free you

from slavery." Then, the Jewish people replied to Jesus, "We are descended from Abraham, and we have never been slaves, not to anyone. How can you say that we must be free?" Descendants are children, grandchildren, and all future generations from the same family line. The Israelites, or Jewish people, are descendants of Abraham. Abraham is the ancestor of the Israelites. We are not sure why the Jewish people said that they have never been slaves to anyone. In their history, the Jewish people were slaves many times when enemy nations conquered them. Even in Jesus' time the Romans ruled the Jewish people. The Jews were probably trying to tell Jesus that they felt they were free already because they were descendants of Abraham. Some of the Jews believed that they were like royalty because they were descendants of Abraham, even when they were slaves to other governments.

So, Jesus said to them, "I tell you this serious truth, all people who continue to sin are allowing sin to control them, just like a master controls a slave."

Then Jesus continues: "And a slave has no permanent place in the family, but the son belongs in the family forever. So, if the Son of God releases you, you will have true freedom." This is a difficult passage to understand. Jesus says that since they are slaves to sin, or that sin controls them, they are not true descendants of Abraham and do not truly belong to God's special family. However, people who are sons, or children, of a family belong to it forever. Jesus is not a slave to sin, but the Son in God's family, and he has the right to free slaves from the control that sin has over them and make them free. He will free those who ask for it and believe in Jesus. If the Jewish people want to be in a real relationship with him, they have to start living according to Jesus' teaching. Then they will experience true freedom.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. Give examples of ways that you have seen sin control the lives of people. Pause this audio here.

Jesus goes on to tell the people that he knows that the Jews are Abraham's descendants, and therefore they are supposed to be children of God. However, Jesus does what Jesus' father God does, but the Jews do what their father does. Jesus is saying that the people are following a different father than God. Jesus does not say this out loud at this point, but he is suggesting that the people are actually following Satan as their father because they do not want to accept Jesus' teachings and they are trying to kill him. Remember that Satan, or the devil, is the leader of the evil spirits who rebelled against God. Satan and his evil spirits roam the earth in order to destroy people and pull them away from God.

Then the Jewish people say that they are Abraham's children, or descendants. But Jesus repeats that they are not really Abraham's descendants. Abraham's descendants would act differently—they would do what Abraham did and they would follow God. But the Jews are not acting in a good way—they are trying to kill Jesus. In contrast, Jesus is doing exactly what his Father God tells him to do. Jesus repeats again that they are doing what their father does. Jesus is implying that the Jews are not following God as their father, but instead they are following Satan like a child follows his father.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. Tell a story about a time in your culture when people tried to kill a messenger or person who was trying to help them. Pause this audio here.

Then the Jewish leaders repeated even more strongly, "We are not illegitimate! God is our true father!" In Jewish law, a child was illegitimate when he or she was born outside of a marriage relationship. The Jewish people were saying that they truly followed God as their father. They also may have been referring to the fact that some people thought that Mary, the mother of Jesus, had sexual relations with another man outside of her marriage, and then gave birth to Jesus. The Jews wanted to tell Jesus that they thought they were better than he was. Jesus continues to explain to them that people who truly follow God would love Jesus. Jesus comes from God, and God sent Jesus. Jesus tells them plainly now that they follow their father the devil, or Satan. Satan keeps them from hearing the truth about Jesus, because they are too busy loving the things that Satan loves rather than the things that God loves. Satan loves to destroy people. Jesus calls Satan a murderer and someone who hates truth. In fact, Satan is the father of lies—Satan is the one who taught people how to lie. Therefore, when Jesus tells the truth, the people cannot believe him because Satan does not allow them to. Jesus asks two questions to show that he is rebuking the Jews for their behavior. Jesus asks them, "Can you prove to me that I have sinned?" and, "If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?" The Jews' plan to kill Jesus, who was not guilty of any crime, and their refusal to believe the truth that he proclaimed were exactly the types of behavior that would

be expected from the devil, or Satan, because he has always been a murderer and he neither follows nor speaks the truth.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. What kinds of things do evil people say and do to convince people that they are telling the truth? If you are a student of a great teacher, how do you know that you are hearing his voice well? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 8:31–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus told the Jewish people, "You will know the truth, and believing what is true will free you from slavery."

In the second scene: The Jewish people say that Abraham is their father. Jesus responds that if they were truly Abraham's descendants then they would follow Jesus, but instead they are descendants of a different father.

In the third scene: The Jewish people say that only God is their father. Jesus replies that their father is Satan, or the devil.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Jewish people who say they believe in Jesus
- The crowd

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, Jesus said to the Jewish people who had believed him to continue to obey his teaching if they truly want to be his disciples. Jesus said to them that they will know the truth, and believing what is true will free them from slavery of sins. Then, the Jewish leaders said they are children from Abraham, and they have never been slaves to anyone. How can Jesus say to them that they must be free? So, Jesus told the Jewish people to listen very carefully because all people who continue to sin are allowing sin to control them. Then Jesus gave an example that a slave has no permanent place in the family, but the son who belongs in the family has a permanent place forever. It is important to remember that if they believe Jesus as the Son of God, they will have true freedom from sins and remember that Jesus will free those who ask for it in faith.

In the second scene, the Jewish people say Abraham is their father. Jesus said to the Jewish leaders that he agrees that they are children of Abraham and they were looking for ways to kill him, because they rejected his teaching. Then, Jesus says to them, "What I'm teaching you is exactly what God showed me. You say you will do what your father asked you to do as Abraham's children. Therefore, believe and accept the truth I have been telling you if you truly belong to God, because the person who belongs to God will listen and accept the person God sent to him. If you were Abraham's children, you would do the things Abraham did. Instead, you seek to kill me." Abraham's descendants are supposed to be children of God. However, Jesus does what Jesus' father God does, but the Jews are actually following Satan as their father because they do not want to accept Jesus' teachings. Jesus is saying that the Jews are following a different father than God. It is important to remember that Abraham did not try to kill people. Abraham is a friend of God who is the father of Jesus.

In the third scene, the Jewish leaders told Jesus they are true children of Abraham and their only Father is God himself. So, Jesus told them if it was true that God is their Father, they would love Jesus because Jesus left God's presence in Heaven to come to earth. Jesus did not decide by himself to come to earth. It was God who sent him. So, because they Jewish leaders do not want to hear my teaching and don't understand him, they belong to the devil who does what he wishes. The devil has murdered people since the beginning of creation and does not remain in the truth because nothing is true in him. When the devil lies, he is talking in the way that is natural for him, because he is a liar and he is the origin of lies. It is important to remember that Jesus told Jewish leaders

couldn't prove Jesus guilty of any sin. Jesus told them the truth and that is why they do not believe him and remember that their plans to kill Jesus was not for any crime or sin but their refusal to believe the truth Jesus teaches.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 8:31–47 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatize the story.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus told the Jewish people, "You will know the truth, and believing what is true will free you from slavery."

In the second scene: The Jewish people say that Abraham is their father.

In the third scene: The Jewish people say that only God is their father.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The Jewish people who say they believe in Jesus
- The crowd

Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, Jesus said to the Jewish people who had believed him, "If you continue to obey my teaching, then you are truly my disciples. You will know the truth, and believing what is true will free you from slavery." Then, the Jewish leaders replied to Jesus, "We are descended, or children, from Abraham, and we have never been slaves, not to anyone. How can you say that we must be free?" Jesus said to them, "I tell you this serious truth, all people who continue to sin are allowing sin to control them. And a slave has no permanent place in the family, but the son belongs in the family forever. So, if the Son of God releases you, you will have true freedom."

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Jewish people, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "We can't open our hearts to Jesus' teaching because he is calling us slaves that need freedom." [!end] Continue the drama.

In the second scene, Jesus said to the Jewish leaders, "I recognize and agree that you are descended from Abraham. But you are trying to kill me, because you refuse to accept what I am teaching." Then, Jesus continues to say, "What my Father has shown me, that is what I tell you, but you do what you have heard your father tell you."

The Jewish leaders said to Jesus, "We are Abraham's children."

Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the things Abraham did. Instead, you seek to kill me. What I have been telling you is the truth that God told me. Abraham did not try to kill people! As for you, you are following what your own father does."

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the religious leaders, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Well! Jesus needs to know that even though we are still under the Roman rules, we are free people as children of Abraham under God Almighty." [!end] Continue the drama.

In the third scene, then the Jewish leaders replied to Jesus, "As for us, we are true or legitimate children. Our only Father is God himself."

So, Jesus told them, "If it was true that God is your Father, you would love me. That is because I left God's presence to come here to you. I did not decide by myself that I should come to earth. It was God who sent me to you. Why is it that you do not understand me? Is it because you do not want to hear my teaching? You belong to your father, who is the devil, and you are willing to obey your father's wishes. The devil has murdered people since the beginning of creation and does not remain in the truth because nothing is true in him. When the devil lies, he is talking in the way that is natural for him, because he is a liar and he is the origin, or source, of lies." Then Jesus said, "But I tell you the truth, and that is why you do not believe me. Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? You should believe me, because I am telling the truth. The person who belongs to God accepts what God says. God's children, or people, listen to what he tells them. You do not listen because you are not the children, or people, of God."

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the religious leaders, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "This Jesus is now becoming very abusive by calling us children of the devil. We must find a way to find him guilty of crime and kill him." [!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 8:31–47 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus said to the **Jewish** people who had believed him, "If you continue to obey my teaching, then you are truly my disciples." Jews refers to the people group descended from Jacob, grandson of Abraham. This is the group God covenanted with to give them the land of Israel. It is both an ethnic group and a group of people who practice the religion of Judaism. Translate Jews in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Jews is in the Master Glossary.

"If you continue to obey my teaching, then you are truly my **disciples**." A disciple is a person who follows and learns from a specific religious teacher about God, faith, and life. Jesus chose 12 people to follow him and to be his disciples. They followed him everywhere, learning from him and watching him. Sometimes Jesus sent them to preach the good news that the kingdom of God had come, and to heal the sick. Translate disciples in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that disciples is in the Master Glossary.

Then, the Jewish leaders replied to Jesus, "We are **descendants**, or children, of **Abraham**, and we have never been slaves, not to anyone." A person's descendants are his children, grandchildren, and all future generations from the same family line. The Israelites are descendants of Abraham. Abraham is the ancestor of the Israelites. Translate descendants, slaves, and Abraham in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that descendants is in the Master Glossary.

So, Jesus said to them, "I tell you this serious truth, all people who continue to **sin** are allowing sin to control them, just like a master controls a slave." Sin refers to an act of disobedience to God and not that someone has failed to perform a religious act like ritual prayer or following certain religious rules. Translate sin in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that sin is in the Master Glossary.

"You belong to your father, who is the **devil**, and you are willing to obey your father's wishes." The devil refers to the leader of the evil spirits, named Satan. Satan means the adversary, enemy, or accuser who decided to rebel against God. Satan was originally a created angel that wanted to be like God. Now, Satan is the leader of all the demons. Translate devil in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that devil is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in their own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 8:31-47

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3529403 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 8:48–59

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 8:48–59 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 8:48–59 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage? Pause this audio here.

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 8:48–59 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus is still teaching in the temple area. In the last passage, Jesus said to the Jewish people that they will know the truth. In this passage, the Jewish people who opposed and argued with Jesus answered him, "Are we not correct when we say that you are a Samaritan and possessed by a demon?" Samaritans were the descendants of Jews who lived in Samaria. Jews considered Samaritans to be religiously unclean and below them because Samaritans had married foreigners. We do not know why the Jewish people accused Jesus of being a Samaritan. They may be saying that Jesus acted like a Samaritan by following some Jewish laws and not others, or that Jesus believed, like the Samaritans, that other people besides the Jews could be considered descendants of Abraham.

Jesus ignored the accusation that he was a Samaritan. Instead, Jesus said, "I am not possessed by a demon." Anyone who was demon-possessed could not be teaching the will of God. Jesus continues to say, "I am glorifying, or honoring, my Father, but you are not honoring me. I do not want people to glorify or honor me, but God wants people to glorify me, and he judges in my favor." God is the judge in these matters and God wants the Jews to honor Jesus, so failure to honor or praise Jesus is the same as disobeying God. But Jesus was interested in far more than just answering accusations or insults. He wanted to bring his audience to the place where they accepted his teachings, which gives eternal life. Jesus gets the attention of the people and says, "I tell you the truth." Then he says, "If anyone obeys my teaching or message, he will never die."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. In your culture, how does an important leader give authority to another leader? How does a community show honor to a leader and to the messengers the leader sends? Pause this audio here.

When the Jewish people heard Jesus say that people will never die if they obey Jesus, they were surprised. They said that if even Abraham, an important prophet, died, then surely everyone will die. The Jews ask, "Are you more important than our father Abraham? Abraham and the prophets of God have all died. Who are you claiming that you are?"

Jesus responds to the Jews by saying that if he tried to honor himself, it would mean nothing. Jesus' Father is the God that the Jewish people say is their God too. It is that God, the God the Jews say they follow, who honors Jesus. But then Jesus surprises them. Jesus says that the Jews do not really know their God. However, Jesus says he knows God. Jesus calls the Jewish people liars because they say that they know and obey God, but they do not. However, Jesus knows God deeply. Jesus has a relationship with his Father God and obeys him. Then Jesus gives more proof that he is from God. Jesus says that the Jews' important prophet, Abraham, also understood that one day Jesus would come. Abraham was very very happy, or rejoiced, that Jesus was coming. Jesus is

challenging the Jews' false security in their belief that as Abraham's descendants God would save them from his judgment. This made the Jewish people dislike Jesus even more! After all, Jesus had told them that their behavior did not match Abraham's own, that God was not their Father, and that their true father was the devil, and that Abraham had given total approval to Jesus' ministry.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. Tell a story about a time when your community did not accept a religious teacher or leader. What kinds of things did they say about him? Pause this audio here.

The Jewish leaders exclaimed in surprise, "You are not fifty years old. So, it is impossible that you have seen Abraham!" Jesus told them, "This is a true saying, that even before Abraham was born, I existed or lived." When Jesus said this, he was repeating the "I am" statement that he mentioned in the previous stories. This "I am" reminds his listeners about the name of God in the Old Testament. Jesus is using the words God the Father used when he told Moses his name is "I am." The Jews took Jesus' words as an insult to Abraham, their greatest ancestor. Not only did Jesus present himself as equal to Abraham, but he claimed to be older than Abraham! Such an insult should be punished by death. They picked up stones to kill Jesus. But Jesus hid himself and went away from the temple court.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. What happens in your culture when a younger person gives warnings or true teachings to older people? How do the older people usually respond? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 8:48–59 the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Jewish people told Jesus he was a Samaritan who was possessed by a demon. Jesus explains to them how he cannot be possessed by a demon. Jesus says that people who obey him will not die.

In the second scene: Jewish leaders respond to Jesus' claim with surprise. They ask if Jesus thinks he is greater than Abraham. Jesus responds that he knows God, and that Abraham was very happy to know that Jesus was coming to earth.

In the third scene: The Jewish leaders are surprised that Jesus has seen Abraham. Jesus claims to be older than Abraham. The Jewish leaders are angry, and pick up stones to kill Jesus. Jesus hides himself.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jewish leaders
- The crowd, or Jewish people

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, Jesus is still talking with the Jewish people. Jesus has just told them that they do not belong to God. The Jewish people who opposed and argued with Jesus answered him, "Are we not correct when we say that you are a Samaritan and possessed by a demon?" The Jewish leaders expect Jesus to answer yes. Another way to say this is, "We are right! You are a Samaritan and you are possessed by a demon!"

Jesus does not respond to their accusation that he is a Samaritan. Instead, Jesus says, "I am not possessed by a demon." Jesus makes a contrast between what he is doing and what the Jewish leaders are doing. He says, "I am glorifying or honoring my Father, but you are not honoring me." Now Jesus makes a contrast between what he wants people to do and what God wants people to do. He says, "I do not want people to glorify or honor me, but God wants people to glorify me, and he judges in my favor." Then Jesus uses a phrase, "I tell you of this truth" to tell people to pay attention to him, because he is about to give an important teaching. He says, "If anyone obeys my teaching or message, he will never die."

In the second scene, the Jewish people were very surprised when they heard Jesus say that people will never die if they obey Jesus. The Jews who opposed and argued with Jesus assumed he was talking about our physical life and fully believed that only people who are possessed by demons speak this way. The Jews misunderstood Jesus and thought Jesus was saying he is greater than their ancestor Abraham and other prophets, or God's messengers. The Jews also knew that Jesus would die. For that reason, Jesus may say he is greater than their ancestors, but he shouldn't have said people who obey his teaching or message will never die. So, the Jews challenged Jesus not to say that he is greater than their ancestors who had died because surely everyone will die. This shows that the Jewish people were angry at Jesus' claim that he will never die.

In the third scene, Jesus reminded the Jews that they claimed to follow God. That same God is Jesus' father. When Jesus said to the Jewish people "though you do not know him," Jesus was making a contrast that the Jews knew about God but the Jews do not have a close relationship with the God they claimed to worship. Jesus said, "Your ancestor Abraham was very happy about my coming." Abraham had lived about two thousand years ago before Jesus came.

When the Jewish leaders heard this, they rebuked Jesus and laughed or scorn at him. Because the Jews were thinking of Jesus' human life beginning from his birth, they said, "You are not yet fifty years old! How come you said you have seen Abraham?"

Jesus' response showed that he was saying something very important. Jesus started by saying, "Truly I tell you" to show that the next thing he said was important. Then Jesus said the very important thing: "Before Abraham existed, I am." The Jewish leaders understood that Jesus was saying he was divine, and so they picked up stones. They wanted to throw stones at him until he died. Jesus hid himself and left the temple area. We do not know how Jesus hid himself so that the leaders could not find him.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 8:48–59 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatize the story.

This passage has three scenes.

The character in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jewish leaders
- The crowd

Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The Jewish people who opposed and argued with Jesus told him they were correct when they said Jesus was a Samaritan and possessed by a demon. Jesus says, "I am not possessed by a demon, I am glorifying or honoring my Father, but you Jews are not honoring me. I do not want people to glorify or honor me, but God wants people to glorify me, and God judges in my favor. I tell you this truth, "If anyone obeys my teaching or message, he will never die."

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Jewish people, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "We are wasting our time listening to this attention seeker. He is using his teaching and message to get the crowd on his side." [!end] Continue the drama.

When the Jewish people heard Jesus say that people will never die if they obey Jesus, they were surprised. They said that even Abraham, an important prophet, died, then surely everyone will die. The Jews ask if Jesus is more important than their forefather Abraham and the prophets of God who have all died. Jesus responds to the Jews by saying that if he tried to honor himself, it would mean nothing. "My Father is the God that you Jewish people say is your God too." Jesus says that the Jews do not really know their God. However, Jesus calls the Jewish people liars because they say that they know and obey God, but they do not.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Jewish people, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "We have our security in our ancestor Abraham. Through him God will deliver us. We don't know or understand this Jesus. His teaching seems crazy!" [!end] Continue the drama.

The Jewish leaders were surprised and said to Jesus, "You are not fifty years old. So, it is not possible that you have seen Abraham!" Jesus replied to the Jewish leaders that even before "Abraham was born, I existed." Such an insult to Abraham and to God should be punished by death. So, the Jews picked up stones to kill Jesus. But Jesus hid himself and went away from the temple court.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Jewish people, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Jesus has gone too far! We need to stop him now." [!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 8:48–59 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **Jews** in this passage are the Jewish people who opposed and argued with Jesus. The Jews in this passage are probably Jewish religious leaders. Translate Jews in the same way you have in previous passages and remember that Jews is in the Master Glossary.

The Jewish people who opposed and argued with Jesus answered him, "Are we not correct when we say that you are a **Samaritan** and **possessed by a demon**?"

Jews did not like Samaritans. Samaritans were descendants of Jews who lived in Samaria. Jews considered Samaritans to be unclean because Samaritans had married foreigners. Translate Samaritan in the same way you have in previous passages and remember that Samaritans, or Samaria, is in the Master Glossary.

Demons are spirit beings who have rebelled against God. Translate demon in the same way you have in previous passages and remember that demon is in the Master Glossary.

The Jewish people say that Abraham and the **prophets** of God have all died. A prophet refers to someone who receives a call and message from God, takes God's message to people, and knows that his most important job is to bring the Word or message of God to people. Translate prophet in the same way you have in previous passages and remember that prophet is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus continues to say, "I am **glorifying**, or honoring, my Father, but you are not honoring me." Glory refers to how God shows his power and splendor through his presence. To glorify someone is to speak well about someone or to give them honor. It is most often used when talking about praising, honoring, and speaking well about God. Translate glorify in the same way you have in previous passages and remember that glory and glorify are in the Master Glossary.

The Jews picked up stones to kill Jesus. But Jesus hid himself and went away from the **temple** court. The temple was built so that people could worship God and special priests could bring sacrifices to God. The general population could not enter into the center of the temple, but remained in the outer courts. Translate temple in the same way you have in previous passages and remember that temple is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in their own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 8:48–59

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3010971 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 9:1–12

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 9:1–12 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 9:1–12 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 9:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Jesus angered the Jewish leaders and left the temple in Jerusalem. Some time later, Jesus and His disciples walked through the streets of Jerusalem and saw a man who was blind. This man was blind since birth, and the local community knew this about him. Beggars were common in Jerusalem near the temple. They hoped that people who came for worship would give them a donation. This man was likely one of many beggars in that area.

Pause this audio here.

- In your culture, how are beggars treated?
- Do most people talk to them or know their names?
- Blindness from birth is very uncommon around the world. How do you think most people become blind?

Jesus' disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, or teacher, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" The title they used for Jesus, "Rabbi," was commonly used for Jewish religious teachers or experts. It is appropriate to use the title, "teacher," here instead of, "Rabbi," if needed. This is a natural question for them to ask, because the Jews believed that all suffering was caused by sin or disobedience to God. It was difficult to think of how this man could sin before he was born. And it was difficult to understand how his parents could have sinned and caused his blindness.

Pause this audio here.

- In your culture, how do you address a respected teacher or person?
- What do people in your culture think is the cause of illness?
- What do Christians in your culture believe is the cause of illness?

Jesus told His disciples that neither the man nor his parents sinned to cause his blindness. Jesus said that the man was born blind so that other people can see God's power at work in him. John often refers to the miracles of God as "works" of God. Jesus also told His disciples that they must do the works of God while it is day. He connected this to the meaning in the next sentence, "While I am in the world, I am the Light of the World." Jesus is the Light of the World, and while He is in the world it is like daytime. Jesus also said that "night is coming." By this He means that He will be leaving the world and it will be like night time, because the Light of the World-Jesus-will be gone.

This is the second time in the book of John that Jesus has referred to Himself as the Light of the World. This is one of the important "I am" statements of Jesus. There are seven of these in the Gospel of John. Jesus is using the name of God that God said to Moses when God sent him to free the Israelites in Egypt, "I am."

While Jesus is with them, it is like daytime. When Jesus leaves them to go to heaven, it will be like night time.

Pause this audio here.

- What are some words in your language that have more than one meaning, like "work" in this passage? Another example in English is, "brother," which can mean a brother by birth, or a brother by circumstance like a neighbor, close friend, fellow Christian, etc.
- What are some of the ways you can say that a person is "working" in your language?
- In your culture, what does light and dark symbolize? How would you describe something as "the Light of the World?"

After that, Jesus spat on the ground and made some mud, then He put it on the eyes of the man who was born blind. We don't know why Jesus used spit and mud in this healing, but it could be related to His own deity, or that He wanted the man to do some action to show his faith in Jesus. Jesus told him to go wash in the pool of Siloam. This pool was near the temple. It was a water supply for the city. People would do ritual washing before going to worship at the temple. The man went to the pool to wash, and came back with his sight!

Pause this audio here.

When the man came back from the pool, his neighbors who knew him as the blind man were amazed. They asked if he was the man who used to sit and beg. They were not sure if he was the same man. People in this culture and time who were blind normally begged for money to live. But the man healed by Jesus told them that he was the man who was blind, but now he sees. His neighbors asked him how he was healed, and the man told them about Jesus. He told them that Jesus put mud on his eyes and told him to go and wash in the pool. After he did this, he could see. His neighbors asked him where Jesus was then, but he did not know.

Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 9:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus and His disciples are walking through Jerusalem, and they see a man born blind. His disciples ask Jesus, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" Jesus answers them.

In the second scene: Jesus puts some spit on the ground, makes mud, and puts it on the eyes of the man born blind. He sent the man to wash in the pool of Siloam. The man did this and came back with his sight.

In the third scene: The man's neighbors and acquaintances try to understand if this is the same man who was born blind, but now he sees. The man tells them that he is that man. He told them how Jesus healed him. Then they ask him where Jesus is, but he doesn't know where to find Jesus.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The man born blind
- The neighbors of the man born blind
- People who had seen the man begging in the street

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the previous passage the religious leaders almost stoned Jesus because of things He said to the Jewish leaders. He and His disciples left the temple, and were now walking through Jerusalem. There were likely many beggars in the area. It was not surprising to see a man begging beside the path.

When they saw the man born blind, Jesus' disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned...?" The Jewish people believed that all suffering was a result of sin. For this reason, the question that Jesus' disciples ask Him is a normal question. Jesus told His disciples that the blindness was not because of the sin of the man or his parents. Jesus told them that instead this blindness was so that God's power would be seen in his life. This sentence has an emphasis on the positive part, God's work in the life of the man. Sometimes, it is translated as two sentences to make it more clear. Your team may also decide to put the positive portion first to make the emphasis clear. For example, "Neither! He was born blind so that God's works may be revealed in him, not because he or his parents sinned."

Jesus told His disciples that they must do the works of God while it is day. He connected this to the meaning in the next sentence: "While I am in the world, I am the Light of the World." Jesus is the Light of the World, and while He is in the world it is like daytime. This is the second time in the book of John that Jesus has referred to Himself as the Light of the World. This is one of the important "I am" statements of Jesus. Jesus is using the name of God that God said to Moses when God sent him to free the Israelites in Egypt, "I am."

It is important to notice that Jesus calls Himself the "Light of the World." The phrase is one way that Jesus described Himself. Almost the same phrase is also in Isaiah, where the Messiah is predicted to be "a light to the nations." In this phrase, Jesus compares himself to light. Like light, He makes it possible for people to see. He gives spiritual light to the people of the world, showing them who God is.

Here are a few other ways to translate this phrase:

- I am the light for the world.
- I am like the light of the world.
- I am like the light of the world because I enable people to see.
- I am the one who is the true light of the world.
- I bring true spiritual light to the people of the world.

Jesus also said that "night is coming." By this, He means that He will be leaving the world and it will be like night time, because the Light of the World (Jesus) will be gone. While He was in the world, He told them that He is "the Light of the World." While Jesus is with them, it is like daytime. When Jesus leaves them to go to heaven, it will be like night time.

After Jesus said these things, He spit on the ground and made mud with the wet dirt. Then He put this mud on the man's eyes. Then Jesus told him to wash in the pool of Siloam, not far from the temple. The man went there and washed, and he came back with his sight.

When the man came back, Jesus was gone. His neighbors and other people who had seen him begging did not know if this was the same man who used to be blind. While they discussed it, the man said, "I am that man." He explained to them how Jesus healed him. Then they asked where Jesus was, but he did not know.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 9:1-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The man born blind
- The neighbors of the man born blind
- People who had seen the man begging in the street

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out the portion of the passage when Jesus and his disciples are walking through Jerusalem, and see the man born blind. Have the disciples ask Jesus, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?"

Pause the drama.

Act out the part of the passage when Jesus answered the disciples. Jesus told them that neither the man nor his parents sinned to cause this. Instead, the man was born blind so that God's works can be displayed in his life. Jesus also told them that they must do the works of God while Jesus is in the world. Jesus also told them that He is, "the Light of the World." Then Jesus made some mud with spit and put it on the eyes of the man who was born blind.

Jesus told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam.

Pause the drama.

Ask one of the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer, "I wonder what Jesus is doing now," or "Is Jesus' spittle going to heal this man?" [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out the part of the passage when the man washes in the pool, and comes back seeing. Then have his neighbors and acquaintances see him, and discuss among themselves, "Is this the man who used to beg?"

Have the man who was healed say, "I am that man."

The neighbors ask the man how he was healed. The man then tells them what happened. Then his neighbors ask him, "Where is the man who healed you?" but the man does not know where Jesus is.

Pause the drama.

Ask the man who Jesus healed, "What are you thinking or feeling now?" The person might answer, "I'm excited to be able to see!" or "I don't know how this is possible."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 9:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus' disciples asked Him, "**Rabbi**, who **sinned**, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" Rabbi means teacher. Sin is disobedience to God. For more information on Rabbi and sin, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same words or phrases for Rabbi and sin as you have used in previous passages.

Jesus told them that instead this blindness was so that **God's works** would be seen in his life. In the Gospel of John, "God's works" refer to miracles that only God can do, also something that God does to show His power. For more information on works, see the Master Glossary entry for miracle. Be sure to use the same word for "works of God" as you have used in previous passages.

Jesus also said, "While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world." Jesus is using the Name of God that God said to Moses when God sent him to free the Israelites in Egypt: "I am." See the Master Glossary entry for I am for more information on this term. Be sure to translate "I am" in the same way you have done in previous passages.

Jesus told him to go wash in the **pool of Siloam**. This pool was near the temple, and people used it for ritual washing before worship as well as a water supply for the city. It was a man-made pool. The name of the pool, "Siloam," means, "sent," because the water in the pool was sent from outside of Jerusalem to the pool for the people to use.

When the man told the Pharisees how Jesus healed him, he said that Jesus rubbed, or **anointed**, his eyes. This means that Jesus honored the man by putting the mud on his eyes. This word, anoint, is often used when someone places oil on a person's head in a special ceremony. For more information on anointing, refer to the Master Glossary. Be sure to use the same word for anoint as you have used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 9:1–12

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2872887 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (4801532 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 9:13–23

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 9:13–23 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 9:13–23 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

- What do you like in this passage?
- What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
- What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
- What does this passage tell us about people?
- How does this passage affect our daily lives?
- Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 9:13–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Jesus healed a man who was born blind. After that, people who knew the man as blind did not know if he was the same man, and if he was genuinely healed.

They also did not know where Jesus was, so they could not ask Him more about this miracle.

The neighbors and people who knew the healed man took him to the Pharisees, local religious leaders. These people did this because something very unusual happened when the man was healed. They wanted to find out from the religious leaders if this was an act of God. The author, John, mentions an important detail when he says that it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and healed the man. The Jews had many rules for the Sabbath Day that went beyond the command to "honor the Sabbath Day and keep it holy," as is stated in the ten

commandments. They did not allow any work at all, and healing was considered work. On the Sabbath, people weren't allowed to help someone unless their life was in danger. This man's life wasn't in danger. This could be a part of the reason why the people came to the religious leaders for investigation.

Pause this audio and discuss the following questions with your group: In your culture, what do you do when there is a difficult or confusing event? Who would you ask for help in understanding it?

The Pharisees asked the man who Jesus healed how it happened. The healed man described it. When they heard that it happened on the Sabbath, the Pharisees had a disagreement among themselves. Some of them said that because Jesus did not follow the rules that the Jews had for the Sabbath day, He was not sent from God in their opinion. Other Pharisees asked if Jesus did not come from God, how could He have the power to do the miracles He did? The Pharisees did not expect an answer to this question. They asked it to make the point that Jesus might be from God. This was a difficult situation for these religious leaders to comprehend and explain.

At this point, the Pharisees asked the healed man what He thought about Jesus. This is not normal for these religious leaders. The healed man was uneducated and a beggar. He was not a religious expert. But they asked his opinion here. The man told them, "He, Jesus, is a prophet." A prophet is someone God sends to speak God's message to people. The healed man thought that Jesus was a messenger and representative of God.

The religious leaders did not believe that the man was born blind or that Jesus healed him. So they sent for the man's parents to come and talk to them. This was mandatory for the parents. They asked his parents if this was their son, and was he born blind? The Pharisees also asked how he can see now. The parents told the Pharisees that this is their son, and he was born blind. But they did not know how he could see.

The man's parents told the Pharisees to ask the man himself. They said that he was old enough to speak for himself. In their culture, this means that he was at least 13 years old. But he was likely older than that, because he begged for money in the streets, and probably did not depend on his parents for support. He is also called "a man" in the passage. John notes that they did this because they were afraid of the Pharisees. These religious leaders had already warned the Jews that if anyone said that Jesus was the Christ, the Promised Savior, he would be forbidden to attend their house of worship. This was a very serious punishment in their culture. So the parents of this man did not want to be involved in the discussion any longer.

Pause this audio here and ask the following questions for discussion with your group: In your culture, how much authority do religious leaders have to forbid a person to join the community in worship? What would happen if the religious leaders in your culture kicked a person out of the house of worship? How might this impact other parts of their life?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 9:13–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: The healed man is brought to the Pharisees for investigation. The Pharisees have a disagreement among themselves about Jesus' power and authority. The healed man calls Jesus "a prophet."

In the second scene: The Pharisees send for the parents of the man who was healed. They question his parents, and specifically want to know how he was healed. But his parents do not answer that question. Instead, they refer the Pharisees back to the man who was healed.

The characters in this passage are:

- The man who was healed from blindness
- His neighbors and people who knew him as a beggar
- The Pharisees (one group who does not believe Jesus is from God, one group who thinks He might be from God)
- The parents of the man born blind

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Scene 1

In the beginning of this passage, the phrase, "They brought to the Pharisees the man who was formerly blind..." is a transition in the story. This probably happened the day after this man was healed. The people involved moved to a new location, meeting with the Pharisees. The scripture is not clear about whether the man went voluntarily, or if the people forced him to go. Try to translate it without saying he was forced to go, or not forced to go. You could say, "the people led the man who was formerly blind to the Pharisees," or something similar.

The fact that this man was healed on the Sabbath day is made clear by the word translated as "now." In this context, "now" is not a word referring to time. Instead, here it means, "it should be noted that." This is one of the reasons why the Pharisees cared about this healing. It is also possible that Jesus did this on purpose, on the Sabbath, in order to show His power over the law of the Sabbath. The Pharisees and Jewish leaders have already disagreed previously with Jesus when he healed others on the Sabbath.

The Pharisees asked the healed man to explain how he was healed. The man told them that Jesus took clay, applied it to the man's eyes, and told him to wash, and he was healed. Immediately, some of the Pharisees pointed out that Jesus could not have come from God, because He did not follow the Sabbath rules. It was against their Sabbath laws for someone to heal another person on the Sabbath, because it was considered "work." Some other of the Pharisees disagreed and said that if Jesus did not come from God, He would not have the power to do these miracles. So the religious leaders had a division among themselves because of this difficult situation.

The Pharisees then asked the man who was healed what he thought about Jesus. The man was sure of it when he said, "He is a prophet." That meant that he thought that Jesus was from God.

Scene 2

The Pharisees still did not believe that the man was born blind, or that he was healed. So they sent for his parents to come and be questioned. They asked his parents, "Is this your son? Was he born blind? How does he see now?"

The man's parents confirmed that he was their son, and he was born blind.

John makes another point at this time in the passage. He said that the parents of the man who was healed were afraid of the religious leaders. These leaders said that if anyone claimed that Jesus was the Messiah, the Promised Savior, he would be banned from the synagogue. The parents did not want to be punished for something that involved their son.

The parents of the man told the Pharisees that their son was old enough to answer for himself, but they did not know how he was healed. They did not say if they knew about Jesus.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 9:13–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- The man who was healed from blindness
- His neighbors and people who knew him as a beggar
- The Pharisees (one group who does not believe Jesus is from God, one group who thinks He might be from God)
- The parents of the man born blind

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Scene 1 of the passage, when the healed man is brought to the Pharisees for investigation. The Pharisees have a disagreement among themselves about Jesus' power and authority. The healed man calls Jesus "a prophet."

Pause the drama.

Ask one of the religious leaders who doesn't believe, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "This man is lying," or "How will we punish this man?" or "Why doesn't Jesus keep the Sabbath?"

Ask one of the religious leaders who has doubts, who thinks this may be a miracle from God, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "This is an amazing miracle!" or "Is Jesus really a prophet?" [end] Continue the drama.

Act out Scene 2 in the passage, when The Pharisees send for the parents of the man who was healed. They question his parents, and specifically want to know how he was healed. But his parents do not answer that question, instead they refer the Pharisees back to the man who was healed.

Ask the actors playing the parents of the man, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "We are scared. These people are dangerous," or "Why won't they just ask our son?" or "This is the most difficult situation we have ever been in."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 9:13-23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The neighbors and people who knew the healed man took him to the Pharisees, local religious leaders. The **Pharisees** were seen as the most influential group of religious leaders in Israel. The Pharisees were devoted to God's law. They recognized both the written and oral religious traditions and law. Some of the Pharisees were also teachers of God's law. At the time of Jesus, many but not all of the religious leaders in Jerusalem belonged to the Pharisee sect. In this passage, they are called Pharisees, Jews, and Jewish leaders. This is all the same group of people in this passage. Use the same word or phrase for Pharisee in this passage as you have used in previous passages. For more information on Pharisee, refer to the Master Glossary.

It was on a **Sabbath** when Jesus healed the man. The Jewish people observed the Sabbath day as a day of rest and worship from the time that God gave them this command. By the time of Jesus, strict, specific rules were in

place regarding what kind of work could and could not be done on this day. This was also the day that people went to the synagogue or temple to worship. Use the same word for Sabbath as you used in previous passages. For more information on Sabbath, refer to the Master Glossary.

Some of the Pharisees asked how a man who is a **sinner** could perform **signs**, or **miracles**. Sin refers to an act of disobedience to God. When these Pharisees suggested that Jesus was a sinner, they meant that He was like every other person and committed sin. In this passage, the word sign means a miracle. Signs and miracles refer to powerful actions that only God can do, and make people be in awe of God. Miracles, signs, and wonders all refer to similar things.

Use the same word for **sinner** as you have used in previous passages. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

Use the same word for **sign** as you have used in previous passages. For more information on signs, refer to miracle in the Master Glossary.

The healed man called Jesus a **prophet**. A prophet is someone who receives a message from God and takes it to people. Use the same word for prophet as you have used in previous passages. For more information on prophets, refer to the Master Glossary.

The healed man's parents were afraid of the Jewish leaders because they knew that if anyone confessed Jesus as the Christ, or Messiah, he would be "put out of the **synagogue**." This is important because the right to worship in the synagogue was very important to all Jewish people. The synagogue was the local place of worship for Jews, it was not the temple where people made sacrifices. Use the same word for synagogue as you have used in previous passages. For more information on synagogue, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 9:13–23

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 9:24–34

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 9:24–34 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 9:24–34 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God and Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 9:24–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, the Pharisees questioned the man who was healed from blindness and then his parents. They tried to confirm if he was the son of these people, and if he was born blind. After this, the Pharisees called the healed man back to talk to them.

They began with a statement, "Give glory to God." This is a challenge to the man to be honest with the Pharisees. They did not believe him, or wanted him to agree with them. "Give glory to God" can be translated as "Swear by God to tell the truth" or "Speak the truth before God." They wanted to make sure that the man gave God the glory for this healing, and not to Jesus. The Pharisees also wanted the man to make a statement like an oath to them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When the Pharisees said that the healed man should "give glory to God," they were telling him to speak truthfully with God listening. In your culture, how do you know if someone is telling the truth? What words or phrases do people normally use when someone tells the truth? In a formal setting, like a court or council meeting, how do people do this? In an informal setting, like a family or group of friends, how do you know when someone is telling the truth? Pause this audio here.

Then they said, "We know that this man is a sinner." The Pharisees did not even speak Jesus' name. They were giving their own opinion about Jesus, that He was not a good person. They tried to make the man agree with themselves. When they refused to use Jesus' name, they were showing disrespect. "This man" could even be "this fellow" or "this person." By calling Jesus a sinner, they meant that He did not keep the Jewish law. In Jewish law, people should not do work on the Jewish Sabbath Day of rest. The religious leaders considered Jesus a sinner because he made mud and healed the man on the Sabbath Day.

The healed man said to them, "I do not know if He is a sinner, but I know this, I was blind, but now I see!" This is a statement of the facts. The man did not allow the Pharisees to involve him in their theory or debate of whether or not Jesus was a sinner. He gave an expression of simple faith of what he knew was true.

After that, the Pharisees asked the man, "What did He do to you, how did He open your eyes?" The Pharisees tried to find something that Jesus did that broke the Sabbath law with this question. The healed man responded by saying that he already told the Pharisees what happened, but they did not listen to him. His meaning is that they did not want to listen to him. They also did not believe him, and he knew that.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: This man refused to get involved in a debate with the religious leaders. He simply stated what he knew. If you were this man, what would you have said? Pause this audio here.

The healed man already considered himself a disciple of Jesus. He asked the Pharisees a very bold question. He said, "You do not want to become His-Jesus'-disciples too, do you?" The healed man was probably frustrated by their questions, and asked this question out of his frustration. But the Pharisees did not like the question. They quickly said, "We are disciples of Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He comes from." Again, they did not use Jesus' name, and this is probably a sign of disrespect. They showed contrast in their speech by using Moses' name but not Jesus' name.

Then, the healed man makes more important statements. He states his amazement that these religious leaders of Israel do not know where a man who can heal blind people comes from. He also says that, "We know that God does not listen to sinners, but God does listen to God-fearers, or people who honor and obey God by doing His will." When he said this, he made it clear that he believed that God sent Jesus, and was not a sinner, which is what they called Jesus.

The healed man continued to say that, "from the beginning of time, no one has heard of someone healing a person born blind." He said that if this man, Jesus, were not from God, He could do nothing. His meaning is that Jesus must be from God. The healed man was obviously speaking the truth that God gave him. In this situation, he is more aware of God's power and presence than the Pharisees.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how can a common person challenge or question a person who is in authority over them such as the police, religious leaders, or a teacher? Pause this audio here.

The Pharisees responded to the statements of the healed man by attacking him. The Pharisees responded with a question that they did not expect an answer to. They said, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" This was a rebuke, and an insult. They said that he was completely a sinner, a sinner from the time he was born, and continuing in it. At this point, it sounds like they remembered that he was a blind beggar just days before this time. They insulted him in an effort to discredit him. Then the Pharisees put him out of the synagogue. The meaning here is unclear. It could be they banned him, or it could simply mean they had him removed from the building. Either way, this was a serious punishment for the Jewish people. The Pharisees did not kick the man out of the Jewish religion, or the temple, but he was removed from his local synagogue, where his family and neighbors likely worshiped.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: If one of your family members was kicked out of your place of worship, how would it affect your family and that family member? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 9:24-34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: The Pharisees call the healed man back to talk with them. They tried to force their opinion on him. Instead, the healed man told them that he was blind, and now he can see.

In the second scene: The Pharisees asked him how Jesus healed the man. He responded that he told them what happened, but they did not listen to him.

In the third scene: The man asked if they wanted to become Jesus' disciples also. The Pharisees then insulted Jesus and this man. But the man challenged them to consider that Jesus must be from God, because he healed a man born blind.

In the fourth scene: The Pharisees insulted the man and kicked him out of the synagogue.

The characters in this passage are:

- The man who was healed from blindness
- The Pharisees

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Scene 1

The beginning of this passage used an introductory word that showed that the Pharisees shifted from questioning the parents of the healed man to questioning the healed man again.

They began with a statement, "Give glory to God, we know that this man is a sinner."

This is a challenge to the man to be honest with the Pharisees. "Give glory to God" can be translated as "Swear by God to tell the truth," or "Speak the truth before God." They wanted to make sure that the man gave God the glory for this healing, and not Jesus. The Pharisees also want the man to make a statement like an oath or solemn vow to them.

They were also giving their own opinion about Jesus, that He was not a good person. They tried to make the man agree with them, and say it in his own words. When they refused to use Jesus' name, they were showing disrespect. "This man" could even be "this fellow," or "this person." By calling Jesus a sinner, they meant that He did not keep the Jewish law. In Jewish law, people should not do work on the Jewish Sabbath Day of rest. The religious leaders considered Jesus a sinner because he made mud and healed the man on the Sabbath Day.

The response of the healed man here is the most important part of this passage. The healed man said to them, "I do not know if He is a sinner, but one thing I do know, I was blind, but now I see!" It is an expression of simple faith in what this man knew was true. The original language of this passage gives emphasis to the phrase "one thing I know." It could also be translated as "all I know is this" or "but I definitely know one thing."

Scene 2

The direction of speech changed again when the Pharisees asked the man another question. Since the Pharisees did not get the healed man to say what they wanted, they asked another question. They asked him how Jesus healed him, specifically, "What did he do to you?" The Pharisees wanted to hear about some activity that Jesus did which would specifically violate the law of the Sabbath.

The healed man responded by saying that he already told the Pharisees what happened, but they did not listen to him. He responded with two questions. He did not want the Pharisees to answer the questions, but instead he made his point by asking the questions. He said, "Why do you want to hear it again?" The man showed frustration when he said this. The healed man knew that they did not believe what he said about Jesus.

Scene 3

The healed man then asked the Pharisees a very bold question. He said, "You do not want to become His disciples too, do you?" The healed man was probably frustrated by their questions, and asked this question out of his frustration. The healed man did mean that he was a disciple of Jesus by the way he said "too."

The Pharisees did not like the question. They quickly said, "We are disciples of Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He comes from." They showed contrast in their speech by using Moses' name, but not Jesus' name. It was a known fact that Moses came from God, but the Pharisees said that they did not know where Jesus came from.

The healed man said that he was amazed that these religious leaders of Israel did not know where a man who can heal blind people came from. He also says that, "We know that God does not listen to sinners, but God does listen to God-fearers who do His will." When he said this, he made it clear that he believed that God sent Jesus, and Jesus was not a sinner.

The healed man said, "From the beginning of time, no one has heard of someone healing a person born blind." This was a statement of the healed man's opinion. It is very rare for someone to be born blind; most people who are blind become blind after birth. It is surely true that this man had never heard of someone who was born blind being healed.

He said that if this man were not from God, He could do nothing. This was a powerful statement, full of faith and boldness. His meaning is that Jesus must be from God.

Scene 4

The Pharisees responded with a question used to rebuke and insult the healed man. They insulted him by saying that he was completely a sinner, born in sin and continuing in it. When they said this, they were insulting the man's parents as well. At this point it sounds like they remembered that he was a blind beggar just days before. They insulted him in an effort to discredit him.

Then the Pharisees put him out of the synagogue. The meaning here is unclear. It could be that they banned him or it could simply mean that they had him removed from the building. This was the danger that the healed man's parents were worried about in the previous passage. Now, this happened to the healed man. It was a serious disgrace for him.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 9:24–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- The man who was healed from blindness
- The Pharisees

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the previous passage, the Pharisees questioned the man who was healed from blindness and his parents. They tried to confirm if he was the son of these people, and if he was born blind. After this, the Pharisees called the healed man back to talk to them.

They began with, "Give glory to God." Then they said, "We know that this man is a sinner."

The healed man said to them, "I do not know if He is a sinner, but I know this, I was blind, but now I see!"

Pause the drama.

After that, the Pharisees asked the man, "What did He do to you, how did He open your eyes?" The healed man responded by saying that he already told the Pharisees what happened, but they did not listen to him.

Pause the drama.

The healed man then asked the Pharisees a very bold question. He said, "You do not want to become His (Jesus') disciples too, do you?"

They quickly said, "We are disciples of Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He comes from."

Pause the drama.

Then, the healed man makes more important statements. He states his amazement that these religious leaders of Israel do not know where a man who can heal blind people comes from. He also says that, "We know that God does not listen to sinners, but God does listen to God-fearers who do His will."

The healed man continued to say that "from the beginning of time, no one has heard of someone healing a person born blind." He said that if this man, Jesus, were not from God, He could do nothing.

Pause the drama.

The Pharisees responded to the statements of the healed man by attacking him. They said that he was "born entirely in sin," and he should not be teaching them. They insulted the man, saying that he was completely a sinner, born in sin and continuing in it. Then the Pharisees put him out of the synagogue.

Pause the drama.

Ask the man playing the healed man, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person may answer things like, "I don't know what I will do, they have shamed me in front of the people and God," or "I can't believe this happened to me," or "I wonder where Jesus is?"

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 9:24–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The Jewish leaders began with a statement: "Give **glory** to God." This is a challenge to the man to be honest with the Pharisees. They did not believe him, or wanted him to agree with them. "Give glory to God" can be translated as, "Swear by God to tell the truth," or "Speak the truth before God." They wanted the man to make a solemn vow to them. Be sure to use the same word for **glory** that you have used in previous passages. For more information on glory in this passage, refer to the word glorify in the Master Glossary.

Then the Pharisees said, "We know that this man is a **sinner**." Be sure to use the same word for sinner as you have used in previous passages. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

The healed man then asked the Pharisees a very bold question. He said, "You do not want to become His **disciples** too, do you?" They quickly said, "We are disciples of Moses." A disciple is a person who follows and learns from a specific religious teacher about God, faith, and life. Be sure to use the same word for disciple here that you have used in previous passages. For more information on disciple, refer to the Master Glossary.

Then, the healed man makes more important statements. He states his amazement that these religious leaders of Israel do not know where a man who can heal blind people comes from. He also says that, "We know that God does not listen to sinners, but God does listen to God-fearers, or **worshippers** who do His **will**." A God-fearer or worshiper is someone who does the **will of God**. This man believed that Jesus was doing the will of God. The will of God is God's plan, or His purpose. Someone who does the will of God is doing things that God has told them to do. Be sure to use the same word for **God-fearer** or someone who **worships** God as you have used in previous passages. For more information on God-fearer or on worship, refer to worship or fear of God in the Master Glossary. Be sure to use the same word for "will of God" that you have used in previous passages.

Then the Pharisees put him out of the **synagogue**. Synagogues were Jewish places of worship where people in villages could meet instead of in the main temple in Jerusalem. The meaning here is unclear. It could be they banned him, or it could simply mean they had him removed from the building. This was a serious punishment for the Jewish people. While the man was not kicked out of the Jewish religion, or the temple, he was removed from his local synagogue where his family and neighbors likely worshiped. Be sure to use the same word for synagogue that you have used in previous passages. For more information on synagogue, refer to the Master Glossary entry for synagogue.

Stop here and look at the photo of a synagogue as a group. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 9:24-34

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3365428 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 9:35–41

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 9:35–41 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 9:35–41 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 9:35–41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The religious leaders put the man who Jesus healed from blindness out of the synagogue. This meant that he was cut off from his religious community. This passage begins just after that. When Jesus heard that the religious leaders put the man out of the synagogue, He found the man to talk with him. Jesus asked the healed man, "Do you **believe** in the **Son of Man**?" The way Jesus asks the question of the man can be understood as, "You believe in the Son of Man, right?" It was an assumption and a question. Jesus was asking the man if he believed or trusted in the person whom God says is coming to save the world. The man probably would have heard the prophecy that someone called the Son of Man was coming. Jesus assumed, because the man spoke well of him in the synagogue to the religious leaders, that the man does believe in him. Jesus asks him this very personal and pointed question. The emphasis is on the man himself, and his belief. We do not know who else may have heard this conversation, but it is likely that Jesus' closest disciples heard it. That would include Peter, James, and John, the one who recorded this account.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When Jesus asked the healed man if he believed in the Son of Man, it was a very important and serious question. In your culture, how would you ask someone a very important and sensitive question like this? Who else might be involved in a conversation like this one? Pause the audio here.

After Jesus asked the healed man this important question, the man asked Jesus, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe?" The healed man was interested, but unsure who the Son of Man was.

Jesus told him that He is the Son of Man. Jesus said, "You have seen Him." This man had only had his sight for one day. The fact that Jesus said "you have seen Him" meant a lot to this man. The healed man knew that Jesus was the Son of Man. The healed man said, "Lord, I believe," and worshiped Jesus.

The healed man called Jesus "Lord" before he knew that Jesus was the Son of Man. But the way that he used this title, it could be translated as "sir." It was a polite title used to honor Jesus in the same way that the man would honor any other respected religious teacher. But after he realized that Jesus was the Son of Man, he called Jesus "Lord" and said "I believe." Then the healed man worshiped Jesus. His meaning the second time was much more serious and respectful, and the healed man showed it by saying that he believed and by worshiping Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture demonstrate real belief, or real trust, in something or someone? Talk about the things they say, do, or write to show how they really trust in someone. Pause the audio here.

Sometime after this, perhaps in a different place, Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind." Now, some of the Pharisees are in the same area and listening. It seems like the Pharisees probably were not present when the healed man worshiped Jesus.

Jesus told the people that He came to the world for judgment. A judge is someone who decides who is guilty of a wrong or not guilty. The judgment Jesus refers to here is a judgment that comes with light, or seeing. Jesus reveals himself, which is like light shining on something, in this case, on the sins of people because they don't understand who Jesus is. Jesus is not saying here that He is the judge. He is saying that those who refuse to see Him as the Promised Savior, the Son of God, become blind and bring judgment to themselves.

When Jesus made this statement about judgment, some of the Pharisees asked, "We are not blind too, are we?" They meant, "Do you think we are blind?" These Pharisees thought that they knew everything about God and genuine faith. They did not believe that they would be blind to the truth from God. But they showed that they were blind, because they rejected Jesus as the Promised Savior.

Jesus responded to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin, or not be guilty of sinning; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

The challenge for the Pharisees, the most influential religious leaders of Israel, was that they claimed to see. They claimed spiritual knowledge. They knew God's law. And it is sin for people who have spiritual knowledge to act as they do. Jesus does not say that they really do see, but that they claim to see. If they really had spiritual sight they would act differently toward him. Yet they are not completely blind. His meaning is that they have enough spiritual knowledge to be responsible. If they acted on the best knowledge they had they would welcome the Promised Savior. But they did not act on their best knowledge. They claimed to have sight but they acted like the blind. Therefore God does not take away their sin. It remains with them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, when does a person think that they have learned everything there is to know about a topic? If someone thinks they know everything, how can they learn more? How can religious leaders today continue to learn from others? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 9:35–41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus found the healed man and asked the man if he believed in the Son of Man, Jesus. The healed man asked Jesus how he could believe if he did not know the Son of Man. Jesus told the healed man that He (Jesus) is the Son of Man. The healed man told Jesus that he believed, and he worshiped Jesus.

In the second scene: Jesus said that He came into the world for judgment. He said that people who were blind would be able to see, and those who see would become blind. The Pharisees asked Jesus if they were blind. Jesus told them that if they were blind, they would not have sin. But because they said that they see, they still have sin.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The man healed from blindness
- The Pharisees

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

When Jesus heard that the religious leaders put the man out of the synagogue, He found the man. Jesus asked the healed man, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" The way Jesus asks the question of the man can be understood as, "You believe in the Son of Man, right?" It was an assumption and a question. You may have a special way to say this in your language. Try to say it in a way that is more than an open question, but ask it in a way that leads the hearer to say, "yes." The emphasis is on the man himself and his belief.

We do not know everyone who heard this conversation in scene 1, but it is likely that Jesus' closest disciples heard it. That would include Peter, James, and John, the one who recorded this account.

After Jesus asked the healed man this question, the man asked Jesus, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe?" The healed man was interested, but did not know who the Son of Man was.

Jesus told him that He (Jesus) is the Son of Man. Jesus said, "You have seen Him..." Jesus referred to Himself when He said, "You have seen Him..." This man had only had his sight for one day. Then, the healed man knew that Jesus was the Son of Man. The healed man said, "Lord, I believe," and worshiped Jesus. This means that the healed man likely bowed down in front of Jesus and gave God glory for Jesus. Possibly he said, "Praise God for you."

The healed man called Jesus "Lord" before he knew that Jesus was the Son of Man. But the way that he used this title, it could be translated as "sir." But after he realized that Jesus was the Son of Man, he called Jesus "Lord" and said "I believe." Then the healed man worshiped Jesus. His meaning the second time was much more serious, and the healed man showed it by saying that he believed and by worshiping Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this as a group. In the original language, the word for "Lord" is the same in both places in this passage. But the first time the healed man says it, he is showing respect only-it could be translated in English as "sir." The second time he said it, he also worshiped Jesus. The healed man then saw Jesus as his Lord or Master. In your culture and language, what are some of the titles of respect for people of honor like respected teachers, gods, religious leaders, or the wealthy and powerful people in the community? Are the titles different, or is there just one, like the Jewish people had with "lord?" Pause this audio here.

Scene 2

This probably happened in a setting a little bit different from the previous conversation. At this time, some of the Pharisees listened. It seems like they were not present when the healed man worshiped Jesus.

Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind." Jesus made a comparison here to make His point. He compared being blind to not believing. The people who do not believe think they do not need the light, but they do. When they do this, they reject Jesus, the true light.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: Have a group member tell a story about someone who did not believe something, even though someone else clearly showed them the truth. Ask the group: How would you describe the person who did not believe? Can you think of ways to help that person believe? Pause this audio here.

The judgment Jesus refers to here is a judgment that comes with light, or seeing. Judgment is the result of His coming. But Jesus did not say here that He would be the judge, and in other parts of the book of John He said that he did not come to judge. Therefore, it is important that you do not say here that Jesus came to judge, but that when he comes He exposes people's sins.

Jesus came and offered salvation. As a result, some people believed Him and were saved and others rejected Him and were judged. Another way to say this is, "People will be judged because I came to this world." God is the judge, not Jesus.

As the Light of Jesus came to the world, it exposed sin and people who do not believe in Jesus.

People who refuse to see Jesus as the Promised Savior, the Son of God, are in the darkness, not the light. They bring judgment to themselves from God because of their unbelief.

When Jesus made this statement about judgment, some of the Pharisees asked, "We are not blind too, are we?" The Pharisees would expect Jesus to answer this question with a "no."

Instead, Jesus responded to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

The challenge for the Pharisees, the religious leaders of Israel, was that they claimed to see. They claimed spiritual knowledge. They knew the law. If they acted on the best knowledge they had they would welcome the Son of Man. But they did not act on their best knowledge. They claimed to have sight and acted like the blind people who did not know about the coming Promised Savior. Therefore, God does not take their sin away. It remains with them.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 9:35–41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' disciples
- The man healed from blindness
- The Pharisees

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

After Jesus heard that the religious leaders put the healed man out of the synagogue, Jesus found him. Jesus asked him, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

The healed man said, "Who is He Lord? I want to believe in Him."

Jesus told the healed man, "You have seen Him, and He is the person talking with you."

The healed man said, "Lord, I believe." Then he worshiped Jesus.

Pause the drama.

Some time later, Jesus said, "People's sins will be exposed because I came to this world. Those that reject me reject the light of the world, and those who accept me receive life. Some of his disciples and some of the Pharisees heard this. When the Pharisees heard Jesus say this, they asked, "Surely we are not blind too, are we?"

Pause the drama.

Jesus told the Pharisees, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 9:35-41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Permission to worship in the **synagogue** was important to all Jewish people. Although the word synagogue is not used in this passage, you may say that Jesus heard that the religious leaders threw the man out of the synagogue if you need to. Use the same word for synagogue as you have used in previous passages. For more information on synagogue, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus asked if the man **believed** in the **Son of Man**. Jesus referred to Himself as the Son of Man. The Son of Man is a title that Jews connected with the Messiah, or Promised Savior that God would send to help them. Be sure to use the same words for Son of Man that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Son of Man, refer to the Master Glossary entry for Son of Man.

Jesus asked the healed man if he **believes**. And the healed man later said that he believes. To believe and to have faith are the same thing. If you believe in someone, you believe that what that person says about himself is true. You then trust that person and are committed to do what that person tells you to do. Be sure to use the same word for belief that you have used in previous passages. For more information on belief, refer to the Master Glossary entry for belief.

The healed man called Jesus "**Lord**" before he knew that Jesus was the Son of Man. But the way that he used this title, it could be translated as, "sir." But after he realized that Jesus was the Son of Man, he called Jesus "Lord" and said, "I believe." Then the healed man worshiped Jesus. His meaning the second time was that Jesus was his Master, and the healed man showed it by saying that he believed and by worshiping Jesus. Be sure to use the same word for lord that you have used in previous passages. For more information on lord, refer to the Master Glossary entry for lord.

When the healed man heard that Jesus is the Son of Man, he **worshiped** Jesus. We worship when we show awe and wonder about God. The Old Testament characters thought this worship could take place anywhere God had revealed Himself. In this story, Jesus reveals Himself to the man, so the man worships Him right there. In many stories where worship is used, it implies more than just performing rituals; it includes the heart of love, awe, and wonder of God. Be sure to use the same word for worship that you have used in previous passages. For more information on worship, refer to the Master Glossary entry for worship.

Jesus told the people that He came to the world for **judgment**. A judge is someone who decides who is guilty of a wrong or not guilty. The judgment Jesus refers to here is a judgment that comes with light, or seeing. Jesus reveals himself, which is like light shining on something, in this case, on the sins of people because they don't understand who Jesus is. They bring the judgment on themselves. Jesus is saying that those who refuse to see

Him as the Promised Savior, the Son of God, are bringing judgment to themselves. Be sure to use the same word for **judgment** that you have used in previous passages.

The **Pharisees** claimed to see. They claimed spiritual knowledge. They knew the law. Jesus said that they had enough spiritual knowledge to be responsible and be judged by God for rejecting Jesus. Therefore their **sin** is not taken away. It remains with them. Be sure to use the same word for Pharisees that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Pharisees, refer to the Master Glossary entry for Pharisee. Be sure to use the same word for sin that you have used in previous passages. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary entry for sin.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 9:35-41

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3279336 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 10:1–10

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 10:1–10 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 10:1–10 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 10:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous story, Jesus healed a man who was born blind. In the present story, Jesus was talking to the Jews. Here, he reveals something about himself using ideas related to taking care of sheep, but Jesus will not explain what he means.

During the time of Jesus, there were people who owned many sheep. These people were called shepherds. A shepherd was a person who owned and took care of a large number of sheep. Shepherds took care of their sheep by leading them to places where they could find food and water. Shepherds also protected their sheep by creating a sheepfold or a sheep pen. A sheepfold was like the home of the sheep. It was an open field outside the home of the shepherd. It had walls around it to prevent the sheep from going away and to prevent wild animals or bad people from attacking the sheep. The walls were usually made with either stone or wood, so people or animals could not easily destroy them. A sheepfold also had a door or a gate so that the sheep could come in or come out. The person who guarded the door was called a gatekeeper.

Stop here and, as a group, look at a picture of a shepherd guiding his sheep into the sheepfold. The gatekeeper should also be there, guarding the door of the sheepfold. Pause this audio here.

In this story, Jesus describes the difference between a shepherd and a thief or a robber. A thief or a robber is a person who sneaks into people's properties to steal from them. A robber may also use violence or threat of violence. Jesus says that a person who climbs over the walls of the sheepfold, instead of using the door to enter it, is a thief or a robber. They climb in so that the gatekeeper doesn't stop them. When a thief or a robber enters the sheepfold, he steals the sheep and kills them. But the person who enters the sheepfold by the door is the shepherd. The shepherd could enter the sheepfold by the door because the gatekeeper recognizes him and opens the door for him. Then, when the shepherd is inside, he calls his sheep by name. This means that the shepherd knows his sheep. The sheep also know their shepherd because they recognize his voice. So, when the

shepherd leads the sheep out of the sheepfold, the sheep follow him. He walks in front of the sheep, and he leads them to a place where the sheep can find food and water. The sheep follow him because they know the voice of their shepherd. If a stranger or a person who is not the shepherd will call the sheep, the sheep will not follow him. Instead, the sheep will flee or run away from the stranger because they do not recognize the voice of the stranger. The sheep only recognize the voice of their shepherd.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do animal keepers take care of their sheep or animals in your culture? Pause this audio here.

When Jesus described the difference between a shepherd and a thief or a robber, Jesus was using a figure of speech or an illustration. Figure of speech is a way of indirect communication. When a speaker wants to say something, he usually uses simple words so that he can communicate his thoughts directly. But when a speaker feels that using simple words and ideas will not effectively communicate his thoughts, the speaker may use a figure of speech. A speaker uses figures of speech when, instead of simple words, he uses ideas or things familiar to his listeners to describe his thoughts. Because figure of speech is an indirect way of communication, people do not always easily understand what the speaker is saying. This happened when Jesus spoke using a figure of speech. The Jews who were listening to Jesus did not understand why Jesus was describing the difference between a shepherd and a thief or a robber.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story in which you are describing the characters by comparing them to objects. Pause this audio here.

Jesus spoke to them again. Jesus said, "I am the door." Jesus is saying that he was the door of the sheep or the sheepfold. When Jesus said this, he was repeating the "I am" statement that he mentioned in the previous stories. This "I am" reminds his listeners about the name of God in the Old Testament. Jesus is using the words God the Father used when he told Moses his name is "I am." All those who came before him were thieves and robbers. These people who came before Jesus were people who said that they were the true savior. They went around telling people that God sent them to save the people. But the truth is, they said that only to lead people away from God. This is why Jesus said that, like thieves and robbers, they came only to harm the sheep. But Jesus is like the door of the sheepfold where the sheep enter, and they are safe. Any sheep that enters through Jesus, the door, will be safe. In the same way, any person who enters Jesus by trusting and believing him will be safe. This means that Jesus will keep him safe from thieves and robbers. That person will be like a sheep that does not worry when he comes in or out of the sheepfold to find pasture or a place to eat. Unlike the thief who comes only to steal, kill, and destroy the sheep, Jesus came so that people may have an abundant life. A person has an abundant life when he is safe from any danger or harm, and when he has everything that he needs in life. A person who has an abundant life also does not worry if someone will come and harm him or take away everything from him because he trusts in Jesus who protects him. Most importantly, a person who has abundant life has a healthy spiritual life. That means he has a good relationship with God, and he will live with God forever.

Again, Jesus is using a figure of speech here. Jesus said that he is the door of the sheepfold because, like the door of the sheepfold, he protects the sheep from thieves and robbers. The sheep are the people who want to receive abundant life. The way to enter Jesus is by trusting and believing in his teaching. But Jesus does not explain that here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What figure of speech would a person in your culture use when he wants to say to someone that he will protect him?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 10:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus describes the difference between a shepherd and a thief or a robber.

In the second scene: Jesus explains that he is the door of the sheepfold, and those who came before him are thieves and robbers.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus the door
- Thieves and robbers
- A shepherd
- A stranger
- Flock of sheep
- The Jews or the Jewish leaders

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

We don't know how much time passed between the previous story and the present story. But in this story, Jesus again is talking to the Jews. Remember that in John, "the Jews" usually referred to the Jewish leaders. Jesus reveals something about himself using ideas related to taking care of sheep, but Jesus will not explain what he means.

In scene one, it is important to have something that represents the sheepfold because everything that Jesus talks about in this scene will be around the sheepfold. Then Jesus begins his speech using an expression that tells his listeners to listen carefully because what he is about to say is important and true. Then, Jesus describes a thief or a robber. The thief or a robber does not enter the sheepfold by the door. Instead, he climbs over it. But the shepherd is different. The shepherd enters by the door because the gatekeeper recognizes him and opens the door of the sheepfold for him. When the shepherd calls his sheep by name, his sheep recognizes his voice. Then the shepherd leads the sheep out of the sheepfold. There are other sheep in the sheepfold and the shepherd will also lead them out of the sheepfold. The shepherd leads the flock of sheep to a place where they can find food, and the flock of sheep follows behind the shepherd. Jesus also said that the sheep that knows its shepherd does not listen or follow a stranger. A stranger may try to call the sheep, but the sheep will run away from him because he only recognizes his shepherd. It is also important to show that the words of Jesus are figures of speech. It means that Jesus was using the ideas related to taking care of sheep to reveal something about himself. The Jews who were listening to him, however, did not understand what Jesus was saying. So Jesus will continue speaking in the next scene.

In scene two, it is important to emphasize the difference between the thief and Jesus. Jesus begins his speech again using an expression that tells his listeners to listen carefully because what he is about to say is important and true. Jesus reveals to them that he is the door of the sheepfold. The thieves and robbers will come for the sheep, but the sheep will not listen to them. Then Jesus comes and shows that he is the door. Those who came before him were thieves and robbers. But Jesus is like the door of the sheepfold where the sheep enter, and they are safe. Any sheep that comes through Jesus the door will be saved. Jesus will keep it safe from thieves and robbers. It does not worry when he comes in or out of the sheepfold to find pasture or a place to eat. In acting out the sheep that enters through Jesus, it is important to show that the sheep is happy, it is satisfied, and not worried over his safety because he trusts in Jesus the door. The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy the sheep. But Jesus came so that people may have an abundant life.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 10:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus the door
- Thieves and robbers
- A shepherd
- A stranger
- Flock of sheep
- The Jews or the Jewish leaders

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus describes the difference between a shepherd and a thief or a robber.

Pause the drama.

In scene two, Jesus explains that he is the door of the sheepfold, and those who came before him are thieves and robbers.

Pause the drama.

You may also ask the person playing the sheep, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like, "Jesus is the door. I will only come to him so I will be safe" or "Jesus will save me from the thieves and robbers, and Jesus will give me an abundant life!"

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 10:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The story begins with Jesus speaking. Jesus begins his speech by using an expression that tells the reader that what he is about to say is true and very important. So, they need to listen very carefully. Translate this expression the same way you have translated it before.

Jesus says that a person who climbs over the walls of the sheepfold, instead of using the door to enter it, is a thief or a robber. A **thief** usually steals someone's property in secret so that he will not be caught. A **robber** also steals someone's property, but he usually does this in public, and he often uses violence. A **sheepfold** was like the home of the sheep. It was an open field outside the home of the shepherd. It had walls around it to prevent the sheep from going away and to prevent wild animals or bad people from attacking the sheep. The walls were usually made with either stone or wood, so that people or animals would not easily destroy them. A sheepfold also had a door or a gate so that the sheep could come in or come out. A thief or a robber is a person who sneaks into people's properties to steal from them. When a thief or a robber enters the sheepfold, he steals the sheep and kills them.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the words **sheepfold**, **thief**, and **robber**.
Pause this audio here.*

On the other hand, Jesus says that the person who enters through the door is the shepherd. To him, the gatekeeper opens the door of the sheepfold. A **shepherd** was a person who owned and took care of a large number of sheep. A **gatekeeper** is a person who guards the door of the sheepfold or the sheep pen.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the words **shepherd** and **gatekeeper**. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus continues and says that the sheep follow only the shepherd because they recognize only his voice.

Jesus was speaking using a **figure of speech** here, and the Jews who were listening to him did not understand him. A speaker uses figures of speech when, instead of simple words, he uses ideas or things familiar to his listeners to describe his thoughts. Because figure of speech is an indirect way of communication, people do not always easily understand what the speaker is saying.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **figure of speech**. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus speaks again. Jesus begins his speech by using an expression that tells the reader that what he is about to say is true and very important. So, they need to listen very carefully. Translate this expression the same way you have translated it before.

Jesus says, "I am the door." Jesus is saying that he is the door of the sheepfold. The words **I am** are important. These words remind the Jewish listeners of the name of God in the Old Testament. God told Moses that his name is "I am." When Jesus says "I am," he is saying that he is God. See the Master Glossary for more information about I am. The **door** of the sheepfold keeps the sheep safe when the sheep comes in from a pasture. A **pasture** is a field of grasses where sheep feed. In the same way that the door of the sheepfold keeps the sheep safe, Jesus **saves** every person who comes to him. When Jesus saves a person, he gives him **abundant life**. A person has an abundant life when he is safe from any danger or harm, and when he has everything that he needs in life. When Jesus saves a person, he also protects him from a thief or a robber, or from the evil people who seek to lead him away from God. The person that Jesus saves does not worry if someone will come and harm him or take away everything from him because he trusts in Jesus who protects him. Translate the word save the same way you have translated it before. For more information about salvation, you may refer to the Master Glossary.

*Also, stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **pasture** and **abundantly**. Pause this audio here.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 10:1–10**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (3411207 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5759355 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 10:11–21*Hear and Heart*

In this step, hear John 10:11–21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 10:11–21 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 10:11–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous story, Jesus said that he is the door of the sheepfold. Just as the door of the sheepfold keeps the sheep safe, Jesus also saves those who enter through him. In the present story, Jesus continues to reveal something about himself using ideas related to the caring of sheep.

Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd of the sheep." When Jesus said this, he was repeating the "I am" statement that he first mentioned in the previous story. This "I am" reminds his listeners about the name of God in the Old

Testament. Jesus is using the words God the Father used when he told Moses his name is "I am." The sheep are referring to the people who believe in Jesus, but Jesus will not explain that. A shepherd is a person who owns and cares for his sheep. Jesus is comparing himself to a good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. When a wolf comes to attack the sheep, the good shepherd will not run away. Instead, he lays his life down for his sheep. This means that if the wolf comes to attack the sheep, the good shepherd would protect his sheep even if he had to die doing it. A wolf is a wild dog that often hunts other animals.

The good shepherd is not like the hired hand. A hired hand is a person who takes care of the sheep that are owned by the shepherd. The shepherd pays him to take care of his sheep when he is away. Both the shepherd and the hired hand take care of the sheep. But when there is danger, for instance, when the wolf comes to kill the sheep, the hired hand would leave the sheep and run away. Then the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep. The hired hand would run away and leave the sheep because he did not care about them.

Stop here and, as a group, look at a picture of a wolf, a sheep, and a shepherd. Pause this audio here.

As a group, you may also discuss this question: What are some of the wild animals in your culture that attack and eat other animals? You may also discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture describe the action of a person who is willing to die to save and protect another person? Pause this audio here.

Jesus is like a good shepherd. He knows his own sheep and his own sheep knows him too. Here, Jesus is referring to his own sheep, or the people who believe in him. In the previous story, Jesus described the difference between a shepherd and a thief or a robber. Unlike the thief or robber, the shepherd knows the names of his sheep. He calls them by name, and the sheep listen only to him. The sheep recognizes only the voice of the shepherd. Jesus is saying that he is like the shepherd of the sheep who knows all his sheep, and his sheep know Jesus too. This is like the relationship between Jesus and the Father. Jesus knows the Father, and the Father knows Jesus too. That means they are in a close relationship, and they show this by always loving each other. In the same way, Jesus knows his sheep, and his sheep knows him too. That means Jesus and the people who believe in him are in a close relationship, and they show that they love each other as well. Jesus also says that he lays down his life for his sheep. It means Jesus was willing to die for the people who believed in him. But Jesus does not explain all this.

Jesus said that there are other sheep that are outside of the sheepfold. A sheepfold was like the home of the sheep. It was an open field outside the home of the shepherd. It had walls around it to prevent the sheep from going away and to prevent wild animals or bad people from attacking the sheep. These other sheep are the people who have not yet heard about Jesus, but they are ready to listen and trust Jesus. But again, Jesus does not explain this. Jesus is saying that he must bring these other sheep too. And when Jesus comes for them, they will listen to Jesus. Jesus wants to do this so that there will only be one flock of sheep. A flock of sheep is a group of sheep. This means that Jesus wants all those who believe in him to be together so that they can all be under one shepherd, that is Jesus.

Stop here and, as a group, look at a picture of a sheepfold with a flock of sheep inside it. The shepherd must be there as well. Pause this audio here.

Jesus also said that the Father loves him. The Father refers to God the Father. In John, Jesus calls God his Father. The Father loves Jesus because he lays his life so that he may take it up again. This means that no one can actually kill Jesus. Rather it is Jesus who decides when and how he would die. And like a good shepherd, Jesus decided to die or to give his life so he could protect and save his sheep. Jesus has the authority to decide to give his life as he wishes, and he has the authority to take up his life again. That means, Jesus has the power and authority to make himself alive again even if he dies. He said that the Father gave him the authority to lay down his life and take it up again. The Father gave Jesus this command. Jesus is obeying the Father's command, and that is why the Father loves him.

The Jews who were listening to Jesus argued with each other because they had different opinions about everything that Jesus said. The Jews may be referring to the Jewish leaders. Many of them said that Jesus has a demon, which means a demon or evil spirit is causing Jesus to speak in this way. Others are saying that Jesus is crazy, he is not thinking right. So many of them said that they should not listen to Jesus. Meanwhile, other people are saying that it is impossible that Jesus has a demon. Because if Jesus had a demon, he would not be able to open the eyes of the blind or heal a blind person so that he could see again. Here, the Jews were talking about the time when Jesus healed a blind man.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture argue against each other when they disagree with one another? You may also discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture describe a person who is not behaving as normal people would behave? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 10:11–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus describes the difference between the good shepherd and the hired hand. Jesus says that he is the good shepherd.

In the second scene: Jesus says like a good shepherd, he knows his sheep, and his sheep knows him too.

In the third scene: Jesus speaks about gathering the other sheep outside the sheepfold.

In the fourth scene: Jesus speaks about his authority to lay down his life and to take it up again as the Father told him to do.

In the fifth scene: The Jews who were listening to Jesus argued with each other about what Jesus said.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus the shepherd
- A hired hand
- A flock of sheep
- God the Father
- The Jews or the Jewish leaders

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Be sure to show that this story continues from the previous story. Like in the previous story, Jesus is talking to the Jews. Remember that in John, "the Jews" usually referred to the Jewish leaders. Jesus continues to reveal something about himself using ideas related to taking care of sheep. So, it is important to have something that represents the sheepfold.

In scene one, Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd." When Jesus says this, he is saying that he is like a good shepherd who is ready to die to protect his sheep from any danger. Then, Jesus compares himself to a hired hand who runs away when a wolf comes. When the hired hand runs, it is important to show that he is not only afraid. He also doesn't care about the sheep. Then the wolf attacks and snatches a sheep from the flock. Then the other sheep would run away, they would scatter.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does a person in your culture show that he does not care about something or someone? Pause this audio here.

In scene two, Jesus says again, "I am the good shepherd." He knows his own sheep, and the sheep knows him. Jesus compares his good relationship with his sheep with his good relationship with God the Father. Just as the Father and Jesus know each other and have a good relationship, Jesus and his sheep also know each other and have a good relationship. This means that they showed that they love each other.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do two persons that love one another show to other people that they love one another? Pause this audio here.

In scene three, Jesus continues and says that he has other sheep that are outside the sheepfold. He says that he must bring them into the sheepfold. When he does, the sheep will listen to him. Then, there will be one flock of sheep in the sheepfold, and Jesus will be their shepherd.

In scene four, Jesus explains that the Father loves him because he is willing to die to save and protect his sheep from danger so that he can be alive again and be with the sheep after this. Someone may try to kill Jesus, but he will fail because no one can take Jesus' life from him, which means no one can kill him. Instead, Jesus lays down his life willingly. This means that Jesus decides how he would die. And he decided to die by saving and protecting his sheep.

Jesus can decide when he would die, and when he would live again because God the Father gave him the authority and command to die and live again for the sheep. And Jesus is obeying the Father.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture describe the action of a person who is willing to die to save and protect another person? Pause this audio here.

In scene five, the Jews (or the Jewish leaders) will argue with each other. They would have different opinions after they heard Jesus. Many of them would say, "He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?" When they asked, "why listen to him," they are not really asking a question. Rather they are saying that they should stop listening to Jesus. Other Jews would respond to them and say, "These are not the words of one who is possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?" They are saying that it is not possible that Jesus had a demon inside him because a demon cannot heal a blind person just like Jesus did before.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 10:11–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus the shepherd
- A hired hand
- A flock of sheep
- God the Father
- The Jews or the Jewish leaders

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Jesus describes the difference between the good shepherd and the hired hand. Jesus says that he is the good shepherd.

Pause the drama.

You may also ask the person playing the hired hand, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "When a wolf comes, I should run, or else I might die!" or "When a wolf comes, I will not protect the sheep. I don't care about them." [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene two, Jesus says that like a good shepherd, he knows his sheep, and his sheep know him too.

Pause the drama.

In scene three, Jesus speaks about gathering the other sheep outside the sheepfold.

Pause the drama.

In scene four, Jesus speaks about his authority to lay down his life and to take it up again as the Father told him to do.

Pause the drama.

In scene five, The Jews who were listening to Jesus argued with each other about what Jesus said.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 10:11–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus said, "**I am the good shepherd.**"

The words "I am" are important. These words remind the Jewish listeners of the name of God in the Old Testament. God told Moses that his name is "I am." When Jesus says "I am," he is saying that he is God. See the Master Glossary for more information about I am.

A **shepherd** is a person who owns and cares for his sheep. Jesus is comparing himself to a good shepherd who "lays down his life" for the sheep. When a shepherd **lays down his life** for the sheep, it means that he is willing to die to save and protect his sheep against all danger.

The good shepherd is not like the hired hand. A **hired hand** is a person who takes care of the sheep that are owned by the shepherd. The shepherd pays him to take care of his sheep when he is away. When a wolf comes to attack the sheep, the hired hand runs away and leaves the sheep behind. A **wolf** is a wild dog that often hunts other animals. Translate shepherd the same way you have translated it before.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **lay down his life** and **wolf**. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus said that there are **other sheep** that are not of this **fold**. And Jesus wants to bring them into the same fold so that there is only one **flock** of sheep and one shepherd.

A **flock** of sheep is a group of sheep.

A **fold**, or a **sheepfold**, was like the home of the sheep. It was an open field outside the home of the shepherd. It had walls around it to prevent the sheep from going away and to prevent wild animals or bad people from attacking the sheep.

These **other sheep** are the people who have not yet heard about Jesus, but they are ready to listen and trust Jesus. Translate sheep and fold the same way you have translated sheep and sheepfold before.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **flock**. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus also said that **the Father** loves him because he lays down his life for the sheep so that he may **take it up again**. "The Father" refers to God the Father. Jesus called God his Father because of his special relationship with God. When Jesus spoke about taking his life up again, he meant to say that he could make himself alive again after he died. The Father gave Jesus this command. This is why Jesus has the authority to decide when and how he would die, and Jesus also has the authority to decide when and how he would make himself alive again when he died. Jesus is obeying the Father's command, and that is why the Father loves him.

After Jesus spoke, the **Jews**, or the Jewish leaders, who were listening to Jesus argued with each other. They had different opinions about everything that Jesus said. Many of them said Jesus had a **demon** and was **insane**. A demon or an evil spirit is a spirit that is against God. An insane person is a person who does not speak or

behave like normal people do. While others said that it is impossible that Jesus would have a demon, because a demon could not **open the eyes**, or **heal**, a blind person so he could see again. Translate Jews and demon the same way you have translated them before. For more information on Jews and demon, you may refer to the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **insane**.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 10:11–21

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3850309 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (6496838 KB)

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John 10:22–42

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 10:22–42 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 10:22–42 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 10:22–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus has been preaching to the Jews, or Jewish religious leaders, and many of them are divided over whether Jesus has a demon or is from God. We are not sure how long after this discussion that our current passage happens. The phrase "at that time" could be a phrase that connects the timeline to the previous passage. However, it could also mean that at the time of this passage it was cold and the Feast of Dedication was happening.

The Festival of Dedication was also called Hanukkah, which was the Hebrew word for Dedication. It occurred in winter, or the colder seasons. This celebration was not one of the Old Testament celebrations commanded by God, but was a more recent celebration that Jews would often travel into Jerusalem for. This Festival or celebration remembered the time when the temple was taken back from the Syrians. The Syrians had taken over Jerusalem and had defiled the temple by sacrificing pigs to their chief god, Zeus, in the temple. Three years later, the Jews took back Jerusalem and rededicated the temple and the altar to God.

Jesus was walking around the part of the temple called Solomon's Portico, or Colonnade, which is a porch. This porch was covered and was most likely on the east side of the temple facing inwards towards the temple. This porch was in the outer court area known as the court of the Gentiles, so anyone was allowed to walk in that area. People who walked or sat in this area would have been protected from the weather. It was called Solomon's porch because it was believed to be the only part of the temple that remained from Solomon's original temple.

Stop here and look at a picture of the porch with columns on it. Look at the diagram of the temple noting Solomon's porch and the outer court of the Gentiles. Pause this audio here.

As Jesus was there, several Jews came and surrounded Jesus. They asked Jesus to speak plainly about whether or not Jesus was the Messiah. The phrase "until when will you lift up our soul" is often translated "how long will you keep us in suspense." This means how long do we have to guess or how long will we wonder about you? These Jews were probably a mixture of religious leaders and common Jews. It is not easy to know why they asked their questions, but the question sounds like an accusation that is combined with a command: "If you, yourself, are the Messiah, tell us plainly." More than likely these Jews were trying to catch Jesus in another trap.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about a time when someone accused someone else of wrongdoing. How did they accuse them? What kinds of questions did they ask, or what kinds of statements did they make? Pause this audio here.

Jesus' answer is that Jesus has already told the Jews that He was the Messiah by the works He did as well as the words Jesus spoke. Jesus did not say plainly, "Yes I am the Messiah" because these Jews were not ready to hear the truth. Jesus was different from the Messiah they expected and they were not ready to give up their own beliefs.

Jesus uses the same comparison He used earlier. Jesus is like a shepherd and Jesus' followers are like sheep. Jesus tells the Jews that they do not believe because they are not Jesus' sheep. His sheep hear Jesus' voice and know Him and follow Him. In Jewish culture, several of the shepherds would keep their sheep together in the same pen that was guarded by the gatekeeper. In the morning, the shepherds would come and call their sheep to themselves. These shepherds would lead the way with the sheep following behind them.

The shepherd will always save his sheep. Jesus reminds these religious leaders that no one can take His sheep out of His hands or the Father's hands. Jesus tells these Jews plainly, that Jesus and the Father are one, or are unified in their nature and work.

The Jews felt like Jesus was again saying that He and God were the same. This was very wrong in the Jewish religious law, and this was enough for the Jews to believe that Jesus was blaspheming, which was to harm the reputation of, or defame, God. These Jews show this belief when they pick up stones to stone Jesus to death. The law required death by stoning for those who blasphemed God. They state that they are not trying to stone Jesus because of Jesus' good works, but because of Jesus' blasphemy and making Himself, who is a human, to be equal with God.

Jesus knows that the religious leaders do not have a good reason to stone Him. However, the religious leaders still do not recognize who Jesus is, even after all of the works Jesus has done. Jesus answers the religious leaders by referring to their own Scriptures. Jesus refers to a Scripture in the Psalms where God calls certain leaders "gods." Some scholars believe that God was talking to angelic beings, and some believe that God was talking to humans, like the prophets. We do not know why God called these leaders gods. Jesus, however, reminds the Jewish leaders of their strong belief in Scripture and that they cannot change it. So either way, Jesus refers to this Psalm to point out that if God used the term "gods" for other people who were not the Messiah, why then would they accuse Jesus of blasphemy when Jesus calls himself the Son of God and is the one God dedicated and sent into the world?

Stop here and discuss together as a group: What does someone in your culture do to blaspheme God? Talk about any punishment in your culture for blaspheming God. Tell stories of anyone you know who might have been falsely accused of blaspheming God. Pause this audio here.

Jesus points again to the works of the Father and encourages the Jews, that if they are not going to believe Jesus, then to believe the works Jesus does. Jesus has done both miracles and works of compassion and kindness that would prove Jesus is from the Father. If the religious leaders believe Jesus' works, then they might finally come to believe that Jesus and the Father are completely joined together, like one person. The Jews however, try to grab ahold of Jesus and yet Jesus, again, gets away from them. Jesus then goes back across the Jordan in the area of Perea. This was where John the Baptist first baptized many people, including Jesus. Several came to where Jesus was and said to each other that everything that John said about Jesus was true. Many people there believed in Jesus.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 10:22-42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: It is the time of the Festival of Dedication and Jesus is walking around the area of the temple called Solomon's porch.

In the second scene: Several Jews come up to Jesus and surround him. These Jews ask Jesus to tell them plainly if Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus tells them that He has already told them by the works that Jesus has done in the name of, or by the power of, the Father. However, these Jews don't believe because they are not God's sheep, or followers. God's sheep hear Jesus' voice and know Him and follow Him. Jesus tells them that He and the Father are united as one in their intentions and purpose.

In the third scene: The Jews pick up stones to kill Jesus with. Jesus asks which of His works that they are stoning Jesus for. The Jews answer that it is not because of His works, but because Jesus, who is a man, made Himself equal with God. Jesus refers them back to a Psalm and tells them that He is the one who is sent by God. He tells the Jews that if they do not believe in Him, then to believe in the works of the Father that Jesus has done.

In the fourth scene: The Jews try to grab Jesus but Jesus gets away from them. Jesus goes across the Jordan river and stays there for a time. Many people come to believe in Jesus because of what John the Baptist said about Jesus and because of Jesus' works.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jews, among whom are the religious leaders
- God the Father
- Jesus' followers who are described as sheep
- The people who believe in Jesus when Jesus goes across the Jordan River
- The disciples were probably present and listening, although they did not say anything

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: This passage takes place in two settings. The majority of the action takes place in the area of the temple called Solomon's portico, or porch. This would be a covered area where people were protected from the weather. The last part of the passage takes place back across the Jordan river in the area of Perea where John the Baptist had started baptizing people.

Stop here and look at a map of Jerusalem and Perea, east of the Jordan river. Pause this audio here.

Notice that the text starts with "at that time." All we know is this takes place after Jesus' teaching about how He is the Good Shepherd. Because Jesus continues this theme in Jesus' response to the Jews, it is possible that "at that time" means shortly after, or around the time of the previous passages. However, it is possible to read the passages as "around the time of the Festival of Dedication." Notice also that in this passage it is winter time, or the time when it is cold, which is towards the end of the year in Israel.

Jesus is walking around Solomon's portico. More than likely Jesus is walking back and forth when a group of Jews come up to Jesus and surround Jesus. This group does not seem to be violent at first, but it is a group that is hostile, or not friendly. They ask Jesus to tell them plainly if Jesus is the Messiah. This question means that the Jews that are asking do not really believe that Jesus is the Messiah. They are more than likely trying to trap Jesus again. Jesus tells them that the works He has done prove who He is. Jesus has done these works in the name of, or authority of, the Father. But the Jews have not believed Jesus because they are not Jesus' sheep, or followers. Jesus is comparing His followers to sheep that would know the voice of their shepherd. Jesus' sheep know Jesus' voice and He knows them and they follow Jesus. Jesus tells the Jews that He gives His followers

eternal life, or life forever with God. Jesus also says that no one can snatch His followers out of His hands. This was an important part of the shepherd's job, to keep his sheep safe. Jesus means that as the Good Shepherd, He will keep his sheep, or followers, and be responsible for their safety. It is not up to the sheep to stay safe, but up to the shepherd to keep the sheep safe. God is the one who gave Jesus these followers, and so God, who is more powerful than anyone, will keep the followers safe as well. Jesus makes it clear that He and the Father are one. This word, "one," means that they are united in everything that they do and say. Jesus is saying that He is God.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: What do you think Jesus and the Father would do to show that they are united in nature? How will you talk about Jesus and God being one in your translation to show that Jesus is God; unified in mind and nature with God? Pause this audio here.

In response to Jesus declaring His equality with God, the Jews pick up stones, once again, in order to throw stones at Jesus and kill Him. The Jewish law stated that those who blasphemed against God should be put to death by stoning. Jesus reminds them that if they don't believe in Him, then to at least believe in the works that Jesus has done because they will prove who Jesus is. If the Jews believe in the works, then they will realize that Jesus is from or in the Father, and the Father is in Jesus. The Jews continued to try to grab Jesus, but Jesus got away from them. We don't know exactly how Jesus got away from them.

Jesus then went to the east side of the Jordan, to the area of Perea where John the Baptist first baptized people. Several came to Jesus and discussed that even though John never did a miraculous sign, still what John said about Jesus was true. Signs were thought to be evidence of a prophet, but these people saw Jesus' signs as the evidence of the truth of what John the Baptist said. Many followed Jesus.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 10:22-42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jews, among whom are the religious leaders
- God the Father
- Jesus' followers who are described as sheep
- The people who believe in Jesus when Jesus goes across the river Jordan
- The disciples were probably present and listening, although they do not say anything

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

It is the time of the Festival of Dedication and Jesus is walking around the area of the temple called Solomon's porch. Several Jews come up to Jesus and surround him. These Jews ask Jesus to tell them plainly if Jesus is the Messiah.

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells them that the works that Jesus has done in the name of the Father is enough to prove who Jesus is. However, these Jews don't believe because they are not God's sheep, or followers. God's sheep hear Jesus' voice and know Him and follow Him. Jesus tells them that His followers cannot be snatched out of His or God's hands. Jesus tells them that He and the Father are one.

Pause the drama.

The Jews pick up stones to kill Jesus with. Jesus asks which of His works that they are stoning Jesus for. The Jews answer that it is not because of His works, but because Jesus, who is a man, made Himself equal with God.

Pause the drama.

Jesus refers them back to a Psalm and tells them that He is the one who is sent by God. He tells the Jews that if they do not believe in Him, then to believe in the works of the Father that Jesus has done. The Jews try to grab Jesus but Jesus gets away from them. Jesus goes across the Jordan river and stays there for a time. Many people come to believe in Jesus because of what John the Baptist said about Jesus and because of Jesus' works.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 10:22–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

At the time of the **Feast of Dedication** in **Jerusalem**, Jesus is walking around the area of the **temple** known as **Solomon's portico**, or Solomon's porch. The Feast of Dedication is the celebration of when the Jews took back the temple from the Syrians and rededicated it to God. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel, where the temple was and where Jews went to worship God. The temple is the place where God would meet with His people and people would worship God by making sacrifices to Him. The porch is the area of the temple that was believed to be still standing from Solomon's temple. This porch was supported by two rows of columns and would have faced inward towards the temple to keep people from the effects of the weather. Use the same word for Jerusalem and the temple that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Festival of Dedication, Jerusalem, and the temple, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus is walking back and forth when a group of **Jews** and **Jewish religious leaders** come up to Jesus and surround Jesus. Jews are the descendants of Abraham, and God's chosen people. Some of these Jews were probably some of the Jewish religious leaders as well. Use the same word you've used in previous passages for Jews. For more information on Jews, refer to the Master Glossary.

This group does not seem to be violent at first, but it is a group that is hostile, or not friendly. They ask Jesus to tell them plainly if Jesus is the **Messiah** or the **Christ**. The Messiah is someone who is anointed by God. Use the same word for Messiah, or Christ, that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Messiah, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus tells them that He has told the Jews plainly but that the Jews do not **believe**. To believe is to trust in someone or something and it is shown by actions. Use the same word that you have used for believe in previous passages. For more information on belief, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus says that the works that Jesus has done **in the name**, or authority, of the Father **testify** about who Jesus is. To testify is to declare the truth about someone or something from personal experience. Use the same word for testify that you've used in previous passages. For more information on testimony, refer to the Master Glossary.

But the Jews have not believed Jesus because they are not Jesus' sheep. Jesus' sheep know Jesus' voice and He knows them and they follow Jesus. Jesus gives His sheep **eternal life**, or life forever with God, the sheep will never **perish**, or die, and the sheep cannot be **snatched**, or taken away from Jesus or out of the Father's hand. See the Master Glossary for more information about eternal life. Jesus tells the Jews that His Father, who has

given Jesus these sheep, is greater and more powerful than all. Jesus makes it clear that He and the Father are one. This word, "one," means that they are united in nature. Jesus is saying that He is God.

In response to Jesus declaring His equality with God, the Jews pick up stones in order to kill Jesus. Jesus asks which of His good works they are stoning Jesus for. The Jews say, it is not for Jesus' works, but for his **blasphemy**. To blaspheme God is to dishonor or defame God.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **blasphemy**. See the Master Glossary for more information on blasphemy. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus tells them that in their own **Scriptures**, that God said to some leaders that they are **gods**. So if that is true, then how can the Jews say that Jesus is blaspheming when Jesus calls himself the **Son of God**, when He has been set apart and sent by God? The Scriptures, or the law, is referring to the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures that the Jews believed in. Son of God implies that Jesus has a special relationship to God, like a Father and Son, but also that Jesus is God. Use the same words for Scriptures and Son of God that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Scriptures, gods, and Son of God, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus reminds them that if they don't believe in Him, then to believe in the works that will testify to who Jesus is. The Jews continued to try to grab Jesus, but Jesus got away from them.

Jesus then went to the east side of the **Jordan River**, to the area of Perea where **John the Baptist** first **baptized** people. The Jordan is the Jordan river which runs from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea. John the Baptist was the one who prepared the way for Jesus by telling people to repent and be baptized. To baptize is to cleanse people in water. Use the same words for Jordan, John the Baptist, and baptize that you've used in previous passages. For more information on Jordan, John the Baptist, and baptism, refer to the Master Glossary.

Several came to Jesus and they discussed that even though John did not do any **signs**, what John said about Jesus was true. Many people believed in Jesus there. Signs are a signal or indication that something is true, or will happen. Use the same word for signs that you've used before. For more information on signs, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 10:22-42

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 11:1–16

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 11:1–16 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 11:1–16 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

In the previous passage, the Jews accused Jesus of blasphemy and tried to stone Jesus. After the Jews tried to stone Jesus to death, Jesus and his disciples went across the Jordan River to stay there for a while. This passage tells the next story of a friend of Jesus named Lazarus who became sick and died.

This passage begins by describing a man named Lazarus. Lazarus was very sick. Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha, are friends of Jesus. Lazarus, Mary, and Martha live in Bethany, a small town less than two miles east of Jerusalem. Martha seems to be the oldest sister in the family because she is mentioned first and by name. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord Jesus with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair. At this time of Lazarus' illness, Mary had not yet anointed the feet of Jesus. John tells us this information now to remind his readers of which Mary this was, because his readers probably knew Mary. Mary was a common name in Jesus' time. Several women named Mary are mentioned in the Gospels.

So the sisters, Mary and Martha, sent someone with a message to Jesus, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." Jesus knows and loves the family-the sisters do not even have to say Lazarus' name. The sisters addressed Jesus with the respectful title "Lord," which means master. They trusted him as a respected religious leader from God who they honored greatly. Their message was a polite request for Jesus to come and heal Lazarus, even though their message did not mention Jesus healing Lazarus specifically. The sisters must have known about the healings Jesus had done in Jerusalem which was not far from Bethany. They were confident that Jesus would come, because they knew him well and Jesus loved Martha and Mary and Lazarus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some things people do to express love to a special friend in your culture? Pause this audio here.

When Jesus heard this message, Jesus said, probably to the messenger, "This sickness will not end in death. Instead, this illness will bring God glory, or praise. People will praise, or glorify, the Son of God because of this sickness." When people glorify God, they praise him for his power and majesty. Jesus says that he himself, the Son of God, will also receive praise because of Lazarus' sickness. Jesus used the title "Son of God" to refer to himself.

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. He had affection for them and cared about them. So when he delayed going to their place, it did not mean that he did not love them. Jesus loved them as close friends. Jesus knew what was best for Mary and Martha, and Jesus knew that God would get glory, or praise, from this situation. Then after two days Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us return to Judea." Judea is the name of the province or area where Jerusalem and Bethany were. Lazarus and his sisters lived in Judea, and the religious leaders opposed to Jesus held the most power there. It was therefore the province where Jesus was in the most danger.

Stop here and look at a map showing the location of Judea, with Jerusalem and Bethany. Pause the audio here.

The disciples replied, "But teacher, or Rabbi, a little while ago the people in Judea tried to stone you to death, and are you going there again?" The word Rabbi means "my great one." The disciples are showing respect for an important religious teacher or leader. The people in Judea had wanted to stone Jesus to death because they thought he spoke wrong things against God. When Jesus' disciples asked Jesus "are you going there again?" they did not expect an answer. They were surprised and wanted to tell Jesus that it was not a good idea to go to Judea.

Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight when people can walk and not stumble or trip, because they can see by the light of this world?" Jesus did not expect an answer to this question. Jesus was making a comparison. Jesus compared his life on earth before his death to daylight. His question emphasizes that there was still time for them to work before he had to die-he says twelve hours of daylight to show that there is a full day of light, or a lot of time! Jesus was not telling his disciples that there are twelve hours in a day. He meant that it was all right to go to Judea because he did not have to die yet.

Jesus was not telling his disciples that it is safer to walk during the day than at night. Rather he was telling them that those who walk with him, the light of the world, will not sin or face unnecessary danger, just like someone walking during the daylight can avoid stumbling and falling. Jesus compared living life without him to walking in the world without light. People who walk in the dark are not able to see or know the way. People who walk in the dark can be in danger. It means that the person stumbles because Jesus, the light, is not in him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story that uses an everyday object to mean something else. Pause this audio here.

After saying this, Jesus said to the disciples, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there in order to wake him." Jesus' disciples thought, obviously, that anyone who sleeps will feel better soon. However, in that culture, sometimes people said that someone was sleeping as a polite way to say that they had died. Jesus here talks of death as sleep because he knew that people would rise from the dead. The rest of the scriptures use the same image of death for people who follow Jesus. Their death is only like a sleep-they will wake up when God raises them from the dead. Jesus' disciples thought Jesus was really saying Lazarus was sleeping, so Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. I am glad I was not there. Now you can believe in me even more. Let us go to him now."

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you talk about someone dying in a polite way in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Jesus implied that if he had been there, he would have healed Lazarus because he loved him. But now he had another chance to show the disciples his power. Then Thomas said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us go as well, so that we can die with him there." Like the other disciples, Thomas expected that the Jewish leaders would kill Jesus, but he urged his fellow disciples to stay with Jesus. By saying that they should go and die with Jesus, Thomas expressed his loyalty and love for Jesus. In this story, John gives us extra information about Thomas. People also called Thomas by another name, Didymus, that meant "twin." Apparently Thomas had a twin brother or sister. We do not know if Thomas was the older or the younger twin.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Talk about people you know who other people call by a different name. Why do they choose to call the person by a different name than their usual name? What are the reasons that people have second names? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 11:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Lazarus was sick. His sisters Mary and Martha sent someone to tell Jesus about it.

In the second scene: Jesus hears about Lazarus' illness, but he stayed where he was for two more days. He says Lazarus' sickness, or illness, will bring glory, or praise, to the Son of God. Then Jesus told the disciples to go to Judea with Jesus. The disciples tried to warn Jesus of the danger of the decision. Thomas urged the other disciples to go with Jesus.

The characters in this passage are:

- Lazarus
- Mary
- Martha
- The person Mary and Martha sent to Jesus
- Jesus
- And the other disciples of Jesus, including Thomas

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany with his sisters Mary and Martha.

The story begins with a word that introduces new stories.

Stop here and talk about how you introduce new stories in your language. Pause this audio here.

John gives us extra information about Mary, one of Lazarus' sisters. He tells us that Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair. So the sisters sent someone with a message to Jesus, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." Remember that this message was a polite request for Jesus to come and heal Lazarus. "He whom you love" is a way to refer to Lazarus and to remind Jesus that Lazarus was a good friend of his.

It is important to remember that when Jesus heard this message, Jesus said, "This illness will not result in death; rather, it is for God's glory, so that because of the illness, the Son of God may be glorified." It is important to remember that we do not yet know how God and his son Jesus will receive praise in this story. Jesus is talking about something that will happen in the near future because of this situation.

Note that although Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, when Jesus heard that Lazarus was ill, Jesus stayed where he was for another two days. We do not know why Jesus stayed where he was for two more days. Many scholars think that Jesus delayed going because he knew it was better for Mary and Martha if he waited, or because he knew that if he waited, God would get more glory.

Remember that after two days Jesus told his disciples that they should return to Judea. The disciples replied, "But teacher, a little while ago the people in Judea tried to stone you to death and are you going there again?" It is important to note that when Jesus' disciples asked Jesus "are you going there again?" they did not expect an answer. They were surprised and wanted to tell Jesus that it was not a good idea to go to Judea.

The disciples were very surprised that Jesus wanted to go back to where people wanted to kill him. They indicated that this was not a good plan. Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight when people can walk and not stumble or trip, because they can see by the light of this world? It is when people walk in the night or dark hours that they stumble or trip, because they do not have any light inside them." Remember that Jesus said this to remind his disciples that his time for his death had not yet come. It was still daylight, and he could walk safely. The enemies of Jesus will not be able to make anything happen to Jesus until the time God will allow it. After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there in order to wake him."

It is important to remember that Jesus' disciples said if Lazarus was asleep, he will be alright because they didn't understand what Jesus said. However, Jesus had been speaking about Lazarus' death, but his disciples thought that he meant that Lazarus was asleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you will believe in me." This means that what was about to happen would teach them more about who Jesus was.

It is important to remember that Thomas, who is also called Didymus, or the Twin, said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us go as well, so that we can die with Jesus there."

Stop here and discuss as a team: John added extra information twice in this story. At the beginning John reminds us of which Mary this is. Now John tells us Thomas' other name. When you tell stories in your culture, how do you add extra information? Try telling a story and add extra background information about a character in the story. Listen for how you add in the information. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 11:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Lazarus
- Mary
- Martha
- The person Mary and Martha sent to Jesus
- Jesus
- And the other disciples of Jesus, including Thomas

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus the brother of Mary and Martha, from Bethany. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; it was her brother Lazarus who was sick. So the sisters sent someone with a message to Jesus, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." When Jesus heard this message, Jesus said, "This illness will not result in death; rather, people will praise God, so that because of the illness, the Son of God may be glorified."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I feel compassion for Lazarus," or "I am glad because God will be glorified through Lazarus' illness." [!end] Continue the drama.

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when Jesus heard that Lazarus was ill, Jesus stayed where he was for another two days. Then after two days he said to his disciples, "Let us return to Judea." The disciples replied, "But teacher, a little while ago the people in Judea tried to stone you to death, and are you going there again?" Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight when people can walk and not stumble or trip, because they can see by the light of this world? It is when people walk in the night or dark hours that they stumble or trip, because they do not have any light inside them."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "We feel so much concern for Jesus, he might be killed in Judea," or "We don't want Jesus to go to Judea," or "We'll try to convince Jesus not to go to Judea." [!end] Continue the drama.

Then Jesus told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there in order to wake him." Jesus' disciples replied, "Lord, if he went to sleep, he will be alright." Jesus, however, had been speaking about Lazarus' death, but his disciples thought that he meant that Lazarus was asleep.

Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you will believe in me. But let us go to him."

Then Thomas, also called the Twin, said to the rest of the disciples, "Let us go as well, so that we can die with him there."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Thomas, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I feel this is an opportunity to prove my loyalty to Jesus," or "I feel a need to convince the disciples to go with Jesus to Judea," or "I am willing to die with Jesus."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 11:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Mary was the one who **anointed** the **Lord** with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; it was her brother Lazarus who was sick. Anointing people with oil could symbolize honoring them. People probably rubbed a little oil on one part of the body as a symbol. The most likely place to rub the oil would be on the head.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **anointed**. Look up anointed in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Use the same word or phrase for **Lord** as you used in previous passages. Lord is in the Master Glossary.

When Jesus heard this message, Jesus said, "This illness will not result in death. Rather, it is for **God's glory**, so that because of the illness, the **Son of God** may be glorified. Glory can refer to how God shows his power and splendor. Translate glory in the same way you have before. For more information on glory, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for "Son of God" as you used in previous passages. Son of God is in the Master Glossary.

So when Jesus heard that Lazarus was ill, Jesus stayed where he was for another two days. Then after two days he said to his **disciples**, "Let us return to Judea." Use the same word or phrase for disciples as you used in previous passages. Disciples is in the Master Glossary.

The disciples replied, "But teacher, or Rabbi, a little while ago the people in Judea tried to stone you to death and are you going there again?" The word Rabbi means "my great one." People at that time used this word to show respect for an important religious teacher or leader. Use the same word or phrase for Rabbi as you used in previous passages. Rabbi is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 11:1–16

Audio Content

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John 11:17–27

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 11:17–27 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 11:17–27 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 11:17–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Lazarus got sick and died. Lazarus' sisters, Mary and Martha, sent someone to tell Jesus. But when Jesus learned of Lazarus' illness, he stayed where he was two days before he decided to go and visit Lazarus. This passage tells the story of what happened when Jesus arrived at Bethany.

When Jesus arrived in Bethany, someone told Jesus that the body of Lazarus had lain in his tomb for four days. Lazarus' body had already started to decay. John simply tells us that when Jesus arrived he found that Lazarus had already been buried for four days in a burial cave or tomb. A tomb was often a cave dug into the side of a hill. There was probably a large stone in front of the tomb to protect the body that was buried in it.

Stop here and look at a picture of a tomb as a group. Pause this audio here.

We do not know how long before they buried Lazarus' body, but probably not long because, at this time, people did not practice embalming in Israel, so people usually buried bodies within one day of their death. The four days Lazarus stayed in the tomb may be significant. Perhaps Jesus delayed coming so that people would know that Lazarus was really dead. In the culture at that time, people believed that when someone dies, the soul remains near the body for three days. The soul hopes for an opportunity to return. But on the fourth day, the soul sees decomposition setting in and leaves the body finally, leaving the person irrevocably dead. Therefore, people would have known that Lazarus was truly dead.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when someone in your culture died. What kinds of things did people do to the dead body? What kinds of things did people do as a community? What kinds of rituals did people do? Pause this audio here.

Bethany was about three kilometers from Jerusalem. Many of the people of that region came to see Martha and Mary, to give them sympathy or comfort because their brother had died. It was a Jewish cultural practice for people to visit and comfort a family whose loved one dies.

Stop here and look at a map showing the distance from Jerusalem to Bethany as a group. Pause this audio here.

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary sat at home. The custom of that time was for people to sit while they were mourning. Mary was sitting because she was mourning, not because she was lazy.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe ways people mourn their dead in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, or master, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." Martha's remark probably expresses regret rather than rebuke. Maybe Martha and Mary had said this same thing to each other many times over the past few days. Martha still had great faith, because she also said that she believed that God will give Jesus whatever he asked.

Martha believes that God will give Jesus whatever, or anything, Jesus asks God to give him. However, Martha probably does not think that God will raise Lazarus from the dead. She was likely thinking in terms of everyday life, not of a movement from death to life. When Jesus told Martha that Lazarus will rise again, she thought Lazarus will rise in the future, when the world would end. Many Jews believed that when the world ended all God's people would rise and live again. But Jesus said to Martha, "Your brother will rise from the dead." And Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." This last day refers to the future time when the world will end and when God will judge all people.

Then Jesus said to Martha, "I am the resurrection. I am also the life. Those who trust in me will live even though they die physically and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." Jesus is saying here that all those who believe in him, even though they die physically, will be raised to life again in the age to come or on the last day. And all those who live spiritually and believe in Jesus will never die again spiritually. Jesus does not simply say that he will give resurrection and life, but that he *is* the resurrection and the life. This means that Jesus is the source of all true life. And even more, he is life, so if we have Jesus, we have life. We will not die in the age to come. Believers in Jesus have eternal life, the life of the age to come.

"Do you believe what I just said?" Jesus asked Martha.

Martha answered Jesus, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, or promised Saviour, the Son of God, the one whom God or Scriptures promise will come into the world." Her answer was a good one, but she did not fully recognize what Jesus had just said. Jesus was not asking Martha who he was, but what she believed about his ability to deal with her situation. He was stating that he had authority over life and over death. The prophets had written about the coming of the Messiah. Now this Savior had come, and he was Jesus.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 11:17–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus arrives in Bethany and learns that Lazarus had been buried four days. Martha went out and met Jesus.

In the second scene: Jesus and Martha had a conversation about the resurrection.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Martha
- Mary
- And the people from the region of Jerusalem who had come to console Mary and Martha

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Jesus had arrived at the edge of the village when someone probably came to tell him that Lazarus had died and he was in his tomb for four days. Note that Jesus stayed where he was for two days. By the time the messengers came back and forth and Jesus had walked to Bethany, it would have been some days. Remember that when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary sat at home. Remember that in Jewish culture, people would sit at home when mourning. Mary was probably sitting at home with many visitors, those Jews that had come to mourn with Mary and Martha.

When Martha met Jesus, she told Jesus that if Jesus had been here earlier her brother would not have died, and even now she knows that God will give Jesus whatever Jesus asks of him. Remember that Martha's statement shows regret rather than rebuke.

But Jesus said to Martha that her brother will rise from the dead. Martha said to Jesus that she knows Lazarus will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.

Pay attention to the words of Jesus when he said to Martha, "I am the resurrection. I am also the life. Those who trust in me will live even though they die physically, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." Jesus says that first people must trust him, or believe in him. When they do that, they will live eternally. The words "I am" are important. These words remind the Jewish listeners of the name of God in the Old Testament. God told Moses that his name is "I am." When Jesus says "I am," he is saying that he is God. Also, when Jesus says "I am the resurrection and the life," he is saying, "I am the one who raises people from the dead and gives them life."

Then Jesus asked Martha, "Do you believe what I just said?" Martha answered Jesus, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one whom God says or promises will come into the world."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 11:17–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Martha
- Mary
- And the people from the region of Jerusalem who had come to console Mary and Martha.

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

When Jesus arrived in Bethany, someone told Jesus that the body of Lazarus had lain in his tomb for four days. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary sat at home in mourning.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Mary, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I feel really sad for my brother's death," or "I think that if Jesus had come earlier, my brother wouldn't have died." [Iend] Continue the drama.

When Martha met Jesus, she told Jesus that if Jesus had been here earlier her brother would not have died, and even now she knows that God will give Jesus whatever Jesus asks of him. But Jesus said to Martha that her brother will rise from the dead. Martha said to Jesus that she knows that Lazarus will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.

Pause the drama.

Then Jesus said to Martha, "I am the resurrection. I am also the life. Those who trust in me will live even though they die physically and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die."

Pause the drama.

"Do you believe what I just said?" Jesus asked Martha. Martha answered Jesus, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one whom God says or promises will come into the world."

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 11:17-27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

When Jesus arrived in Bethany, someone told Jesus that the body of Lazarus had lain in his **tomb** for four days. A tomb was often a cave dug into the side of a hill. There was probably a large stone in front of the tomb to protect the body.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **tomb**. Look up tomb in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Martha said to Jesus, "**Lord**, or **master**, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." Use the same word or phrase for Lord as you used in previous passages. Lord is in the Master Glossary.

Then Jesus said to Martha, "**I am** the **resurrection**. I am also the life." When Jesus says "I am," he is saying that he is God. For more information on I am, refer to the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **resurrection**. Look up resurrection in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

"Do you believe what I just said?" Jesus asked Martha. Martha answered Jesus, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the **Messiah**, or **Christ**, the **Son of God**, the one whom God promised will come into the world." Christ and Messiah are titles for the Promised Savior that have the same meaning. Christ is the word in the Greek language. Messiah is the word in the Hebrew language.

A Messiah literally means someone who is anointed. Someone who is anointed is given a special task. When Jesus came he showed the people that he is the Messiah that God had promised to send. Use the same word or phrase for Messiah or Christ as you used in previous passages. Messiah or Christ is in the Master Glossary.

Son of God is a title that refers to Jesus both being God and being in close relationship to God the Father. Use the same word or phrase for Son of God as you used in previous passages. Son of God is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 11:17–27

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2951561 KB)

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John 11:28–44

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 11:28–44 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 11:28–44 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus? Pause this audio here
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage? Pause this audio here

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 11:28–44 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This continues the story of Lazarus, a close friend of Jesus who became sick and died. Jesus had come to see Lazarus' sisters. Jesus met Martha first and after talking with Martha, Mary met with Jesus where he was at the entrance of the village. This story tells what happened next when Jesus arrived at Bethany.

After Martha declared that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, Martha returned home and spoke quietly to her sister, Mary, probably so that the other people could not hear what she said to Mary. She told Mary that the teacher is here, and he is asking to see her. "The Teacher" refers to Jesus. Teacher was a title of respect for a Jewish man who had authority to teach about God.

When Mary heard this, she stood up quickly and went out to meet Jesus. Jesus had not yet entered the village of Bethany; he was still at the place where Martha met him. The Jewish people who were comforting Mary in the house noticed how fast she went out. They followed her out of the house, because they thought that she was going to Lazarus's tomb to cry or mourn there. When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, which means she knelt quickly at Jesus' feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here with us, my brother would not have died." Mary reacted to seeing Jesus by showing him great respect. She honored him by quickly kneeling on the ground in front of him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people show respect to people of authority or elderly people in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Mary said the same thing to Jesus that Martha had said. Like Martha, Mary wished that Jesus had come to their house earlier. She knew that Jesus could and would have healed Lazarus. When Jesus saw her crying, and the

Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. Maybe Jesus was angry, probably at death or at the mourners who did not recognize his power over death. Jesus was disturbed in his spirit, or his inner being, the source of his emotions.

Then Jesus asked them where they had laid Lazarus. Jesus said this because people usually laid a body on a shelf in a cave when they died. Jesus asked where people had laid Lazarus probably because he didn't know the cave and he wanted to go there. They told Jesus to come with them and see the place. Then Jesus wept. This means that Jesus cried and produced tears, but it does not refer to loud wailing. The onlookers interpreted Jesus' weeping as sorrow over the death of his friend. Another reason Jesus wept could be the lack of belief Jesus saw in his followers.

Then the Jews said to each other that Jesus certainly loved Lazarus very much. The people were saying that Jesus had loved Lazarus very much. They saw Jesus' tears and realized that he loved Lazarus. But some of the Jewish mourners said that since Jesus had healed a blind man, could he not have prevented or saved Lazarus from dying? The people did not require an answer to this question. The question means that Jesus could have prevented Lazarus from dying. It also expresses doubt and criticism. The people wondered why Jesus did not heal Lazarus if he loved him. They accepted that Jesus healed the blind man, and they thought that he could have healed Lazarus too. They wondered why Jesus did not do so. The people implied by that question that either Jesus' power was limited or he did not really love Lazarus. Then Jesus, again deeply moved, came to the tomb. The tomb was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. The purpose of the stone was to protect the body from animals.

Stop here and look at a picture of a tomb as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus asked the people to take away the stone that covered the entrance of the tomb. But Martha, the dead man's sister, told Jesus that by this time the dead body of Lazarus must smell bad, because it has been buried for four days. But Jesus gently reminded Martha, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" Jesus did not require an answer to this question. Jesus used it for emphasis. Jesus was saying that he told Martha earlier that if she believed, she would see the glory of God. This question was also a mild rebuke. Jesus rebuked Martha for not completely trusting him. He reminded her of something he said earlier. So the people, probably some of the men that were there to comfort Martha and Mary, removed the stone that was in front of the cave where they buried Lazarus. Then Jesus looked to heaven and talked to God the Father, or prayed. The Jews often looked up when they prayed.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some special things people do when they pray in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Jesus said, "Father, I thank you that you heard me. I know that you hear me always, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here watching, so that they may believe that you sent me." Jesus now turned from talking to the sisters and the Jews to talking to God. He started by thanking God for hearing his prayer. Though Jesus and God had not yet raised Lazarus from the dead, his resurrection was so certain that Jesus treated it as already done. He had confidence that his Father would always hear him. Jesus could have raised Lazarus without any delay, but Jesus wanted those watching to realize that God's power was working in him. The Jews did not agree about Jesus' origin and his relationship with the Father. So he wanted Lazarus' resurrection to show the whole crowd that Father God sent Jesus. They had heard Jesus' words; now they needed to be drawn to Jesus by believing in him.

After Jesus said this prayer, Jesus called out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" Jesus commanded Lazarus to come back to life and out of the tomb. The shout was not for Lazarus' benefit. He was dead and could hear nothing. Jesus could have raised him with a whisper. But Jesus wanted the living people standing there to hear the resurrection words and the call to move from death into life. Lazarus came out alive and free from the sickness that had killed him. The man who had died came out of the tomb, his hands and feet bound with strips of linen cloth, and his face wrapped in linen cloth. Linen is fabric made from the flax plant. Jesus told the people to unbind Lazarus and let him go. In the culture at that time, it was customary to use handkerchiefs to wrap the faces of the poor who had died in preparing them for burial.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some ways that people prepare dead bodies for funerals in your culture? Tell a story of a time when someone died and some things that people did to prepare the body for burial.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 11:28-44 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Martha returned home and called Mary to go and meet with Jesus. Mary stood quickly, went to where Jesus was and talked with him.

In the second scene: Mary arrives where Jesus is and talks with him, Jesus asks to be taken to the tomb.

In the third scene: Jesus goes to the tomb. He tells them to remove the stone. He calls Lazarus to life.

In the fourth scene: Lazarus comes out alive. Jesus tells people to unwrap him.

The characters in this passage are:

- Martha
- Mary
- The Jewish people who had come to comfort Mary and Martha
- Jesus
- The people that rolled the stone
- Lazarus

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

After Martha had finished talking with Jesus, she returned home and spoke quietly to her sister, Mary. Martha told Mary that the teacher was here, and he was asking to see her. Remember that Martha spoke quietly to Mary probably so that the other people could not hear what she said to Mary. Also remember that "the teacher" was a respectful title referring to Jesus.

When Mary heard that Jesus was here, she stood up quickly and went out to meet Jesus. Now John gives some background information. He tells us that Jesus had not yet entered the village of Bethany, he was still outside the village where Martha met him. Then John goes on in his story to tell us that the Jewish people who were comforting Mary in the house noticed how fast she went out. The Jews followed Mary out of the house, because they thought that she was going to Lazarus's tomb to cry or mourn there. When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at Jesus' feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here with us, my brother would not have died." It is important to remember that kneeling down before Jesus was a way to show Jesus respect and honor. It is also important to remember that Mary's remark probably expresses regret rather than rebuke. Mary, like Martha, also believed that if Jesus had come earlier, Jesus would have healed Lazarus.

Remember that when Jesus saw Mary crying, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was angry in spirit and deeply moved. Jesus asked the people where they had laid Lazarus. The people told Jesus to come with them and see the place. It is important to remember that Jesus wept, probably when he arrived at the tomb. Remember that some of the Jewish mourners said that Jesus had healed a blind man before. And they asked that couldn't Jesus have prevented or saved Lazarus from dying? Remember that the people did not require an answer to this question, rather it meant that Jesus could have prevented Lazarus from dying. It also expresses doubt and criticism. The people wondered why Jesus did not heal Lazarus if he loved him. They knew that Jesus healed the blind man, and they thought that he could have healed Lazarus too. They wondered why Jesus did not do so. The people implied by that question that either Jesus' power was limited or he did not really love Lazarus.

Remember that Jesus was still greatly disturbed. He came to the tomb and asked the people to take away the stone that covered the entrance to the tomb. Note that Martha, the dead man's sister, told Jesus that by this time the dead body must smell bad, because they buried the body four days before. But Jesus gently reminded

Martha, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" It is important to remember that Jesus did not require an answer to this question. Jesus used the question for emphasis. Jesus was saying that he had said to Martha earlier that if she believed, she would see the glory of God. This question was also a mild rebuke. Jesus rebuked Martha for not completely trusting him. He reminded her of something he said earlier.

So the people, probably some of the men that were there to comfort Martha and Mary, removed the stone that was in front of the cave where they buried Lazarus. Jesus now turned from talking to the sisters and the Jews to talking to the Father, God. Then Jesus looked to heaven and talked to God, or prayed. Prayer and talking to God are the same thing, although John does not mention the word prayer in this passage. It is important to remember that the Jews often looked up when they prayed.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: How will your team translate this section about Jesus talking with God? In your language is it more natural to say that Jesus talked with God or that Jesus prayed to God? Which words will help people in your culture best understand what is happening in this passage?

Pay attention to the prayer Jesus prayed. Jesus said, "Father, I thank you that you heard me. I know that you hear me always, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here watching, so that they may believe that you sent me."

It is important to remember that after Jesus said this prayer, Jesus called out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

The man who had died came out of the tomb. Remember that Lazarus came out with his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus told the people to unbind Lazarus and let him go.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 11:28-44 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Martha
- Mary
- The Jewish people who had come to comfort Mary and Martha
- Jesus
- The people that rolled the stone
- Lazarus

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

After saying this, Martha returned home and spoke quietly to her sister, Mary. She told Mary that the teacher is here, and he is asking to see her. When Mary heard this, she stood up quickly and went out to meet Jesus. Jesus had not yet entered the village of Bethany; he was still at the place where Martha met him. The Jewish people who were comforting Mary in the house noticed how fast she went out. They followed her out of the house, because they thought that she was going to Lazarus's tomb to cry or mourn there.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Jewish people, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "We think that Mary is going to the tomb to mourn," or "We feel sorry for Mary," or "We will go with Mary to the tomb to comfort her." [!end] Continue the drama.

When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at Jesus' feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here with us, my brother would not have died."

When Jesus saw her crying, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. Jesus asked the people where they had laid Lazarus. They told Jesus to come with them and see the place. Jesus wept. Then the people from Judea said to each other that Jesus certainly loved Lazarus very much. But some of the Jewish mourners said that since Jesus had healed a blind man, could he not have prevented or saved Lazarus from dying?

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I feel angry because of the effects of death and that people still don't realize who I am," or "I feel compassion for Mary," or "I am deeply distressed," or "I want to go to the tomb of Lazarus now."

Ask the people playing the people, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "Wow! Jesus loves Lazarus so much that he even weeps," or "We wonder why Jesus didn't come earlier and heal Lazarus from the sickness that killed him," or "We doubt Jesus' power and his love for Lazarus." [!end] Continue the drama.

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. Jesus asked the people to take away the stone that covered the entrance of the tomb. But Martha, the dead man's sister, told Jesus that by this time the dead body must smell bad, because it has been buried for four days. But Jesus gently reminded Martha, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" So the people, probably some of the men that were there to comfort Martha and Mary, removed the stone that was in front of the cave where Lazarus was buried.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Martha, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I don't think it's a good idea to open the tomb because it'll smell bad," or "I wonder why Jesus wants the people to open the tomb." [!end] Continue the drama.

Then Jesus looked to heaven and prayed.

Jesus said, "Father, I thank you that you heard me. I know that you hear me always, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here watching, so that they may believe that you sent me."

Pause the drama.

After Jesus said this prayer, Jesus called out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The man who had died came out of the tomb, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus told the people to unbind Lazarus and let him go.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the people that were there, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "Wow! We are greatly surprised to see Lazarus come back to life," or "We think that Jesus indeed is powerful," or "We have never seen such a thing in Israel."

Ask the people playing Mary and Martha, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "We are so excited to have our brother back to life," or "We are so thankful to Jesus for raising Lazarus from the dead," or "Our trust and faith in Jesus has been greatly revived."

Ask the person playing Lazarus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I feel restricted, I need to be unbound," or "I am so excited to see Jesus and my sisters again. I believe Jesus is the Messiah sent from God."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 11:28–44 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

After saying this, Martha returned home and spoke quietly to her sister, Mary. She told Mary that the **teacher** is here, and he is asking to see her. Teacher was a title of respect for a Jewish man who had authority to teach about God. Use the same word or phrase for teacher as you used in previous passages. For more information on teacher, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Jewish people who were comforting Mary in the house noticed how fast she went out. They followed her out of the house, because they thought that she was going to Lazarus's **tomb** or burial cave to cry or mourn there.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **tomb**. Look up tomb in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, which means she knelt quickly at Jesus' feet, and said, "**Lord**, if you had been here with us, my brother would not have died." Lord is someone who is master over other people; who has full authority and who deserves that people give him respect. Use the same word or phrase for Lord as you used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

When Jesus saw Mary crying, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in **spirit**, his inner being, and deeply moved. Use the same word or phrase for spirit as you used in previous passages. For more information on spirit, refer to the Master Glossary.

But Jesus gently reminded Martha, "Did I not tell you that if you **believed**, you would see the **glory of God**?" If you believe in someone, you believe that what that person says about himself is true. You then trust that person and are committed to do what that person tells you to do. Use the same word or phrase for believe as you used in previous passages. For more information on belief, refer to the Master Glossary.

When God shows his **glory**, people can see how beautiful, powerful, and majestic God is. Use the same word or phrase for glory of God as you used in previous passages. For more information on glory of God, refer to the Master Glossary.

Then Jesus looked to heaven and talked to God the Father, or **prayed**. For more information on pray, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 11:28–44

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4409815 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 11:45–57

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 11:45–57 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 11:45–57 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus? Pause this audio here.

4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 11:45–57 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Jesus raised a man called Lazarus from the dead. This passage continues the story of what happened after the miracle. The Jews responded in different ways to the miracle that they saw. Some believed that Jesus was from God, and others reported the miracles to the Jewish religious leaders. The authorities discussed the matter in their council and decided on what to do to Jesus.

Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead believed in who Jesus was and what he did. But some of the people, probably the people who did not believe in Jesus, went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. The Pharisees were a Jewish religious group or party who were enemies of Jesus throughout his ministry. The people who took the news to the Pharisees acted in hostility towards Jesus. Then the chief or leading priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin and discussed what they should do to Jesus. The Sanhedrin was the religious court with the highest authority over the Jews at that time. The council spoke disrespectfully about Jesus when they said, "This man is performing many signs. If we let him continue to work miracles, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. Tell a story of a situation where someone became very popular and more influential than the leader, king, chiefs, and elders in your community or workplace. How did the leaders react to the situation? How did the leaders talk about the person? Pause this audio here.

The Romans were ruling Israel at that time. The Romans allowed the Jewish people to practice their own religion. However, the Romans required that the people remain peaceful and obey the Roman law. The Romans permitted the Sanhedrin to rule over local matters regarding religion. The more Jesus' popularity grew, the more that of the Jewish leaders declined. The Sanhedrin thought that it was possible that everyone would soon believe in Jesus. Soon the Romans might start to think that the Sanhedrin had lost control. The Sanhedrin also thought that Jesus would cause his followers to rebel against the Roman government. Then Romans would come to defeat that rebellion and take away the Sanhedrin's position of leadership. The Romans would also destroy the temple and the nation of the Jews that the Sanhedrin led. Even though the Sanhedrin recognized that Jesus indeed performed many miracles, they responded in opposition instead of belief. Caiaphas, one of the council members, spoke to them. He was the high priest that year. You may remember that according to Jewish law, the high priest held the office until he died. However, during this time, the Roman government changed who was the high priest quite often. The Roman government removed a high priest who did not satisfy them and appointed another. The high priest Caiaphas told them that they did not understand this problem. Caiaphas was speaking firmly and severely to them, even insulting them. His advice focused on the interests of the council members. If the nation perished, the council would have no one to exercise authority over. But Jesus was only one man. They could handle whatever crisis among the people that his death might bring.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. In your culture, how do leaders react when someone threatens their position of authority or influence? How have leaders handled such situations? Pause this audio here.

John explains that Caiaphas said these things because God was using Caiaphas to prophesy, or speak a message from God. God probably chose to speak through Caiaphas because of his position as the high priest. John explains Jesus did die for the nation, but also all of God's people. It was God's purpose to bring together all of God's people everywhere into one group. After Caiaphas' speech, the council began making plans to kill Jesus.

Jesus therefore no longer walked about openly among the Jews in the area of Judea; instead, he went away to a region near the wilderness or desert, to a village called Ephraim. He stayed there with his disciples. Ephraim was a village about 12 miles, or 20 kilometers, northeast of Jerusalem. It was off the main trade routes.

Stop here and look at a map showing the location of Ephraim as a group. Pause this audio here.

Now the story moves to the time right before the Passover. About a week before, many people went up to Jerusalem before the Passover to prepare themselves for the celebration. The phrase "went up to Jerusalem" is a Jewish expression that refers to going to Jerusalem. Jerusalem was built on a hill, so anyone traveling to the city had to walk up a hill to get there. You will remember that the Passover Festival was a celebration to remember how God saved the ancestors of the Israelites from the angel of death when they were slaves in Egypt. During the Passover festival, all Jewish men were required to come to Jerusalem for the Passover.

The population of people that came to Jerusalem were normally anywhere from 25,000 to more than 100,000 people. It was customary for persons coming from the rural areas to purify themselves before a major festival. This could take an entire week. This was especially true for people who lived near Gentiles or who had business dealings with Gentiles. The Jewish people did some washing rituals so they could eat the Passover. The washing rituals were not intended to remove dirt but to prepare the person to approach God. They were not allowed to celebrate the Passover if they were not ritually pure.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group. In your culture, what are some of the cultural festivals that your people celebrate? Describe some rituals or activities that people must do before cultural festivals in order to be ready for them. Pause this audio here.

The chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anybody knew where Jesus was, such person must report or tell the chief priest and Pharisees what they know about Jesus so that they might arrest him. Therefore, the people who had traveled to Jerusalem for Passover kept looking for Jesus and were asking one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think? Surely Jesus will not come to the festival, will he?" The people did not require an answer to this question. It expresses doubt. The Jewish people doubted that they would see Jesus at the festival.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 11:45-57 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Many people who saw the miracle that Jesus performed believed in him, but some people did not believe in Jesus and reported Jesus to the Pharisees.

In the second scene: The chief priests, Pharisees, and the Sanhedrin called for a meeting in order to discuss what they should do to Jesus. Then Caiaphas the high priest gave his opinion, that they should let Jesus die for the sake of saving the people and the priests' influence.

In the third scene: Jesus stopped moving publicly and stayed with his disciples.

In the fourth scene: Jews come to Jerusalem to prepare for the Passover. They wonder if Jesus is coming.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Caiaphas the high priest
- Chief priests
- Pharisees
- Sanhedrin
- The Jews

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The first scene begins after Jesus raised Lazarus from death. Some of the people who had seen Jesus raise Lazarus believed the miracle they saw Jesus perform while others went back home and reported the miracle

Jesus did to the Pharisees. So, the Pharisees called for a meeting of Jewish authorities, called the Sanhedrin, to discuss this new information about Jesus. Then they asked one another, "What we shall do about all the miracles Jesus has performed? If we permit Jesus to continue these miracles, we the Jewish nation will be in trouble with the Roman authorities."

In the second scene, Caiaphas, who was the high priest, said to the Jewish authorities that they don't understand what is happening. Caiaphas was speaking firmly and severely to them, even insulting them. His advice focused on the interests of the council members. The Jewish nation could be destroyed by the Romans. Instead of all the Jewish nation being in trouble with the Roman authorities, it would be better for Jesus alone to be in trouble with the Roman authorities because they will kill him. When Caiaphas said this, he did not know that God was speaking prophetically through him that Jesus was going to die for the Jewish people. Here, John explains that Jesus' death is also for all of God's scattered people. The Jewish authorities began to plot to find a way to have Jesus killed.

In the third scene, when Jesus realised that the Jewish authorities were planning to kill him, Jesus therefore no longer walked about openly among the Jews in the area of Judea. Instead he went away to a region near the wilderness or desert, to a village called Ephraim. He stayed there with his disciples. Ephraim was a village about 12 miles, or 20 kilometers, northeast of Jerusalem. It was off the main trade routes.

Stop here and look at a map showing the location of Ephraim and Jerusalem as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, it was only a few days before the Passover festival, so many people went up to Jerusalem to purify themselves. Jerusalem was built on a hill, so people said that they "went up to Jerusalem" when they traveled there.

The Jewish authorities gave an order that anyone who sees Jesus should come to tell them so that they could arrest him. The people who were coming into Jerusalem for the festival heard this order. Therefore, the people kept looking for Jesus and were asking one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think? Surely Jesus will not come to the festival, will he?" The people were not expecting an answer to this question. The Jewish people doubted that they would see Jesus at the festival.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 11:45–57 the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Caiaphas the high priest
- Chief priests
- Pharisees
- Sanhedrin
- The Jews

Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead believed in who Jesus was and what he did. But some of the people who did not believe in Jesus went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

In the second scene, the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin, or Jewish council, and discussed what they should do to Jesus. The council said, "This man is performing many signs. If we let him continue to work miracles, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation."

Stop the action.

In the third scene, one of the council members named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all! You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed."

Stop the action.

In the third scene, after that meeting, the Jewish council planned to kill Jesus. Jesus therefore no longer walked about openly among the Jews. Instead, he went away to a region near the desert, to a village called Ephraim and he stayed there with his disciples.

Stop the action.

Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the rural areas to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves.

Stop the action.

So, the people who had come to Jerusalem for the Passover kept looking for Jesus and were asking one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think? Surely Jesus will not come to the festival, will he?" Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anybody knew where Jesus was, they must report or tell the chief priests and Pharisees what they know about Jesus so that they might arrest him.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 11:45–57 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Many of the **Jews** who came to visit Mary **believed** in Jesus. In this story, Jews refers to the Jewish people who lived in the area, not just the religious leaders. Use the same words for Jews and believe that you have previously used. For more information on Jews and belief, refer to the Master Glossary.

Probably the people who did not believe in Jesus went to the **Pharisees** and told them what Jesus had done. Translate Pharisees in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Pharisees is in the Master Glossary.

Then the chief **priests** and the Pharisees called a meeting of the **Sanhedrin** or Jewish council and discussed what they should do to Jesus. Translate priest and Sanhedrin in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that priest and Sanhedrin are in the Master Glossary.

The men in the Sanhedrin said, "This man is performing many **signs**. If we let him continue to work miracles, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation." A sign or a miracle is something unusual that is happening for a special reason. Jesus performed many miracles. These miracles were signs that showed the people that Jesus really was sent by God, and that people should listen to what Jesus was saying about God. Translate sign in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that sign is in the Master Glossary.

But one of the council members named Caiaphas who was **high priest** that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all! You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole **nation** destroyed."

A **nation** is a group of people that belong together and who live in the same country, and who have the same ruler. Translate nation in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that nation is in the Master Glossary.

One of the priests was named the **high priest**. The high priest was the most important priest. The high priest had a very important function. Once a year there was a festival that was named the "Day of Atonement." This means something like "the great day of forgiveness or reconciliation." On this day, the high priest offered a sacrifice on behalf of all the people of Israel to ask for forgiveness for all the sins that they had done in the previous year. The high priest first had to ask forgiveness for his own sin, and then for the sin of all the people. The high priest killed a lamb, and took the blood inside the temple. Because of the sacrifice of the lamb, it was again possible for God and people to have a relationship together.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **high priest**. Look up high priest in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

John explains that Caiaphas said these things because God was using Caiaphas to **prophecy**, or speak a message from God. Translate prophecy in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that prophecy is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus therefore no longer walked about openly among the Jews; instead, he went away to a region near the **wilderness**, or desert, to a village called Ephraim, and he stayed there with his disciples. Use the same word or phrase for wilderness as you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Now the **Passover** of the Jews was near, and many went from the rural areas to Jerusalem before the Passover to **purify** themselves.

Passover is an important Jewish festival. Use the same word or phrase for Passover as you used in previous passages. For more information on Passover, refer to the Master Glossary.

Purify means to go through a ritual bath or washing that would be a symbol of removing anything that makes people unclean or unfit to worship God. This usually involved washing. Washing might involve a body part such as hands or face or it might require a complete bath by immersion in water. People would wash and also change clothes. This process was a symbolic removal of anything that was dirty or unclean or anything that separated the person from the worship of God.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **purify**. Look up purify in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The people were in the **temple**, the place of worship, looking for Jesus. Use the same word or phrase for temple as you used in previous passages. For more information on temple, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 11:45–57

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4185639 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 12:1–11

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 12:1–11 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 12:1–11 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?

5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 12:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage many Jews who saw Jesus raise Lazarus back to life believed in him. But others reported him to the Pharisees. The Jewish council met in Jerusalem to discuss what to do with Jesus. They were afraid that if everyone believed in Jesus, the Roman government would destroy the Jewish temple and nation. The high priest Caiaphas said that it was better for Jesus to die than the whole nation be destroyed. So the Jews decided to kill Jesus, and Jesus no longer walked around in public and stayed in Ephraim. When people went to Jerusalem to purify themselves before the Passover feast, they looked for Jesus, thinking that he would not go there. That was because the chief priests and Pharisees had ordered people to tell them if they knew where Jesus was, so they could arrest him.

This passage is a narrative telling the story of what happened next. It was six days before the Passover feast, a Jewish festival. Passover celebrated the time when God rescued the Jewish ancestors from slavery in Egypt. Jesus went from the town of Ephraim to Bethany, a village about 3 kilometres east of Jerusalem. This is where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived. Lazarus was the man whom Jesus raised from the dead. Ephraim was 20 kilometres north of Bethany. It would take Jesus about one day to get there walking.

Stop here and as a group look at a map of Israel in Jesus' time showing towns of Jerusalem, Ephraim, and Bethany. Pause this audio here.

Next John says, "They gave a dinner for him there." This means that the family members of Lazarus, or perhaps his friends and neighbours in general, prepared a dinner to honour Jesus. The people who gave the festive dinner were thankful that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. We know that the dinner was in Bethany, but John does not mention the exact location here. Martha, Lazarus' sister, served the food to the dinner guests. Lazarus was reclining at the table with the other guests including Jesus. It was customary at the time to eat while leaning back, rather than sitting up, especially during an important dinner or a feast. People lay on mats or benches around a low table. If people in your culture do not eat at the table, you do not need to mention a table in your translation.

Stop here and look as a group at a picture of people in Jesus' time reclining at a table during a meal. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are the key eating customs in your culture? Do people in your culture eat at the table? Do they eat with their hands or do they use cutlery? Pause this audio here.

Mary got half a litre of pure nard, which was an expensive perfume, and brought it into the room where the dinner was. Nard was a plant which people used to make a perfume—a nice smelling substance, probably a liquid or oil. Usually, a bottle of perfume would be twelve times smaller. Mary anointed Jesus' feet with the perfume. The word "anoint" means to put oil on someone. She poured all the perfume over Jesus' feet. It was customary to anoint the heads of important guests with olive oil, but a host would provide only water for their feet. Mary anointed Jesus' feet with her expensive perfume to honour Jesus and show that she was devoted to him. Then she used her long hair like a towel to wipe the extra perfume from Jesus' feet. Doing this showed that she was humble and how much she honoured him. All the people in the house could smell the sweet fragrance of the perfume.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What are the customs in your culture to honour people, and important people in particular, who come to your house? Pause this audio here.

Judas Iscariot was one of the guests at the dinner. He was one of Jesus' disciples, and he was later to betray Jesus, which means that he would put Jesus in his enemies' control. When Judas saw Mary anoint Jesus' feet with the expensive perfume, he asked a question that was aimed as a criticism of Mary. He said to those present at the dinner, "Why did Mary not sell this perfume? It was worth three hundred denarii. Mary should have given the money to the poor." Denarii were Roman money made from silver. You can translate denarii as silver coins. It was the official money in Israel at the time of Jesus. One denarius was worth about a day's wage for a worker.

So three hundred denarii were about a year's wage. The perfume was worth a lot of money. Judas was saying that selling the perfume would have been the right thing to do, so that poor people could get the money.

Stop here and look as a group at a picture of denarii from Jesus' time. Pause this audio here.

John now gives us additional information about Judas, which helps us to understand why Judas just said this. Judas said this because he was a thief; he didn't say it out of any concern for the poor. He had charge of the disciples' money, and he often stole some of the money from the disciples' bag. It was money people gave to Jesus and the disciples to buy things they needed, like food. Judas encouraged others to give generously to the poor. However, his reason for what he said was not because he wanted to help the poor. Instead, he said it because he hoped to steal some of the money.

Jesus said to Judas to leave Mary alone. It was a rebuke to Judas. Jesus did not want Judas to trouble Mary. He told Judas to stop criticising her. Jesus' exact words were, "Leave her alone, so that she may keep the perfume for the day of my burial." Most Bible scholars agree that the exact meaning of what Jesus is saying is not clear. There are a number of possible interpretations of Jesus' words, but we cannot be certain which interpretation is correct. One of the interpretations is that Mary poured the perfume on Jesus' feet in anticipation of his death. What we do know is that Mary had kept the perfume so that she could use it before Jesus' burial, or the time when people would place Jesus' body in the tomb. The Jewish custom was to anoint a dead body with perfume or nice-smelling oils before they place it in a tomb. She may or may not have known that this was why she kept it, but God knew. What she did was a good thing, and the reason that Judas should not criticise her.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In your culture how do you determine the meaning of a story when the information somebody gave you does not have all the details? Pause this audio here.

Jesus continues, but now he is not only addressing Judas, but he is also speaking to his other followers—those who are with him and his followers in general. He says that there will always be some poor people living nearby who need help. "The poor" refers to poor people, those without money to buy enough food and clothes. Jesus says, "For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me." Jesus contrasts the phrase "the poor" with the word "me" referring to himself. Jesus would not always be on earth with his people. They would not always be able to show him love and honour him.

Now a large crowd of Jews who lived locally in Judea heard the news that Jesus was in Bethany. Some of those Jews did not believe in Jesus as the Messiah, the promised Saviour, at this point. They came because they wanted to see Jesus who was famous for performing miracles and they wanted to see Lazarus who was dead for four days, but now lived again because Jesus raised him from the dead. By coming to Bethany, those Jews disobeyed the orders of the Jewish council in Jerusalem who told people that anyone who knew where Jesus was had to report his location to the council, so they could arrest him.

John explained that the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well as Jesus. The fact that he was alive showed Jesus' great power. The chief priests made the plans when the Jewish council met in Jerusalem. Because of Jesus bringing Lazarus back to life, many of the Jewish people from Judea were rejecting the priests and turning to Jesus to believe in him. They believed that Jesus was the Messiah, the promised Saviour. This means that they believed the facts about who Jesus was and what he did. This also means that they trusted Jesus instead of trusting themselves or someone else.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 12:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has seven scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus and his disciples travel from Ephraim to Bethany where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus live.

In the second scene: Family and friends of Lazarus prepare a dinner to honour Jesus because he raised Lazarus from the dead.

In the third scene: Mary, the sister of Lazarus and Martha, brings a large bottle of expensive perfume, anoints Jesus' feet with it, and wipes them with her hair.

In the fourth scene: Judas Iscariot questions Mary's actions saying that the perfume should have been sold and the money from the sale given to the poor.

In the fifth scene: Jesus defends Mary's actions telling Judas to leave her alone, as Mary had kept the perfume, and did not sell it, so that she could use it for Jesus' burial. Jesus tells his followers that there will always be poor people among them to take care of, but he will not always be with them.

In the sixth scene: A large crowd of Jews find out that Jesus is in Bethany. They come to Bethany because they want to see Jesus and because they want to see Lazarus, who was dead, but came back to life through Jesus' miracle.

In the seventh scene: John tells us that the chief priests had also made plans to put Lazarus to death as well as Jesus. Because of the miracle of Lazarus coming back to life, many of the Jews from Judea were rejecting the Jewish priests and they were believing in Jesus.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Lazarus
- Martha
- Mary
- Judas Iscariot
- Other guests at the table including Jesus' disciples
- Large crowd of Jews
- And the chief priests

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It was six days before the Passover feast, a Jewish festival. According to other passages in the Gospel of John, the Passover began on the following Friday evening. So the events in this passage must have taken place on the previous Saturday evening. Jesus came from the town of Ephraim to Bethany, a village about 3 kilometres east of Jerusalem. This is where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, the man whom Jesus raised from the dead, lived. Ephraim was 20 kilometres north of Bethany. It would take Jesus about one day to get there walking.

Stop here and as a group look at a map of Israel in Jesus' time showing towns of Jerusalem, Ephraim, and Bethany. Pause this audio here.

John next says, "They gave a dinner for him there." This means that possibly the family members of Lazarus or perhaps his friends and neighbours in general prepared a dinner to honour Jesus. We know that the dinner was in Bethany, but the text does not mention the exact location. Martha, Lazarus' sister, served the food to the guests at the dinner and Lazarus was reclining at the table with the other guests. The word "and" indicates that Martha and Lazarus were doing different things at the same time. Martha was serving food while Lazarus was lying at the table with the other guests. While reclining, one's head rested close to the chest of the person dining next to you.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What words or expressions do you use in your language when you talk about one person doing something completely different from another person at the same point in time? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look as a group at a picture of people in Jesus' time reclining at a table during a meal. Pause this audio here.

Mary got half a litre of pure nard, which was an expensive perfume, and brought it into the room where the dinner was. Mary anointed Jesus' feet with the perfume. She poured all the perfume over Jesus' feet. All the people in the house where Jesus was could smell the sweet fragrance of the perfume.

But Judas Iscariot, who was one of the disciples and who was later to betray Jesus, asked a question aimed as a criticism of Mary. It is important to note that John started this section with the word "but." It introduces what Judas said when he saw what Mary did. He said to those present at the dinner, "Why did Mary not sell this perfume? It was worth three hundred denarii. Mary should have given the money to the poor." His question was more like a statement saying, "Mary should have sold the perfume for three hundred denarii and given the money to the poor."

Stop here and look at a picture of denarii from Jesus' time. Pause this audio here.

John now gives us additional information about Judas, which helps us understand what Judas just said. "He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the money bag he used to help himself to what was put into it."

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you introduce additional information, which is not part of a story in your language? Pause this audio here.

Jesus told Judas to leave Mary alone. He rebuked Judas. Jesus did not want Judas to make it difficult for Mary. He told Judas to stop criticising her. Jesus' exact words were, "Leave her alone, so that she may keep the perfume for the day of my burial." Most Bible scholars agree that the exact meaning of what Jesus is saying is not clear. Your translation should indicate that Mary had kept the perfume, and did not sell it, so that she could use it for Jesus' burial. She may or may not have known that this was why she kept it, but God knew. And this was a good thing, and the reason that Judas should not criticise her.

Jesus continues by saying, "For the poor you will always have with you, but you do not always have me." It is important to note that in the previous sentence Jesus spoke to Judas, but now the word "you" is in the plural form, which means that he is addressing his other followers in general. The word "but" introduces a contrast. They would always have poor people, but they would not always have Jesus.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What words do you use to present contrasting facts or descriptions in your language? Pause this audio here.

Now a large crowd of Jews who lived locally in Judea heard the news that Jesus was in Bethany. They came because they wanted to see Jesus and because they wanted to see Lazarus who was dead for four days, but now lived again because Jesus raised him from the dead. The word "now" often introduces a new part of the story.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What words do you use in your language to introduce a new part to the story? Pause this audio here.

John explains that the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well as Jesus. The fact that he was alive showed Jesus' great power. The chief priests made the plans when the Jewish council met in Jerusalem. Because of Jesus bringing Lazarus back to life many of the Jewish people from Judea were rejecting the priests and turning to Jesus to believe in him.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 12:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has seven scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Lazarus
- Martha
- Mary
- Judas Iscariot
- Other guests at the table, including Jesus' disciples
- Large crowd of Jews
- And the chief priests

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus came to Bethany, the place where Lazarus lived, the man Jesus had raised from the dead.

The friends and family of Lazarus prepared a dinner in Jesus' honour. Martha was serving food and Lazarus was reclining at the table with Jesus and the other guests.

Pause the drama.

Then Mary brought a half a litre jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus' feet with it. Then she wiped his feet with her hair. And the sweet smell of the perfume filled the whole house.

Pause the drama.

But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who was later to betray Jesus, criticised Mary. He said, "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" He did not say this because he was concerned about the poor. He said this because he was a thief. He was the keeper of the common purse belonging to Jesus and the disciples and he used to steal from it.

Pause the drama.

So Jesus defended Mary, saying to Judas, "Leave her alone. She had kept the perfume so that she could use it for my burial." Jesus also said that his followers would always have the poor among them to take care of, but he would not always be with them.

Pause the drama.

When a large crowd of local Jews heard that Jesus arrived in Bethany, they also came as they wanted to see him and they wanted to see Lazarus, the man Jesus had raised from the dead.

However, the chief priests made a plan to kill Lazarus, as well as Jesus.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 12:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Six days before the **Passover**, Jesus therefore came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Use the same word for Passover as you used in previous passages. For more information on Passover, refer to the Master Glossary.

But Judas Iscariot, one of his **disciples**—he who was about to betray him—said, "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred **denarii** and given to the poor?"

Use the same word for **disciples** as you used in previous passages. For more information on disciples, refer to the Master Glossary.

Denarii were Roman money made of silver. It was the official money in Israel at the time of Jesus. Each denarius had an image of the current Roman Emperor on it. At the time of Jesus it was the image of Emperor Tiberius. One **denarius** was worth about a day's wage for a worker. Because denarii were made of silver you can translate denarii as silver coins. Use the same word for denarius as you used in previous passages. For more information on denarius, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here as a group, and look together at a picture of denarii from Jesus' time. Pause this audio here.

So the chief priests made plans to put Lazarus to death as well, because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus. **Chief priests** were leading priests who helped to do administration in the temple in Jerusalem. They were also part of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council. Use the same word for priest as you used in previous passages. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 12:1–11

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5487748 KB)

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John 12:12–19

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 12:12–19 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 12:12–19 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 12:12–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage Jesus came to Bethany where the friends and family of Lazarus prepared a dinner in his honour. Mary anointed Jesus' feet with a large jar of expensive perfume to show him honour. Judas Iscariot criticised her for it and suggested that the perfume should have been sold and the money given to the poor. Jesus defended Mary, saying that they would always have the poor with them, but he would not always be with them and he praised Mary for keeping the perfume for the time of his burial. Then a large crowd of local Jews arrived because they heard that Jesus was in Bethany and they wanted to see Jesus and Lazarus. Many Jews believed in Jesus because he raised Lazarus from the dead.

This passage is a narrative telling the story of what happened next. The next day after the dinner in Bethany, there was a large crowd of people who had come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover feast, a Jewish festival. Passover celebrated the time when God rescued the Jewish ancestors from slavery in Egypt. The crowd of

people heard that Jesus was coming. Someone, or some people, told them that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.

Stop here and as a group look at a map of Israel showing Jerusalem and Bethany. Pause this audio here.

So the people in the large crowd took branches from palm trees and went to meet Jesus. The people cut branches of some of the palm trees that were growing there. Then they carried the branches in their hands to wave and celebrate Jesus' coming. This was a custom at the time and people did it as a way to welcome a famous person. The people left the city to welcome Jesus, who was on his way into the city. They made a path for him and they greeted him as people might greet a king who won a war. They honoured Jesus by welcoming him like this.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a palm tree and palm branches. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and as a group discuss: What are the customs of greeting or receiving important people in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Before meeting Jesus, they started praising him with loud voices, saying, "Hosanna! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord. God bless the King of Israel!" Hosanna in the original language means "please save." But here the Jews say it to mean, "Let us praise God." The sentence "God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord" comes from the book of Psalms, the Old Testament Jewish book of prayer and praise. God inspired people to write it several hundred years before the birth of Jesus. In Old Testament times the Jews used to sing this scripture about those entering the temple to celebrate the Passover. Here this sentence refers to the Messiah, the promised Saviour. The people in the crowd were honouring Jesus, the one who was coming in the name of the Lord. They were saying that Jesus was the Messiah, the promised Saviour, admitting the truth that Jesus came from God. They said about Jesus that God blessed him, meaning that God has given Jesus special love and favour. In addition to greeting Jesus with the scripture, they also called for God to bless him as the King of Israel, or the one who will rule over Israel. The people blessed Jesus as the King and welcomed him. By doing this they gave him one of the titles of the Messiah.

Jesus got a young donkey and rode on it. A donkey is a domestic animal that is like a small horse, but with longer ears. Riding on a donkey, rather than a horse, was associated with humility and peace in Jesus' time. If a ruler rode on a donkey it showed that he came in peace. The horse was different because it was associated with war. This happened just as God prophesied in the Scriptures. Prophet Zechariah wrote about this five hundred years before Jesus' birth: "Fear not, daughter of Zion." The phrase "daughter of Zion" refers to the city of Zion, or Jerusalem and its people. The prophet is saying that the people of Jerusalem should be happy and not afraid that their king was coming to them. He was peaceful. The prophecy continued, "Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!" The word "look" indicates that there is something important that people should see: the coming of the king. The fact that the king rode on a donkey's colt, or a young donkey, showed that he came in peace.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture or video of a donkey. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture or a video of a man riding on a donkey. Pause this audio here.

The next section of the text is not part of the story's action. It is a narrative aside, or additional information that John gives to explain the events from his point of view. When John wrote, he remembered this, thought it was important, and included it in the story. The disciples did not understand "these things" at the time. It means that at first the disciples did not realise the significance of what happened—the crowd greeting Jesus outside the walls of Jerusalem and Jesus riding on a donkey. The disciples did not realise that what happened fulfilled a prophecy from the Scriptures. Only after God glorified Jesus, the disciples remembered that "these things" had been written about Jesus and "these things" had been done to Jesus. To glorify someone means to give them honour and the Bible uses the phrase most often with regards to praising, honouring, and speaking well about God. When the Bible text mentions God glorifying Jesus it refers to the time when God raised him to life and then took him to heaven. Only after God raised Jesus back to life and after he took him to heaven God would send the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit would help the disciples understand. The disciples then remembered what God wrote in the Old Testament about the Messiah, the promised Saviour. They realised only then that prophecies in the Scriptures referred to Jesus. And the disciples remembered what had happened and realised

that what they and others did for Jesus fulfilled the Scriptures. They welcomed him as their Messiah, the promised Saviour, as he rode into Jerusalem on a donkey as the Scriptures said he would.

The next section of the text is also a narrative aside where John explains the reason why the large crowd went to meet Jesus before he entered the city, rather than turning him in to the chief priests. When Jesus had called Lazarus to come out of the grave and raised him from death, the people who were there with Jesus at the time reported to others what had happened to Lazarus. Jesus had raised Lazarus to life and commanded him to leave the tomb. Lazarus returned to a normal human life. It was a miracle and a sign that Jesus was the Messiah, the promised Saviour. The Jews who had been with Jesus at that time and witnessed him raising Lazarus back to life continued to testify regularly and often to other Jews about what Jesus did. The crowd went to meet Jesus as he was approaching Jerusalem because they heard about Jesus raising Lazarus back to life. The people recognised it as a sign that Jesus was the Messiah, the promised Saviour. That's why they wanted to honour him and greeted him as they would greet a king.

On seeing how the crowd greeted Jesus, the Pharisees felt hopeless and upset because they had not succeeded in stopping Jesus. The authorities had not yet arrested him. They felt that they were failing and that he was defeating them. They said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the whole world has gone after him." They were exaggerating saying that the whole world is following Jesus. They meant that very many people started believing in Jesus and they followed him.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 12:12–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: The day after the dinner in Jesus' honour in Bethany, there is a large crowd of people in Jerusalem. The people are here to celebrate the Passover. Someone tells the people that Jesus is coming to Jerusalem too.

In the second scene: The crowd take leaves from palm trees and go outside the city to welcome Jesus. Before meeting Jesus they start praising him with loud voices saying, "Hosanna! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord. God bless the King of Israel!"

In the third scene: Jesus gets a young donkey and rides on it. By doing this he fulfils a prophecy, which prophet Zechariah wrote five hundred years before.

In the fourth scene: On seeing how the crowd greets Jesus, the Pharisees feel hopeless and upset because they have not succeeded in stopping him.

The characters in this passage are:

- Large crowd of Jews who came to Jerusalem
- Jesus
- A donkey's colt
- Jesus' disciples
- The Jews who were with Jesus when he raised Lazarus back to life
- And the Pharisees

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The next day after the dinner in Bethany, there was a large crowd of people who had come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover feast, a Jewish festival. Since Jesus was at the dinner in Bethany on Saturday, this was the Sunday after. The crowd of people heard from someone that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

Stop here and as a group look at a map of Israel showing Jerusalem and Bethany. Pause this audio here.

So the people in the large crowd took branches from a palm tree and went to meet Jesus. The people cut branches from the palm trees that were growing there. Then they carried the branches in their hands to wave and celebrate Jesus' coming. They made a path for him and they greeted him as people might greet a king who won a war. They honoured Jesus by welcoming him like this.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a palm tree and palm branches. Pause this audio here.

Before meeting Jesus they started praising him with loud voices, saying, "Hosanna! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord. God bless the King of Israel!" Hosanna means "Let us praise God," so you may want to say this instead.

Jesus got a young donkey and rode on it. It is important to note that riding on a donkey, rather than a horse, was associated with humility and peace in Jesus' time. This was a fulfilment of a prophecy from the Scriptures. Prophet Zechariah wrote about this five hundred years before Jesus' birth: "Fear not, daughter of Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!" It is important to note that the word "look" indicates that there is something important that people should see: the coming of the king. The fact that the king rode on a donkey's colt, or a young donkey, showed that he came in peace.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture or video of a donkey. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture or a video of a man riding on a donkey. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and as a group discuss: What words do you use in your language to draw people's attention to something important when telling a story? Pause this audio here.

The next section of the text is not part of the story's action. It is a narrative aside, or additional information that John gives to explain the events from his point of view. When John wrote, he remembered this, thought it was important, and included it in the story. Jesus' disciples didn't understand at the time that this was a fulfilment of prophecy. But after Jesus entered into his glory, they remembered what had happened and realised that these things had been written about him.

This next section of the text is not part of the story's action, either. It is also a narrative aside, or additional information that John gives to explain the reason why the large crowd went to meet Jesus before he entered the city, rather than turning him in to the chief priests. When Jesus had called Lazarus to come out of the grave and raised him from death, the people who were there with Jesus at the time reported to others what had happened to Lazarus. They continued to testify regularly and often to other Jews about what Jesus did. The crowd went to meet Jesus as he was approaching Jerusalem because they heard about Jesus raising Lazarus back to life. The people recognised it as a sign that Jesus was the Messiah, the promised Saviour.

Stop here and as a group discuss: In your language, how do you introduce additional information, which is not part of the story? Pause this audio here.

On seeing how the crowd greeted Jesus, the Pharisees felt hopeless and upset because they have not succeeded in stopping Jesus. The authorities had not yet arrested him. They felt that they were failing and that he was defeating them. They said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the whole world has gone after him." They were exaggerating saying that the whole world is following Jesus. They meant that very many people started believing in Jesus and they followed him.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 12:12–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

The characters in this passage are:

- Large crowd of Jews who came to Jerusalem
- Jesus
- A donkey's colt
- Jesus' disciples
- The Jews who were with Jesus when he raised Lazarus back to life
- And the Pharisees

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The next day after the dinner in Bethany, there was a large crowd of people who had come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover feast. The crowd of people heard from someone that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

Ask the people playing the people in the crowd, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "Jesus, the one who raised Lazarus back to life is coming to the feast! He must be the Messiah!" or "We can't wait to meet him! We have been waiting for our promised Saviour so many years!" or "We must honour him like a king! He will be the ruler of Israel!" [!end] Continue the drama.

So the people in the large crowd took branches from a palm tree and went out to meet Jesus.

Before meeting Jesus they started praising him with loud voices, saying, "Hosanna! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord. God bless the King of Israel!"

Jesus got a young donkey and rode on it. This fulfilled a prophecy which said, "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!"

Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "My time has come. I will ride on a donkey to show I come in peace," or "A hard time is ahead of me, but there is no other way," or "Father, praise you that those people know who I am." [!end] Continue the drama.

On seeing how the crowd greeted Jesus, the Pharisees felt hopeless and upset because they have not succeeded in stopping Jesus. They said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the whole world has gone after him."

Ask the people playing the Pharisees, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "This is so bad! Everyone is following that Jesus!" or "We wanted to kill him, but no one told us where he was," or "Now everyone believes he is the Messiah because of that Lazarus! We need to kill them both!" [!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 12:12–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, **Hosanna! Blessed** is the name of the **Lord**, even the King of Israel!" Hosanna can mean "save us," "welcome," or "glory" to a person. In the New Testament Hosanna probably means "welcome" with the idea of great joy and praise.

*Stop here and discuss as a team what word or phrase you will use for **Hosanna**. For more information on Hosanna, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.*

When people are blessing God, it means they are worshipping God and thanking him for his goodness and his blessings.

*Stop here and discuss as a team how you will talk about **blessed** in your translation. For more information on bless, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.*

Use the same word for **Lord** as you used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

His **disciples** did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was **glorified**, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him. Use the same word for disciples as you used in previous passages. For more information on disciples, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word for **glorified** as you used in previous passages. For more information on glorify, refer to the Master Glossary.

And Jesus found a young **donkey** and sat on it, just as it is written. A donkey is a domestic animal that is like a small horse, but with longer ears. Riding on a donkey, rather than a horse, was associated with humility and peace in Jesus' time.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture or video of a donkey. Pause this audio here.

The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the **tomb** and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. Use the same word for tomb as you used in previous passages. For more information on tomb, refer to the Master Glossary.

The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this **sign**. Use the same word for sign as you used in previous passages. For more information on sign, refer to the Master Glossary.

So the **Pharisees** said to one another, "You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him." Use the same word for Pharisees as you used in previous passages. For more information on Pharisees, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 12:12–19**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (4546108 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 12:20–36*Hear and Heart*

In this step, hear John 12:20–36 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 12:20–36 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 12:20–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Jesus was entering Jerusalem while riding a donkey. The people honoured him by shouting praises and waving palm branches. This fulfilled the prophecy about the Messiah, which the prophet Zechariah wrote and showed that Jesus came as a peaceful king. Jesus' disciples did not understand the significance of what was happening at that time. The people went out to welcome Jesus because they heard that he raised Lazarus from the dead.

Some Greeks were among those who went up to Jerusalem to worship God during the time that people were celebrating Passover. The word "Greeks" refers to people who were not Jews by birth. They were Gentiles, speakers of the Greek language. The word "Greeks" in the New Testament does not refer to people from the country of Greece, as it did not exist yet. Since they came to the Jewish feast to worship God, they most likely were converts to the Jewish faith. Passover was a Jewish festival, when the Jews celebrated their freedom from being slaves to the Egyptians.

The Greeks, or non-Jews, approached Philip who was one of the disciples. Philip was from Bethsaida, a town in Galilee, a region in northern Israel. It had many people living there who were non-Jewish. The Greeks spoke to Philip and requested to see Jesus. They wanted to meet and talk with him and asked Philip to make it happen. Philip went and told another disciple, Andrew, what the Greeks, or non-Jews, had asked. Andrew was Simon Peter's brother. They, like Philip, were from the village of Bethsaida. Andrew and Philip went to Jesus to tell him about the Greeks, or non-Jews, and their request.

Stop here and as a group look at a map of Israel showing Jerusalem and Bethsaida. Pause this audio here.

Jesus answered in response to Andrew and Philip, but his words were directed to all who were there, including the Greeks, or non-Jews. He said, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to receive glory from God." "The hour" refers to the time Jesus had been waiting for, not a literal hour. That was the time he would suffer, die, and rise again. This time had now come, but it would not happen in the next sixty minutes. Jesus used the title "the Son of Man" about himself to imply two things. He was a true human being, and he represented all people. He came from God and had all authority and power from God, including the power to forgive sin. The title means that Jesus was fully God and fully human. The Son of Man is a title that Jews connected with the Messiah, or the Promised Saviour that God would send to help them. The time when Jesus would receive glory from God was the time when he would suffer, die, rise from the dead and return to heaven. During that time God would reveal the true nature of Jesus the Son of God, which is his power to give eternal life.

Jesus continued, "Very truly I tell you, unless someone drops a grain of wheat into the earth, and lets it die, it will never be more than one grain. But if it dies, then it produces much fruit." The expression "very truly I tell you" introduces something important Jesus wanted to say. He was encouraging his listeners to listen carefully and accept what he said. Jesus was saying that if a grain of wheat did not fall into the earth and die it would remain just a single grain. It would only become more than a single grain if it fell into the ground and died. Wheat is a type of crop which people in Palestine grew in Jesus' time. They used the wheat grain to make bread. The grain is the individual seed that can grow into a new wheat plant. People must bury a seed in the ground, like it was dead, in order to produce a crop. Jesus was illustrating his own death and burial by comparing it to the way people plant a wheat seed in the ground. It was necessary for him to die in order to bear fruit. When he died and God raised him from death he would bring people into the kingdom of God by giving them eternal life when they believed in him.

Stop here and as a group look at photos of wheat in a field and wheat grain. Pause this audio here.

Jesus made another important statement, saying, "The one who loves his life, destroys it, and the one who hates his life in this world, will keep it for eternity." By saying "the one who loves his life," Jesus was referring to anyone who loves himself or herself above all. That person lives a selfish life, thinking mainly about his or her own desires and goals. Those people will destroy their lives, here on earth and into eternity. Their lives will be ruined, completely losing whatever good they had. They will not receive the true life, which is eternal life. Jesus contrasts those people with those who "hate their own life." Those people love God so much more than their life on earth. Because of that it seems that they hate their life on earth. This means that they do not consider their life on earth the most important thing. They do not consider anything that the world offers more important than God, including money, power, and reputation. They are willing to sacrifice their own desires and ambitions in order to serve God and others. Those people believe that knowing God and serving him are more important than themselves and what their life on earth offers. Jesus is saying that those people will keep their life for eternal life. This means that those people will never lose their true life, which is spiritual life. The word eternal refers to something that does not end. The phrase eternal life refers to life with God that never ends. Jesus is saying that people who love God more than their life on earth will live with God forever.

Jesus continues by saying that anyone who serves him must follow him, and that his servant will be wherever Jesus is. The person who serves Jesus, or his servant, is anyone who wants to be Jesus' disciple or who wants

to call Jesus his master. The person who serves Jesus does not act to benefit himself or to please himself. He listens to what Jesus his master wants him to do and he does that faithfully. The implication is that "serving" Jesus involves imitating his behaviour, doing what he did by serving others, or each other. Jesus requires this person to go where he goes. Jesus was going to the cross and death, and his servants must be willing to suffer and die also. Then Jesus adds that the Father will honour anyone who serves him. This means that God the Father will praise and reward every person for their faithful service to Jesus.

Now Jesus' speech continues and he addresses it to the Father as a prayer. He says that his soul is troubled. The soul is a person's inner life and thinking. The soul is the part of the person which continues to live when the body dies. Here Jesus is talking about himself being in distress. He felt distress because he knew he would soon die a painful death that would cause him shame. He knew that it would be very difficult and he did not know how he should pray. He asks, "And what should I pray?" This question shows that Jesus was thinking that he did not know what or how he should pray to God. He was saying, "What am I to say?" Jesus follows this with another question. He addresses God as his heavenly Father: "Should I say, 'Father save me from this hour'?" "Save me from this hour" means "keep me from having to experience this time of suffering." Jesus was suggesting a possibility that he knew was not good. He was suggesting the possibility that he could ask God to save him from being crucified. He already understood that he would not and must not pray that prayer. Jesus knew that the time when he would suffer and die was now very close, although it would not be in the next sixty minutes. Then Jesus answers his own question and says, "No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour." By saying, "for this reason," Jesus is referring back to when he said that the time has come for God to glorify the Son of Man. Jesus came to this time of his life on earth in order that God may glorify him so that he will give life to others. The phrase, "this hour" refers to Jesus' time of suffering, when he experiences death on the cross for man's sin.

Stop here and tell the group a story from your life when you chose to go through something hard or challenging in your life so that God may bless others through your act. Share with the group what you prayed at the time. Pause this audio here.

Jesus continues his prayer to God his Father. Jesus' prayer is for God to reveal the true glory of God's name, so that everybody knows how great and wonderful God is. The phrase "your name" refers to God himself. His name represents who he is. Then a voice spoke from heaven and said, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." It was God's voice saying, "I have shown how wonderful I am and I will show it again." God revealed his true glory in the signs Jesus performed. He would reveal it again in Jesus' death and resurrection.

The crowd standing there heard the sound of God's voice from heaven, but they did not know what the sound was. "The crowd" refers to the people who had just heard Jesus speak about his future suffering. Some of the crowd thought it was thunder, but other people in the crowd said that an angel had spoken to Jesus. They thought that the sound from heaven was the voice of an angel. An "angel" means messenger. Here it refers to a spirit being who serves God. Sometimes God sends an angel to tell a message to a person or to serve him in other ways.

Jesus told the crowd, "This voice has come for your sake, not mine." Jesus said that the voice from heaven was for the benefit of the people, the listeners. God spoke his words to Jesus, but he intended them to help the people who were listening. The phrase "This voice" refers to what the crowd heard. God wanted the crowd to know that he had answered Jesus' prayer, even though they could not understand what he said. Just knowing that God spoke to Jesus was a large benefit to the people. The voice was more for the crowd's benefit than Jesus' benefit.

Jesus continues by saying, "Now is the time for the judgment of this world; now the Father will throw out the one who rules this world." The word "now" refers to "the hour" which Jesus talked about earlier as the time he would die on the cross. The time of his death was very near. This was the time for the judgment of this world. By judging Jesus and condemning him to die on the cross, people were actually judging and condemning themselves. When they put Jesus on the cross to die, they showed how evil they were. But the cross was also God's judgment on the world, a judgment that Jesus accepted to suffer himself. Jesus endured the judgment and condemnation instead of the world, even though the world deserved it and Jesus did not. "Now," which meant very soon, was also going to be the time that the Father would remove the evil one who rules the world. Jesus knew that he would soon die and by his death he would defeat Satan. "The one who rules the world" means "the one who rules the people of the world" and here it refers to Satan. God would overthrow or defeat Satan

and he would lose authority over the people of the world. He would no longer have the power to rule the world. The text does not say that God would send or chase Satan out of a physical place, like heaven or earth.

Jesus continues by saying that "when they lift me up from the earth I will draw all people to myself." He is talking about the time when people would nail him to a tall cross and lift the cross up so he would die on it. The people listening understood that Jesus meant that he would die. Jesus could also be referring to his resurrection and going up to heaven to be with God, but the main focus here is his crucifixion. Then through his death Jesus would cause all kinds of people to come to him to trust him. Here the word "draw" means "cause to come." It means that Jesus would attract all kinds of people so that they would want to come to him. He would not force people to come to him against their will. The phrase "all people" implies all different races and kinds of people—non-Jews as well as Jews, slaves as well as free. It does not mean that every person would come to him, but anyone could come if they wanted.

The next sentence is extra information that the author John gives us, a comment by the author John. It refers back to Jesus saying that he would be lifted up from the earth. John says, "He said this to indicate the kind of death he was going to die." This means that Jesus was telling them indirectly how he would die. He implied that people would crucify him.

So the crowd responded to Jesus' statement by making a statement and then asking a question. They said, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever." They had heard people preaching from the Jewish Scriptures, or the Old Testament, and saying that the Christ, the promised Saviour, would never die. They were not quoting a specific scripture, but referred to the general understanding of the Scriptures. They understood that when Jesus called himself "Son of Man," he was saying that he was the Christ, the promised Saviour. Christ is the Greek word for the Hebrew word Messiah. The Jews used the title Messiah to refer to the special person whom God had appointed and promised to send as King and Saviour. Then the people asked a question, "How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up?" The people used the question to emphasise or confirm that you cannot say that. The people assumed that once the Christ, the promised Saviour, came he would live forever. They did not understand that there were other Scriptures that talked about his death. They did not think that the Christ, the promised Saviour would die, so what Jesus said confused them. Then the crowd asked the real question, "Who is this son of Man?" If the Son of Man was the Christ, the promised Saviour, the crowd did not understand how he could die. They were confused by what Jesus said and asked him to make things clear. They wanted to know who the Son of Man that Jesus talked about was, what kind of person he was.

Jesus answered them saying, "The light is among you just for a little while longer." Jesus used a metaphor. The light represents Jesus. He is like light in that he shows, or reveals, things as they truly are. He reveals the true God to people. Jesus will be with them just a little longer. After that, Jesus implied, he would no longer be with them. Jesus continued: "Walk while you have the light, so the darkness will not overtake you." Jesus gives them a command to keep on following him, as long as it is possible. While they still have Jesus with them, the people need to listen to him and believe him. Jesus was implying that he would not always be with them. Jesus uses another comparison. The darkness represents evil. People who do not believe in Jesus will not know the truth about God. So spiritual darkness will overcome them, and they will not know what is true or how they should live. Jesus uses a metaphor again to illustrate a spiritual truth: "The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going." Here darkness again represents evil. People who refuse to believe in Jesus, the light, walk in darkness. Therefore they cannot know the truth about God and what he is like. They cannot know how loving and holy he is. They cannot know how he wants them to live. They walk in spiritual darkness.

Jesus continued talking about light and darkness. He said, "While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." Jesus compares himself to light that is present, shining, for a little while longer. Jesus is inviting the crowd listening to him to believe in him. To believe in Jesus means believing the facts about who Jesus was and what he did. It also included the idea of trusting Jesus instead of trusting oneself or someone else. Believing the facts about Jesus should result in trusting him. The Hebrew language used the expression "to be sons of someone" to describe people who have the characteristics of that person. So "sons of light" are people who live in the light of Jesus and belong to him. Their character is like that of the light. They have God's character in them, and they love what he loves and hate what he hates. After saying those things, Jesus left the people he had been talking to and he went away from them into hiding. He went to a place that they did not know about so that they could not find him.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 12:20–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has twelve scenes.

In the first scene: The Greeks, or non-Jews, come up to Philip and ask him to see Jesus.

In the second scene: Philip tells Andrew about the Greeks, or non-Jews, asking to see Jesus and they both go to tell Jesus.

In the third scene: Jesus responds to Philip and Andrew and speaks to them and all others, Jews and non-Jews, who were standing with him. He tells them that the time has come for God to glorify him, the Son of Man. He then illustrates the meaning and importance of his death by telling them a parable about a grain of wheat needing to fall into the ground and die to produce much fruit.

In the fourth scene: Jesus then follows the parable by applying it to life on earth and to eternal life. He says that those who love their life on earth and love themselves more than they love God will destroy their life on earth and lose their eternal life. However, those who love God much more than their life on earth will keep their eternal life. Jesus also makes it clear that those who serve or follow him, must do what he does and go where he goes and God the Father will reward them.

In the fifth scene: Jesus expresses distress about the time of his death, which is coming soon. Jesus is speaking to God, but instead of asking the Father to spare him from death, he asks God to glorify his own name through his Son's death.

In the sixth scene: God answers Jesus and speaks from heaven saying that he has already glorified his name and that he will glorify it again.

In the seventh scene: The crowd standing near Jesus hears the sound of God's voice, but not the words. Some think it was the sound of thunder and others think that an angel spoke to Jesus.

In the eighth scene: Jesus tells the crowd that the voice from heaven was for their benefit.

In the ninth scene: Jesus talks to the crowd about his death. He tells them that his death would bring judgment on the world and that Satan, the ruler of the world, would lose his authority. Jesus says that when people lift him up on the cross and he dies, he would draw all people to himself to follow him.

In the tenth scene: The people answer Jesus. They were puzzled when they heard that the Christ, the promised Saviour, would die. They understood that when Jesus called himself "Son of Man," he was saying that he was the Christ, the promised Saviour. They ask him who the Son of Man is.

In the eleventh scene: Jesus responds to the crowd by using a metaphor and comparing himself to light. He is saying that he will be with them only for a little while longer. He is encouraging them to continue to follow him as long as it is possible, so that darkness, which represents evil, does not overtake them. He is commanding the crowd to believe in him, so that they may become like him.

In the twelfth scene: Jesus leaves the people and hides himself from them.

The characters in this passage are:

- The people who went to Jerusalem to worship during the Passover feast
- Greeks, or non-Jews, who came to worship during the feast
- Jesus' disciple Philip
- Jesus' disciple Andrew
- Jesus, who also identifies himself in this passage as "Son of Man" and "light"
- Grain of wheat
- Fruit
- Those who love their life
- Those who hate their life
- Those who serve Jesus or his servants
- God the Father
- God's voice coming from heaven
- Thunder
- An angel
- The crowd of people standing near Jesus and listening to him
- God's name
- The ruler of this world, Satan
- All people on earth
- Darkness, or evil
- And sons of light

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This story takes place during the week leading to the Passover feast in Jerusalem.

Now some Greeks, or non-Jews, were among those who went up to worship during the Passover festival. The Greek word which translates as "now" introduces a new event in the story. In this context it is not a time word. The text says that they "went up" because Jerusalem was in the hill country. The Greeks, or non-Jews, approached Philip, one of the disciples, and asked him to introduce them to Jesus. They wanted to meet him and speak to him.

Stop here and as a group look at a map of Israel showing Jerusalem and Bethsaida. Pause this audio here.

Philip went and told this to Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. Then the two of them went to Jesus and told him. We can presume that Jesus was not far from them, but the text does not say where he was exactly. Jesus answered them, but we know that he was not only speaking to Philip and Andrew, but also to the crowd which was there with him. The crowd would have included the Greeks, or non-Jews. Jesus spoke to them using a parable. A parable was a special kind of story that Jesus told. It used everyday things to describe deeper things about God. He said, "Now the time has come for the Son of Man to receive great glory. Very truly, I tell you, unless someone plants a grain of wheat in the ground and it dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it bears a rich harvest." The expression "very truly, I tell you" introduces something important Jesus wanted to say.

Jesus continued speaking, "Whoever loves their own life, destroys it, and those who care nothing for their life in the world, will keep true life for ever. Anyone who wants to serve me must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honour anyone who serves me."

Jesus expressed distress about the time of his death, which was coming soon. He addressed the Father in prayer: "Now I am in great distress. What am I to say? Shall I say, 'Father, do not let this hour come upon me?' But I have come for this purpose. Father, bring glory to yourself." The word "now" in this context denotes time and refers to the time when Jesus spoke. The word "but" introduces a contrast to the idea that Jesus might ask God to save him from suffering and dying.

Then a voice spoke from heaven: "I have brought glory to myself and I will do it again." The crowd that was standing there heard the sound of the voice. Some of them thought it was thunder and others thought the sound from heaven was the voice of an angel speaking to Jesus.

Jesus said, "The voice wasn't for my benefit, but for yours."

Jesus continued, "Now is the time to judge this world. Now the Father will defeat the one who rules this world." Here "now" is a time word and can also mean "very soon."

Jesus adds, "When they lift me up from the earth I will cause all people to believe in me."

Now the author John adds extra information to explain what Jesus just said: "By saying this, Jesus indicated how he was going to die."

Now John makes it clear that he is returning to the main story by saying, "So the crowd responded to Jesus' statement." In English, translators use the word "so" or "then" to indicate the return to action.

Stop here and discuss with the group what words you use in your language to indicate that you are returning to the main story after you have stepped away from the action to explain or describe something. Pause this audio here.

The people in the crowd said, "We understand from Scripture that the Christ will live forever. So how can it be true that someone will lift up the Son of Man? Who is the Son of Man you are talking about?" John emphasises the word "we." The people in the crowd, or the Jewish people in general, are the ones who say that they understand from Scripture that the Christ will live forever. Even though Jesus was also Jewish, the crowd emphasised the contrast between them and him.

Because the crowd questions who the Son of Man is, Jesus answers them. Then Jesus said to the crowd, "I am like a light that will be with you a little longer. Walk in the light while you can, so that the darkness may not come upon you. Whoever walks in the dark does not know where they are going. While you have me who is like a light, believe in me, your true light, so that you become like sons of light."

After Jesus said this, he left and hid from the crowd. This means that Jesus left immediately or soon after he finished talking about the light.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 12:20–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has twelve scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- The people who went to Jerusalem to worship during the Passover feast
- Greeks, or non-Jews who came to worship during the feast
- Jesus' disciple Philip
- Jesus' disciple Andrew
- Jesus, who also identifies himself in this passage as Son of Man and light
- Grain of wheat
- Fruit
- Those who love their life
- Those who hate their life
- Those who serve Jesus or his servants
- God the Father
- God's voice coming from heaven
- Thunder
- An angel
- The crowd of people standing near Jesus and listening to him
- God's name
- The ruler of this world, Satan
- All people on earth
- Darkness, or evil
- And sons of light

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Now some Greeks, or non-Jews, were among those who went up to worship during the Passover festival. The Greeks, or non-Jews, approached Philip, one of the disciples, and asked him to introduce them to Jesus. They wanted to meet him and speak to him.

Pause the drama.

Philip went and told this to Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. Then the two of them went to Jesus and told him. Jesus answered them saying, "Now the time has come for the Son of Man to receive great glory. Very truly,

I tell you, unless someone plants a grain of wheat in the ground and it dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it bears a rich harvest."

Jesus continued speaking, "Whoever loves their own life, destroys it, and those who care nothing for their life in the world, will keep true life for ever. Anyone who wants to serve me must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honour anyone who serves me."

Jesus addressed the Father in prayer, "Now I am in great distress. What am I to say? Shall I say, 'Father, do not let this hour come upon me?' But I have come for this purpose. Father, bring glory to yourself."

Pause the drama.

Then a voice spoke from heaven, "I have brought glory to myself and I will do it again." The crowd that was standing there heard the sound of the voice. Some of them thought it was thunder and others thought the sound from heaven was the voice of an angel speaking to Jesus.

Jesus said, "The voice wasn't for my benefit, but for yours."

Jesus continued, "Now is the time to judge this world. Now the Father will defeat the one who rules this world."

Jesus adds, "When they lift me up from the earth I will cause all people to believe in me."

So the crowd responded to Jesus' statement, "We understand from Scripture that the Christ will live forever. So how can it be true that someone will lift up the Son of Man? Who is the Son of Man you are talking about?"

Pause the drama.

Then Jesus said to the crowd, "I am like a light that will be with you a little longer. Walk in the light while you can, so that the darkness may not come upon you. Whoever walks in the dark does not know where they are going. While you have me who is like a light, believe in me, your true light, so that you become like sons of light."

After Jesus said this, he left and hid from the crowd.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 12:20–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Now among those who went up to **worship** at the feast were some **Greeks**. Use the same word for worship as you used in previous passages. For more information on worship, refer to the Master Glossary. The word **Greeks** refers to people who were not Jews by birth. They were Gentiles, speakers of the Greek language. The word Greeks in the New Testament does not refer to people from the country of Greece, as it did not exist yet. Use the same word for Greeks as you used in previous passages. For more information on Greeks, refer to the Master Glossary.

And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the **Son of Man** to be glorified." Use the same word or phrase for "Son of Man" as you used in previous passages. For more information on Son of Man, refer to the Master Glossary.

Truly truly, I say to you, unless a grain of **wheat** falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. Wheat is a type of crop which people in Palestine grew a lot of in Jesus' time. They used the wheat grain to make bread. The grain is the individual seed that can grow into a new wheat plant. People must bury a seed in the ground in order to produce a crop.

Stop here and as a group look at photos of wheat in a field and wheat grain. Pause this audio here.

Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for **eternal life**. Use the same word or phrase for "eternal life" as you used in previous passages. For more information on eternal life, refer to the Master Glossary.

If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the **Father** will honour him. Use the same word for Father as you used in previous passages. Father is a way that Jesus referred to God.

Then a voice came from **heaven**: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." Use the same word for heaven as you used in previous passages. For more information on heaven, refer to the Master Glossary.

Now my **soul** is troubled. The soul is a person's inner life and thinking. The soul is the part of a person that continues to exist when the body dies. Soul can refer to the life that is in all living creatures, humans and animals alike, or to an individual's real self that does not cease to exist at death. Use the same word for soul as you used in previous passages. For more information on soul, refer to the Master Glossary.

The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An **angel** has spoken to him." Use the same word for angel as you used in previous passages. For more information on angels, refer to the Master Glossary.

"Now is the **judgment** of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out." Use the same word for judgment as you used in previous passages. Here the word judgment refers to the time when Jesus died on the cross and paid the price for the sin of everyone in the world. God judged the world, but Jesus endured the judgment and condemnation instead of the world.

So the crowd answered him, "We have heard from the **Law** that the Christ remains forever." The term Law normally refers to the five books of Moses. However, here it relates to all of the Old Testament Scriptures. So here use the word you used previously for **Scriptures**. For more information on Law or Scriptures, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 12:20–36

Audio Content

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John 12:37–50

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 12:37–50 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 12:37–50 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 12:37–50 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage some Greeks, or non-Jews went to Philip and asked to meet Jesus. Jesus responded to the Greeks' request and spoke to them and the crowd standing near him. He talked about the coming hour of his death and he gave the illustration of a seed that must die to produce fruit. Jesus said that people would need to love God much more than their own life to gain eternal life. He told people that anyone who wanted to serve him had to be willing to follow him wherever he went. Jesus then prayed to God asking God to glorify his name and God spoke from heaven so the people who were with Jesus could hear God's voice.

Jesus compared himself to light and encouraged the crowd to follow him for as long as it was possible while he was with them. Then after saying all those things, he left them and hid himself from them.

This passage is a narrative in which John explains why people did not believe in Jesus and tells the story of what happened next.

Although Jesus performed many miraculous signs in the presence of the people, they still did not believe in him. Here John is talking about all the people who have witnessed Jesus' miracles up to that time. Miraculous signs were all the miraculous and powerful deeds Jesus did. These deeds were signs, which showed that Jesus was the Christ, the promised Saviour. Many people, including the crowds and Jewish leaders, witnessed those signs in Judea and Galilee during the time of his ministry. These people saw and heard everything Jesus did. Yet most of those people who saw Jesus do those signs refused to believe in him. They did not believe Jesus when he told them who he was. Also they did not trust Jesus, but instead trusted themselves and others.

Stop here and tell a story to the group about how you came to believe in Jesus. Did you see a miracle? Did you hear a story about Jesus, which made you believe in him? Pause this audio here.

The lack of belief in Jesus by the Jews in general happened in order to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah the prophet. A prophet was a man who spoke to the people as God's representative. He told people what God revealed to him. About seven hundred years before Jesus' birth, Isaiah had predicted that people would not be willing to believe in Jesus, and this actually happened. Isaiah first asks God a question, "God, who believed our message?" Isaiah uses this question to make a negative statement and emphasises that very few people believed God's message. Most people had rejected it. The phrase "our message" refers to the message that God gave to Isaiah to tell the Jewish people. Isaiah asks a second question: "To whom has the Lord revealed his powerful arm?" The "arm of the Lord" is a figure of speech meaning "God's power or strength." In this context it refers to the miracles that Jesus did by God's power. Isaiah emphasises that not many people believed that they were seeing God's power at work.

Now John introduces the second scripture from the book of the prophet Isaiah in which Isaiah explains why many people were unable to believe in Jesus. John states, "Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah also said..." John says that "people could not believe," but he does not mention in whom they did not believe. John will make clear in his writing who Isaiah's message is referring to. The word "therefore," which means "for this reason" usually refers to what the author has just said. Here, however, John uses it to explain the unbelief of the Jews in what he says next.

John's second quote from Isaiah tells why they could not believe. John says, "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, so that their eyes cannot see, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to me so I would heal them." Isaiah says that someone blinded the eyes of the people and hardened their hearts, so that they would not be able to see and understand spiritual truth. They could not understand the spiritual meaning of what Jesus did and said. As a result they would not be able to turn to God and he would not be able to heal them. It is difficult to understand who the words "he" and "I" represent in this Scripture. Many people think that they both refer to God. Others think that only "I" definitely refers to God, but "he" refers to someone not mentioned. It might be God or it might be someone or something else. It is not definite who. The point of the passage is that the people had hard hearts, blind eyes, and hearts that did not understand so they did not turn away from sin and toward God and receive healing from him. They are responsible for their not believing. But God fulfilled his purposes when they refused to believe. To harden one's heart is to make it hard and stiff. People in Jesus' time used the word "heart" to refer to their thoughts and emotions. God confirmed the people in their wrong thinking so that they did not change. He did not make them wise but rather allowed them to follow false and foolish thoughts. And so they could not understand who Jesus was. They did not understand that he was the Christ, the promised Saviour. God knew that this would happen and it was part of his judgement because they refused to believe. However, it was not what he wanted to happen. He preferred that the people would repent and turn to him and believe in him, so that he could heal them. But they refused to believe.

John explains that Isaiah wrote these things because he had a vision of the Lord's glory. Here John identifies "the Lord" with Jesus Christ. In his vision Isaiah saw ahead of time the glory that Jesus would have later as the result of his death and resurrection. He saw Jesus' greatness, majesty, and power.

Nevertheless, many people believed in Jesus, even many of the Jewish authorities. Even though many people rejected Jesus, there were many people who believed in him. And, surprisingly, many religious leaders, members of the Sanhedrin, or the ruling council, also believed that Jesus was the Christ, the promised Saviour. But they did not tell other people that they believed in Jesus, because they were afraid that the Pharisees would

no longer allow them to worship in the synagogue, the Jewish place of worship. These Jewish leaders were afraid that the Pharisees who did not believe in Jesus would reject them and remove them from their religious community. The reason why the leaders were afraid of the Pharisees was that they loved human praise more than the praise of God. They wanted people to accept and praise them more than they wanted God to praise them. They cared more about what people said about them than what God said about them.

Then Jesus spoke loudly and made an important announcement: "The one who believes in me, believes not only in me, but also in the one who sent me." He said that anyone who believed in him, anyone who believed that he was the Christ, the promised Saviour, also believed in God. Belief in Jesus means believing the facts about who Jesus was and what he did. It also includes the idea of trusting Jesus instead of trusting oneself or someone else. So anyone who believes in Jesus also believes in God the Father, who sent him. Jesus also said that whoever saw him also saw the one who sent him. Jesus was saying that he was one with God and seeing Jesus was the same as seeing God the Father.

Jesus compared himself to light. He said, "I have come into the world like a light." He came into the world to be its light, to show people the truth, especially about God and salvation. He continues, "Whoever believes in me will not remain in the darkness." Now Jesus compares darkness to evil. The "darkness" represents evil. Jesus came so that those who believe in him would no longer continue to live in evil. Those who remain in evil are like those who remain in darkness.

Jesus continues by saying, "I am not the one who will judge those who hear my words but refuse to keep doing them. Because I did not come into the world to judge it, but to save it." The original text emphasises the word "I," which refers to Jesus. Jesus himself is not the one who condemns anyone who hears his teaching but refuses to obey it and in this way rejects him. He is saying that neither then nor in the future, would he himself judge those who do not accept his teaching. He would not judge them because Jesus did not come into the world to judge or condemn the people of the world. Jesus came into the world to rescue it from sin and to save it. By dying on the cross and through God raising him back to life, Jesus conquered sin and gave all people who believed in him the opportunity to have eternal life.

Jesus adds, saying, "The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day." "The one who rejects Jesus and does not receive his words" is anyone who refuses to have anything to do with Jesus, anyone who pushes him away, does not accept his teaching and does not do what he says. Rejecting Jesus and not receiving his words is the same thing. And there is a judge for such a person-someone will judge anyone who rejects Jesus. Now Jesus compares his word, or what he said, to a person who is a judge. It refers to the time when God will judge people as to whether they received Jesus' word. This will happen on the last day when God ends the world and judges all people.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Who carries out justice in your people group? Who made the laws which people use to judge others? Do people use the laws mainly to punish people or to help them tell right from wrong and teach them not to commit crimes again? Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus makes it clear that he depends on the words of God the Father. He says, "For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment-what to say and what to speak." Jesus explains why his word will judge those who reject it. It is because God was the source of what Jesus said. Jesus was not talking based on his own authority. He did not make up his own thoughts and say them. God had given Jesus his message. God commanded Jesus exactly what to say and Jesus spoke on God's authority.

Next, Jesus says that God's commandment that he gave to Jesus causes people to live forever. God's command brings eternal life, or life with God that will never end, to those who follow the command. Therefore, whatever Jesus had said and would say in the future to people, is just what the Father had told him to say.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 12:37-50 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has ten scenes.

In the first scene: John states that despite Jesus doing many miraculous signs people still did not believe in him.

In the second scene: John explains that the lack of belief in Jesus by the Jews happened in order to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah.

In the third scene: John quotes the first prophecy in which Isaiah says that very few people believed the message God gave Isaiah to tell the Jewish people. Isaiah emphasises that not many people believed that they were seeing God's power at work.

In the fourth scene: John's second quote from Isaiah says that someone or something blinded the eyes of the people and hardened their hearts, so that they would not be able to see and understand. As a result they would not be able to turn to the Lord and he would not be able to heal them.

In the fifth scene: John explains that Isaiah wrote these things because he had a vision of the glory of Jesus ahead of time.

In the sixth scene: John says that despite the prevailing unbelief, many people believed in Jesus, even many of the Jewish authorities. But they did not tell other people that they believed in Jesus, because they were afraid that the Pharisees would no longer allow them to worship in the synagogue, the Jewish place of worship.

In the seventh scene: Jesus cries out and makes an important announcement, "The one who believes in me, believes not only in me, but also in the one who sent me." Jesus also says that whoever sees him also sees God who sent him.

In the eighth scene: Jesus states that he has come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in him may not remain in darkness.

In the ninth scene: Jesus continues by saying that he would not judge anyone who hears his words, but refuses to keep them. That is because he did not come into the world to judge it, but to save it. But there is a judge for those people who reject him and do not obey his teaching. The very word which Jesus spoke will judge them on the last day.

In the tenth scene: Then Jesus makes it clear that he depends on the words of God the Father. He says that he has not spoken on his own authority, but that God who sent him had given him a commandment of what to say. And what God commanded Jesus to say brings eternal life with God.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Prophet Isaiah
- God
- Jewish people who did not believe in Jesus
- Jewish people who believed in Jesus
- Jewish leaders who believed in Jesus
- And the Pharisees

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Although Jesus performed many miraculous signs in the presence of the people, they still did not believe in him. The word "although" indicates that the people's lack of belief in Jesus was surprising.

This was to fulfil what Isaiah the prophet had predicted, saying: "Lord, who believed what we told them? To whom has the Lord revealed his saving power?"

Here Isaiah uses questions to convey his message. Those questions do not require an answer and are more like negative statements.

John introduces another scripture from Isaiah the prophet, which explains why people were unable to believe in Jesus. Isaiah says, "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, so that their eyes cannot see, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to me so I would heal them." It is difficult to understand who the words "he" and "I" refer to. Many people think that they both refer to God. Others think that only "I" definitely refers to God, but "he" refers to someone not mentioned. It might be God or it might be someone or something else. It is not definite who. The point of the passage is that the people had hard hearts, blind eyes, and hearts that did not understand so they did not turn away from sin and toward God and receive healing from him.

John explains that Isaiah wrote these things because he had a vision of the Lord's glory. Here John identifies "the Lord" with Jesus Christ. In his vision Isaiah saw something that revealed Jesus' greatness, majesty, and power.

Nevertheless, many people believed in Jesus, even many of the Jewish authorities. The word "nevertheless" introduces a contrast with the main theme of the previous paragraph, which said that not many people believed in Jesus. Even though most people did not believe in Jesus, many did believe in him, even some of the Jewish leaders.

But, because they were afraid of the Pharisees, they did not say they believed in Jesus. They were afraid the Pharisees would throw them out of the synagogue, the Jewish place of worship. This was because they loved human praise more than the praise of God. John uses the word "But" to contrast the fact that the Jews believed in Jesus, yet they did not make it public, or they did not tell others about it.

Now John quickly shifts to a new part of the story and he tells us about a time when Jesus proclaimed loudly to the people around him. We do not know where Jesus was or whom he was speaking to. Then Jesus proclaimed, "The one who believes in me, believes not only in me, but also in the one who sent me. For when you see me, you are seeing the one who sent me."

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you suddenly change the action in a story? Try telling a story with several different scenes, and pay attention to how you move from one scene to the next. Pause this audio here.

Jesus compared himself to light. He said, "I have come into the world like a light." He came into the world to be its light, to show people the truth, especially about God and salvation. He continues, "Whoever believes in me will not remain in the darkness." The word "darkness" represents evil. Jesus came so that those who believe in him would no longer continue to live in evil. Those who remain in evil are like those who remain in darkness.

Jesus continues by saying, "I am not the one who will judge those who hear my words, and refuse to keep them. Because I did not come into the world to judge it, but to save it." Jesus tells us something surprising here: some people will hear his teaching, but they will not obey it. One would think that anyone who hears the good teachings of Jesus would obey them! Then Jesus gives us a strong contrast-Jesus did not come into the world to judge the world, but he came to save it. Jesus wants to emphasize that his main purpose was to save the world.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Talk about how you explain something surprising. Maybe tell a story where someone reacted in a surprising or unexpected way. How did you talk about that situation? Then, talk about a time when you really wanted to emphasize why you did a certain thing. How did you talk about it? Pause this audio here.

Jesus adds, saying, "There is one who will judge those who reject me by not accepting what I say. My word will be his judge on the last day." Here Jesus says that God will judge those who reject Jesus and God will use the words which Jesus spoke to judge people with.

Then Jesus makes it clear that he depends on the words of God the Father. He says, "For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment-what to say and what to speak." Jesus wants to tell us why Jesus' word, or his message, will be the thing that judges those people who reject it. Again, Jesus wants to emphasize that God the Father himself told Jesus what to say. Jesus did not speak on his own authority. Jesus uses repetition of the idea "What to say" and "What to speak" in order to emphasize the idea that God told Jesus exactly what to say.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In your language how do you emphasize an important concept or idea? Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus finished his speech, by saying, "And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me." The word "therefore" introduces the reason for Jesus only saying what God the Father tells him to. Jesus knew that God's commandments brought eternal life.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 12:37–50 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has ten scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Prophet Isaiah
- God
- Jewish people who did not believe in Jesus
- Jewish people who believed in Jesus
- Jewish leaders who believed in Jesus
- And the Pharisees

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Although Jesus performed many miraculous signs in the presence of the people, they still did not believe in him.

Pause the drama.

This was to fulfil what Isaiah the prophet had predicted, saying: "Lord, who believed what we told them? To whom has the Lord revealed his saving power?"

Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said, "The Lord has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, so that their eyes cannot see, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to me and have me heal them."

Isaiah wrote these things, because he had a vision of Jesus' glory.

Nevertheless, many people believed in Jesus, even many of the Jewish authorities.

But, because they were afraid of the Pharisees, they did not say they believed in Jesus. They were afraid the Pharisees would throw them out of the synagogue, the Jewish place of worship. This was because they loved human praise more than the praise of God.

Pause the drama.

Then Jesus proclaimed, "The one who believes in me, believes not only in me, but also in the one who sent me. For when you see me, you are seeing the one who sent me."

Then Jesus says, "I have come into the world like a light. Whoever believes in me may not remain in the darkness."

Jesus continues by saying, "I am not the one who will judge those who hear my words, and refuse to keep them. Because I did not come into the world to judge it, but to save it. There is one who will judge those who reject me by not accepting what I say. My word will be his judge on the last day."

Then Jesus makes it clear that he depends on the words of God the Father. He says, "For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment-what to say and what to speak." And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me."

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 12:37–50 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Though he had done so many **signs** before them, they still did not believe in him. Use the same word for sign as you used in previous passages. For more information on sign, refer to the Master Glossary.

This is exactly what Isaiah the **prophet** had predicted: "**Lord**, who had believed our message? To whom has the Lord revealed his powerful arm?" Use the same word for prophet as you used in previous passages. For more information on prophet, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word for Lord as you used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

"Isaiah said these things because he saw his **glory** and spoke of him." Use the same word for glory as you used in previous passages. For more information on glory, refer to the Master Glossary.

"Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the **Pharisees** they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the **synagogue**." Use the same word for Pharisees as you used in previous passages. For more information on Pharisees, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word for synagogue as you used in previous passages. For more information on synagogue, refer to the Master Glossary.

"And I know that his commandment is **eternal life**." Use the same word or phrase for eternal life as you used in previous passages. For more information on eternal life, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 12:37–50

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5685569 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 13:1–11

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 13:1–11 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 13:1–11 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 13:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage John discusses the lack of belief in Jesus of many Jews who heard Jesus and saw his miracles. Many of them rejected him, as the Jewish Scriptures prophesied. Others did believe but remained silent, being afraid that they themselves would be rejected. Then Jesus taught the people about himself—who he was and why he had come into the world. He encouraged people to believe in him and receive his word. He emphasised that he came from God and was obedient to God in everything he said.

This passage is a narrative describing events that followed. It was almost time for the Jewish Passover Feast. Passover was a feast that Jewish people celebrated each year. They remembered how God rescued their ancestors from being slaves in Egypt. Before Passover began Jesus knew that it was now the hour, or the time for him to leave this world and go to the Father. It was the time for him to die for people, as he had come into the world to do. Jesus had already known that his hour had come—he did not only realise it at that time. The word "hour" did not mean that Jesus would die in the next sixty minutes. Here the word "hour" refers to the time when Jesus would leave the world when the people would kill him the following day. Jesus understood that it was his time to leave this world and return to his Father. Jesus would no longer live on earth with his disciples, but would go back to be with God. John the author says that "having loved his own who were in the world, Jesus loved them to the end." Jesus had loved his disciples during his ministry and he still loved them. He had always had a strong affection and showed love in his actions for those who followed him on earth. He cared for them deeply and continued to act for their welfare and blessing. The disciples were Jesus' own in the sense that God had given them to him, and they loved and obeyed and followed him. Jesus understood that he had reached the end of his life on earth. Knowing this, he continued to love and show love to his followers. His death for them showed that and was the ultimate act of Jesus' love.

Some time before the supper that Jesus was about to eat with his disciples, the devil gave Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, the idea and desire to betray Jesus. The devil persuaded him to deliver Jesus into the hands of his enemies. The devil is the leader of the evil spirits, named Satan. His name means the adversary, enemy, or accuser. God originally created Satan as one of the angels, but he decided to rebel against God.

Jesus and his disciples were together eating supper in the evening. Supper was the last meal of the day. It was usually a large meal that took place in the evening. John does not say where this took place, but we know from other gospels that Jesus and the twelve disciples were in an upper room somewhere in Jerusalem.

Jesus knew that God the Father had given him power over everything. Jesus also knew that God sent him to earth and that he would soon leave earth and return to God in heaven. Jesus had always known those things. It was not something he realised at that time. And with the full knowledge of his true status and position, Jesus stood up from the table and took off and laid aside his outer clothing. The outer clothing was a wrap with tassels, which he used as a cloak. He still had his inner clothes on, which was a tunic. Now he was dressed like a slave ready to serve.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of men's clothing from Jesus' time. Pause this audio here.

Next Jesus wrapped a towel around his waist in order to free his hands for washing. A towel was a long piece of linen cloth. It was long enough that Jesus could wrap it around his waist and use the loose end to dry his disciples' feet.

Then he poured water into a basin. A basin was a container to carry water and to pour water from. It was like a clay pot. He began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he was wearing in order to dry them. The disciples were Jesus' followers. Here John is referring to his closest disciples, the twelve disciples whom Jesus had chosen. In those days people wore sandals and walked on dusty roads. It was a common practice that a slave, children, or the wife of the host would wash the guests' feet as an act of hospitality when they entered the house. It was a humble and unpleasant job. By washing the disciples' feet Jesus took on the lowest position of a servant.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of washing of feet. Pause this audio here.

When Jesus reached Simon Peter, Simon Peter asked him a question, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Peter's question shows his surprise and expresses a polite rebuke. Peter did not think Jesus should wash his feet. Peter did not want Jesus to wash his feet. He did not want Jesus to act like a slave and do this humble task.

Jesus replied, "You do not yet understand why I am washing your feet, but afterward you will." Jesus was teaching the disciples to be humble and to serve one another. But at this time the disciples did not understand

why Jesus was washing their feet. Jesus promised that at some time in the future Peter would understand the meaning of Jesus washing his feet. He was probably referring to the near future, after his death. That is, only after Jesus' death and resurrection Peter and the other disciples would realise the full meaning of Jesus washing their feet.

Peter strongly protested, "You will never wash my feet." Peter rejected the idea that he would ever let Jesus wash his feet. Jesus responded by saying that unless he washed him, Peter would not belong to him. Jesus was telling Peter that refusing the love which Jesus was about to display in the washing of Peter's feet would simply prove that he was not one of Jesus' "own who were in the world," but belonged instead to "the world" itself. Jesus is saying that the washing was a necessary condition for belonging to Jesus or being saved. It refers to the washing that cleanses people of their sins, not to washing his feet.

Peter replied enthusiastically, indicating his desire to belong to Jesus. He said, "Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!"

But Jesus answered Peter with an illustration from everyday life. He said that the person who has literally bathed his whole body, does not need to wash any part of his body again, except his feet, because their whole body is clean. If someone bathed and then walked to another house, his feet would get dirty, but nothing else. Jesus' statement also refers to a person's state of right relationship with God. Once Jesus has washed or forgiven someone, Jesus has forgiven that person's sin forever. When the person sins after that, he does not need Jesus to save him again. He just needs to come to Jesus to ask for his forgiveness for the sin he did after Jesus saved him. The washing of feet represents forgiveness of sins people do after Jesus has saved them.

Stop here and as a group discuss whether there are stories in your culture, which illustrate deeper truths about life or spiritual truths with examples from everyday life. Share one of these stories here. Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus used this comparison with water washing to speak not just to Simon, but also to the other disciples in the room. He said, "And you are clean, but not all of you." He was saying that he forgave them their sins and because of that they were "clean." Jesus forgave their sin when the disciples believed his words and believed that Jesus was the Christ, the promised Saviour. However, not all of them trusted in Jesus and so not all of them were clean.

Now John adds an explanation. Jesus knew which of his disciples would betray him. To betray someone means to give a friend into the power of his enemies. He knew that it was Judas. Judas did not ask Jesus to forgive and wash him but betrayed him. The reason that Jesus said, "Not all of you are clean" is that he knew who would betray him.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 13:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has ten scenes.

In the first scene: John sets the scene giving the time of the story and an understanding of Jesus' thoughts. It was just before the Passover Feast and Jesus knows that his time to leave this world and go back to his Father has come. Jesus, who has always loved those who believed in him, would love them to the end.

In the second scene: The devil gives Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, the idea and desire to betray Jesus.

In the third scene: Jesus and the twelve disciples are eating supper together.

In the fifth scene: Being fully aware of his status as the one that God sent, Jesus gets up from the dinner table, lays down his outer garment, and ties a towel around his waist.

In the sixth scene: Jesus pours water into a basin and starts washing the disciples' feet. He dries them with the towel tied around his waist.

In the seventh scene: Jesus approaches Simon Peter, who protests and tells Jesus that he should not be washing his feet. Jesus answers Simon Peter, telling him that he does not understand Jesus' actions now, but will understand them after some events take place.

In the eighth scene: Peter strongly protests telling Jesus he will never allow Jesus to wash his feet. Jesus replies saying that unless he washes Peter's feet, Peter will not belong to him.

In the ninth scene: Simon Peter responds with enthusiasm saying that in that case he wants Jesus to wash his hands and head too. Jesus responds, saying that the one who has had a bath does not need to wash his whole body again, except for his feet, because his whole body is clean. He tells the disciples that they are clean, but not all of them.

In the tenth scene: John the author explains that Jesus knows who would betray him and that's why he said that not all of the disciples were clean.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- God the Father
- The devil
- Judas, son of Simon Iscariot
- Jesus' disciples
- And Simon Peter

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The story starts just before the Jewish Passover Feast. A later passage in John tells us that the events are taking place on Thursday evening. Jesus knew that the time has come for him to leave this world and go back to the Father. John the author says that Jesus had always loved those who were his own in the world, those whom God gave to him. And Jesus loved them all the way to the end.

Some time before the supper that Jesus was about to eat with his disciples, the devil gave Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, the idea and desire to betray Jesus.

Jesus and the twelve disciples were together eating supper in the evening. Supper was the last meal of the day. It was usually a large meal that took place in the evening. John does not say where this takes place, but we know from other gospels that Jesus and the twelve disciples were in an upper room somewhere in Jerusalem.

Now John explains that Jesus knew that God the Father had given him power over everything. Jesus also knew that God sent him to earth and that he would soon leave earth and return to God in heaven. Jesus had always known those things. And with the full knowledge of his true status and position, Jesus stood up from the table and took off and laid aside his outer clothing. The outer clothing was a wrap with tassels, which people used as a cloak. He still had his inner clothes on, which was a tunic. He wrapped a towel around his waist.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of men's clothing from Jesus' time. Pause this audio here.

The disciples were on couches, reclining on their left side. They used their right arms to reach into the dishes that were on the table, or tables, which stood in front of the couches. Jesus poured water into a basin, which was a particular vessel for feet washing. He then went around behind the couches, where the disciples had their feet stretched out behind them. There he poured water from the basin over their feet and dried them with the towel, which he had wrapped around his waist.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of washing of feet. Pause this audio here.

When Jesus approached Simon Peter to wash his feet, Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, *you* should not be washing *my* feet." Simon emphasised the words "you" and "my" to make the point that it was not right for Jesus to wash his feet. Jesus replied saying, "You do not yet understand why I am washing your feet, but afterward you will."

Peter strongly protested, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered Peter, saying, "If I do not wash your feet, you are not one of my people."

Peter replied enthusiastically, indicating his desire to belong to Jesus. He said, "Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!"

But Jesus answered Peter with an illustration from everyday life. He said that the person who has bathed his whole body, does not need to wash any part of his body again, except his feet, because their whole body is clean. Jesus' statement also has a spiritual meaning. When Jesus has forgiven someone of their sin, that person does not need to receive complete forgiveness again, but just forgiveness for his sins they did after that. Then Jesus said that the disciples were completely clean, but not all of them.

Now John adds an explanation. Jesus knew which of his disciples would betray him. He knew that it was Judas. That's why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 13:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has ten scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- God the Father
- The devil
- Judas, son of Simon Iscariot
- Jesus' disciples
- And Simon Peter

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The story starts just before the Jewish Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time has come for him to leave this world and go back to the Father. Jesus had always loved those who were his own in the world, those whom God gave to him. And Jesus loved them all the way to the end of his life.

Some time before the supper that Jesus was about to eat with his disciples, the devil gave Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, the idea and desire to betray Jesus.

Pause the drama.

Jesus and the twelve disciples were together eating supper in the evening.

Jesus knew that God the Father had given him power over everything. Jesus also knew that God sent him to earth and that he would soon leave earth and return to God in heaven. Jesus had always known those things. And with the full knowledge of his true status and position, Jesus stood up from the table and took off his outer clothing, laid it aside, and wrapped a towel around his waist.

Pause the drama.

Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dried them with the towel, which he had wrapped around his waist.

When Jesus approached Simon Peter to wash his feet, Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, you should not be washing my feet."

Pause the drama.

Jesus replied saying, "You do not yet understand why I am washing your feet, but afterward you will."

Peter strongly protested, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered Peter, saying, "If I do not wash your feet, you are not one of my people."

Peter replied enthusiastically, indicating his desire to belong to Jesus. He said, "Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!"

Jesus said, "A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you disciples are clean, but not all of you."

Pause the drama.

Jesus said, "Not all of you are clean," because he knew who would betray him.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 13:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Now before the Feast of the **Passover**, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the **Father**, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. Use the same word or phrase for Passover as you used in previous passages. For more information on Passover, refer to the Master Glossary.

Father is a way that Jesus referred to God.

During supper, when the **devil** had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him. The devil, or Satan, in the New Testament is also sometimes called the evil one. The devil refers to the leader of the evil spirits, named Satan. His name means the adversary, enemy, or accuser. God originally created Satan as one of the angels, but he decided to rebel against God.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **devil**. Look up devil in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

He lay aside his **outer clothing**, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. The outer clothing was a wrap with tassels, which Jesus used as a cloak.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of men's clothing from Jesus' time. Pause this audio here.

Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. Use the same word for **disciples** as you used in previous passages. For more information on disciples, refer to the Master Glossary.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "**Lord**, do you wash my feet?" Use the same word or phrase for Lord as you used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 13:1–11

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 13:12–30

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 13:12–30 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 13:12–30 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 13:12–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Jesus explained that he washed his disciples' feet to give them an example of how to serve each other. Jesus told them that one of them would betray him. Jesus showed the disciples who that would be by giving a piece of bread to Judas. Judas then left the room.

This passage is a narrative account of what happened next in the story. Jesus and the disciples are still in the same room in Jerusalem where they were eating supper in the previous passage. After Jesus had washed the disciples' feet, he had put back on his outer clothing and returned to where he had been reclining at the table around the food with the disciples. Jesus asked his disciples a question: "Do you realise the meaning of what I have just done?" He wanted to know if they appreciated the significance of him washing their feet.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do teachers introduce explanations in your language? Pause this audio here.

Jesus continued: "When you speak to me you, you address me as Teacher, or as Lord. When you do this, you are doing what is right." Jesus reminded his disciples that they called him their Teacher or Lord. They called him using those titles because they considered him to be their teacher and their Lord. The word "Teacher" was a polite title for a Jewish religious leader. It was a title of respect for a Jewish man who had authority to teach about God. The disciples used the word Lord to show that they believed that Jesus was their Master and God. Jesus confirmed that it was right for them to call him their Teacher and Lord, because that is who he was.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what titles do you use for religious leaders and teachers? Pause this audio here.

Jesus then said to the disciples, "I, your Lord and Teacher, have just washed your feet. You, then, should wash one another's feet." The rabbis, or spiritual teachers in Jesus' day, used a form of teaching that talked about greater things or people and moved on to lesser things or people. He is teaching them that if he, the greater, Lord and Teacher, has washed their feet, then the lesser, the disciples, must do the same for one another.

Then Jesus gave the reason why the disciples should wash one another's feet. He said, "For I have given you an example, that you should copy what I have done."

Here the word "example" means pattern or way of life to imitate. Jesus showed the disciples what to do by doing it himself. He had washed their feet to give them an example of humility and service. This was an example or demonstration of how they should act or behave. Jesus wanted them to follow his example and serve one another. That was more important than actually washing feet, although washing feet was a good way to serve others at that time.

Jesus introduced an important statement by saying, "Truly truly I tell you," which meant, "pay attention to what I will now say." He followed it by two general truths saying, "Servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them." Jesus used these obvious truths to say to his disciples, they should be willing to do what he did. If their master could be humble and serve others, then they, his servants, should be willing to do the same. Some people believe that by using the word "messengers" here Jesus is

describing the role of the disciples as Jesus' messengers in the world once he goes back to the Father. As such, they should not expect better treatment from the world than their Lord received.

Then Jesus spoke again and remarked that now the disciples knew that he wanted them to serve others in humility. The disciples knew those things because Jesus set an example by washing their feet and told them to be humble and serve others. And so, God would bless them if they lived like that-obeying Jesus' command to serve others. Here God's blessing means being happy and enjoying God's favour. God would be pleased with the disciples and so their situation would be good if they fulfilled the condition of serving others in humility.

Stop here and tell the group a story of how God blessed you when you served your friend or someone you know. Pause this audio here.

Jesus then continued speaking to the twelve disciples who were with him. He said that what he just told them did not refer to all of them. God would not bless them all. Jesus knew that Judas would betray him. He was not one of Jesus' true servants. What Jesus said about serving others did not refer to Judas. Jesus said he knew the nature of persons he had chosen to be his disciples. He had chosen them all and he knew what each of them was like. Jesus had chosen Judas and a prophecy from an Old Testament Scripture would come true. Jesus said, "But it is to fulfil the Scripture, 'He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.'" The scripture came from the book of Psalms, which king David wrote about one thousand years before the birth of Jesus. The scripture refers to a close friend who became an enemy. "The one who ate my bread" means "the person who has eaten with me." In Jewish culture eating together was a sign of friendship. The word "bread" could also mean "food" in the original text in the Psalms, as bread was the main food in Israel. The phrase "has lifted his heel against me" means something like "has acted to oppose me." In Israel to show the bottom of one's foot to someone was a mark of contempt, or even possibly a threat of violence. It was an especially treacherous thing to do after eating at someone's table. Eating a meal with a superior person was a pledge of loyalty to that person. Jesus said that the prophecy of this scripture would come true through the disciple who would betray him, and that was Judas. The prophecy of the scripture would come true as a result of Jesus choosing Judas.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what kinds of things would you do to show loyalty to someone? In your culture, what kind of gestures show disrespect? Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus said, "I am telling you about someone betraying me before it happens, in order that when it happens, you may continue to believe that I am who I say I am."

Jesus explained to the disciples that he told them that someone would betray him before it occurred. Judas had not yet betrayed Jesus, but Jesus told the disciples that someone would. Jesus did that so that when it happened, his disciples would believe that Jesus was who he said he was-the Christ, the promised Saviour. Jesus says, "that you may believe I am." Some people believe that here "I am" refers to the personal name of God by which God revealed himself to the nation of Israel when he took them out of Egypt. This interpretation means that Jesus said here that he was God.

Jesus made another important statement and asked the disciples to pay attention. He said, "Truly truly I say to you, those who accept any one of you whom I am sending out, they are accepting me. And those who accept me, they are accepting the one who sent me." Jesus was saying that accepting Jesus' messengers is the same as accepting or welcoming Jesus. The messengers of Jesus, or the ones he sends, are those who tell other people Jesus' word. Receiving or accepting Jesus is the same as accepting God the Father, who sent him. A person who welcomes Jesus and his message, and believes in him, also believes in God the Father.

After Jesus said all these things, he was in great emotional and mental distress. His spirit was in deep anguish. And Jesus declared, "Truly truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me." Jesus spoke about something he knew would happen. He emphasised the importance of what he was going to say, by beginning with, "Truly truly, I say to you." Then Jesus indicated that one of his disciples who was with him in the room would no longer follow him, but would instead give Jesus to his enemies. In this context it meant that the disciple would help Jesus' enemies to arrest and kill him.

Stop here and tell the group a story of how someone betrayed you and what you were feeling at the time. Pause this audio here.

After Jesus said that one of them would betray him, the disciples looked at each other in confusion: which of them could he mean? They were puzzled and anxious.

John is now telling about what happened next. Jesus and the disciples were reclining at the table where they were eating supper. One of the disciples, the one whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to Jesus. At formal meals, Jewish people leaned on couches around the table. They leaned on their left elbow and used their right hand to eat the food. The disciple John mentions was next to Jesus with his back to Jesus. This way he could lean back and talk privately to Jesus. He was apparently on Jesus' right side, a place of honour. Traditionally people identified this disciple as John, the son of Zebedee, but we are not sure who he was. The phrase "whom Jesus loved" indicates that John knew that Jesus loved that disciple very much. This phrase does not mean that Jesus did not love the other disciples.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture how do you show honour to people of importance during festive meals? Pause this audio here.

Simon Peter motioned to the disciple reclining next to Jesus so that he would ask Jesus, "Who are you talking about?" Simon was probably sitting across the table from that disciple. He either gestured with his hands, motioned with his head or showed him by means of his eyes to ask Jesus the question.

So the disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread after I dip it in the sauce." The Jewish people at this time did not normally eat with knives, forks, and spoons. Their custom was to break off pieces of bread and then dip them into a stew or sauce. Jesus told the disciple that he would answer his question by following this custom and then handling the bread to the betrayer.

So when Jesus dipped the piece of bread in the stew or sauce, he gave it to Judas, son of Simon Iscariot.

Then as soon as Judas had taken the bread from Jesus and eaten it, Satan entered Judas. Satan is the name of the chief or leader of all the evil spirits. In Hebrew his name means "enemy." He is the enemy of God and God's people. Satan is the same being as "the devil." Then Jesus said to Judas, "Do quickly what you are going to do." The phrase "what you are going to do" refers to betraying Jesus. Judas understood what Jesus was saying, but the rest of the disciples did not understand it at all. Jesus told Judas to do it as soon as possible.

Now John introduces additional information by saying, "Now none of the others reclining at the table knew for what purpose Jesus had said this to Judas." The other people present did not understand what Jesus meant. They did not realise that Jesus was referring to Judas betraying him. Judas had the moneybag. So some of the disciples wrongly thought of two things that Jesus might have told Judas. One of the ideas that some disciples had about what Jesus told Judas was to get food supplies for the feast. "The feast" referred either to the Passover Feast or the Feast of the Unleavened Bread, but we don't know which one. The other idea was that Jesus told Judas to give some money to the poor. Often people gave money to the poor at Passover time.

So after Judas had taken and accepted the piece of bread Judas immediately left the meal and the house where the disciples were staying. The sun had set and it was night. The night in the gospel of John represents Jesus' death. Not only was it dark when Judas went out, but it was time for Jesus to die.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 13:12–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Having washed the disciples' feet, Jesus puts on his outer garment and sits back in his place at the table. He asks his disciples a question to see if they understood the significance of his actions.

In the second scene: Jesus explains why he washed his disciples' feet. Although he was their master, he served them. Now they should serve each other.

In the third scene: Jesus tells his disciples that one of them will oppose him. This will fulfil a passage in the Old Testament Scriptures.

In the fourth scene: Jesus is in anguish and tells his disciples that one of them would betray him. The disciples wonder who he meant. Jesus shows them by giving a piece of bread to Judas. Judas then leaves the room.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples
- The disciple Jesus loved
- Simon Peter
- Judas, son of Simon Iscariot
- And Satan

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Jesus and the disciples are still in the same room in Jerusalem where they were eating supper in the previous passage. After Jesus had washed the disciples' feet, he had put his outer clothing back on and returned to where he had been reclining with the disciples at the table around the food. Jesus asked his disciples a question: "Do you realise the meaning of what I have just done?"

Jesus reminded his disciples that they called him their Teacher or Lord. Jesus confirmed that it was right for them to call him their Teacher and Lord, because that is who he was. Jesus was reminding the disciples of who he was and preparing them for what he was going to teach them next.

Jesus then said to the disciples, "I, your Lord and Teacher, have just washed your feet. You, then, should wash one another's feet." The rabbis, or spiritual teachers in Jesus' day, used a form of teaching that talked about greater things or people and moved on to lesser things or people. Jesus is teaching them that if the greater one, Jesus their Lord and Teacher, has washed their feet, then the lesser ones, the disciples, must do the same for one another.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your language how do you argue a point? What kinds of arguments do you give? Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus gave the reason why the disciples should wash one another's feet. He said, "For I have given you an example, that you may copy what I have done."

He had washed their feet to give them an example of humility and service. He told his disciples to serve one another.

Jesus introduced an important statement by saying, "Very truly I tell you," which meant, "pay attention to what I will now say." He followed it by two general truths saying, "Servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them." Jesus used these obvious truths to say to his disciples that if their master could be humble and serve others, then they, his servants, should be willing to do the same. Also they should not expect better treatment from the world than their Lord received.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What phrases do you use in your language to attract someone's attention when you want to say something important? Pause this audio here.

Jesus then said to the disciples that they now knew about the things he just told them about-the need to have a humble attitude and to serve others. He also told them that God would bless them, by giving them happiness and favour if they followed Jesus' example to serve others. God's blessing was conditional on the disciples obeying Jesus' teaching.

Jesus then said he was not saying that God would bless all of them. Jesus was not including Judas, who would betray him. Jesus said he knew the nature of persons he had chosen to be his apostles. Jesus had chosen Judas and a prophecy from an Old Testament Scripture would come true. Jesus said, "But it is to fulfil the Scripture, 'He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.'" The prophecy of the scripture would come true as a result of Jesus choosing Judas, who would betray him.

Jesus said to the disciples that he told them that someone would betray him before it occurred. Judas had not yet betrayed Jesus, but Jesus told the disciples that someone would. Jesus did that so that when what Jesus

predicted happened, his disciples would believe that Jesus was who he said he was—the Christ, the promised Saviour. Jesus says, "that you may believe I am."

Jesus made another important statement and asked the disciples to pay attention. He said, "Those who accept any one of you whom I am sending out, God will consider that they are accepting me. And those who accept me, God will consider that they are accepting my Father, who sent me."

After Jesus said this, he was very troubled. He solemnly declared, "Listen to this carefully: One of you is going to enable my enemies to seize me." The phrase "after Jesus said this" finishes Jesus' speech and starts a new part of the story.

After Jesus said that one of them would betray him, the disciples looked at each other in confusion: which of them could he mean? They were puzzled and anxious.

John is now telling about what happened next. Jesus and the disciples were reclining at the table where they were eating supper. One of the disciples, the one whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to Jesus. The disciple John mentions was next to Jesus with his back to Jesus. This way he could lean back and talk privately to Jesus. He was apparently on Jesus' right side, a place of honour.

Simon Peter motioned to the disciple reclining next to Jesus so that he would ask Jesus, "Who are you talking about?" Simon was probably sitting across the table from that disciple. He either gestured with his hands, motioned with his head or showed him by means of his eyes to ask Jesus the question.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your language how do you use your body to communicate in addition to, or instead of using words? Pause this audio here.

The story tells us that then the disciple responded to what Simon Peter asked him to do. The disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, "Lord, who is it?" The disciple was either already leaning back against Jesus, or he leaned back to ask the question.

Jesus responded to the disciple. He said, "It is the person to whom I will give this bread." Then, to show the person he was talking about, Jesus dipped the piece of bread into the stew or sauce. Jesus gave the bread to Judas.

Judas took the bread. He ate it. As soon as Judas ate the bread, Satan entered into him. The text says that Satan entered into Judas "after he received the piece of bread." It indicates the time when Satan entered Judas or took control of Judas. It does not indicate that receiving bread caused Satan to control Judas. Jesus said to Judas, "Do quickly what you are going to do." The phrase "what you are going to do" refers to betraying Jesus. Judas understood what Jesus was saying, but the rest of the disciples did not understand it at all.

Now John introduces additional information by saying, "Now none of the others reclining at the table knew for what purpose Jesus had said this to Judas." Here the word "now" is not a time word, but introduces some additional information about the people in the story. The other people present did not understand what Jesus meant. They did not realise that Jesus was referring to Judas betraying him. Judas had the moneybag. So some thought that Jesus was telling him to buy what they needed for the feast or to give something to the poor. Judas kept all the money for Jesus and the disciples. It was his responsibility to look after it and spend it when necessary. So some of the disciples wrongly thought of two things that Jesus might have told Judas. One of the ideas that some disciples had about what Jesus told Judas was to get food supplies for the feast. "The feast" referred either to the Passover Feast or the Feast of the Unleavened Bread, but we don't know which one. The other idea was that Jesus told Judas to give some money to the poor. Often people gave money to the poor at Passover time.

So after Judas had taken and accepted the piece of bread Judas immediately left the meal and the house where the disciples were staying. The sun had set and it was night. The night in the gospel of John represents Jesus' death. Not only was it dark when Judas went out, but it was time for Jesus to die.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 13:12–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples
- The disciple Jesus loved
- Simon Peter
- Judas, son of Simon Iscariot
- And Satan

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

After washing the disciples' feet, Jesus put on his robe again and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I was doing? You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right, because that's what I am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them."

Pause the drama.

Jesus said, "I am not saying these things to all of you; I know the ones I have chosen. But this fulfils the Scripture that says, 'The one who eats my food has turned against me.' I tell you this beforehand, so that when it happens you will believe that I am the Messiah. I tell you the truth, anyone who welcomes my messenger is welcoming me, and anyone who welcomes me is welcoming the Father who sent me."

Now Jesus was deeply troubled, and he exclaimed, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me!"

Pause the drama.

The disciples looked at each other, wondering whom he could mean. The disciple Jesus loved was sitting next to Jesus at the table. Simon Peter motioned to him to ask, "Who's he talking about?" So that disciple leaned over to Jesus and asked, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus responded, "It is the one to whom I give the bread I dip in the bowl." And when he had dipped it, he gave it to Judas, son of Simon Iscariot. When Judas had eaten the bread, Satan entered into him. Then Jesus told him, "Hurry and do what you are going to do." None of the others at the table knew what Jesus meant. Since Judas was their treasurer, some thought Jesus was telling him to go and pay for the food or to give some money to the poor. So Judas left at once, going out into the night.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Where is Judas going? Perhaps Jesus asked him to buy food for the feast." [!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 13:12–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus said to his disciples, "You call me **Teacher** and **Lord**, and you are right, for so I am."

Use the same word or phrase for **teacher** as you used in previous passages. For more information on teacher, refer to the Master Glossary.

Use the same word or phrase for **Lord** as you used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus also said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, a **servant** is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him." Use the same word or phrase for servant as you used in previous passages. For more information on servant, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus said, "If you know these things, you are **blessed** if you do them." When God blesses a person, God is doing, or promising to do, something good for that person. God blessed Abraham and gave him a long life, many possessions, and a son. Most importantly, when God blesses someone, it means there is a good relationship between the person and God. God especially blessed people by sending Jesus to save them.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **bless**. Look up bless in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

"I am not speaking of you; I know whom I have chosen. But the **Scripture** will be fulfilled, 'He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.'" Use the same word or phrase for Scripture as you used in previous passages. For more information on Scripture, refer to the Master Glossary.

"I am telling you this now before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that **I am** he." The words "I am" are important. These words remind the Jewish listeners of the name of God in the Old Testament. God told Moses that his name is "I am." When Jesus says "I am," he is saying that he is God. Translate this phrase in the same way you have translated it in other passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information on I am.

The **disciples** looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke. Use the same word for disciples as you used in previous passages. For more information on disciples, refer to the Master Glossary.

Then after he had taken the morsel, **Satan** entered into him. The name Satan refers to the spiritual being, whom God created, who is the leader of the evil spiritual beings who decided to rebel against God. You may need to describe the name Satan with "leader of the evil spirits" if Satan is unknown to your audience.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Satan**. Look up Satan in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 13:12–30

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 13:31–38

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 13:31–38 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 13:31–38 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?

5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 13:31–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Jesus explained why he washed his disciples' feet. Although he was their master, he served them. Now they should serve each other. Jesus told his disciples that one of them would oppose him. This would fulfil a passage in the Old Testament Scriptures. Jesus was in anguish and told his disciples that one of them would betray him. The disciples wondered whom he meant. Jesus showed them by giving a piece of bread to Judas. Judas then left the room.

The events in this passage take place in the same room in Jerusalem where Jesus was with his disciples in the previous story. Jesus and the eleven disciples are probably finishing eating supper. After Judas had left the room, Jesus started speaking to his disciples. However, his words at first sounded like a speech, which Jesus was not directing at anyone in particular. Jesus said, "Now people are about to see the glory of the Son of Man." People would soon see how wonderful the Son of Man was and they would see the honour he would receive from God. Jesus used the title to imply two things; he was a true human being so he represented all people, and he came from God and had authority from God. Jesus was talking about the time of his death, resurrection, and return to heaven, the events which glorify Jesus by showing his true greatness. Here the word "now" means that the time of those events was very near. Jesus added, "and God will receive glory in the Son of Man." This meant that Jesus would cause people to see how wonderful God was.

Jesus continued, "And since God receives glory because of the Son of Man, God will glorify the Son of Man in union with himself. And God will do it at once." Just as Jesus acted to glorify God, so God will act to glorify Jesus. God will glorify Jesus without delay, because the events, which will bring honour to Jesus will take place very soon.

Jesus continued, now addressing his disciples very directly and personally, "My children, I will be with you only for a little longer. And as I told the Jewish leaders, you will search for me, but you will not be able to come where I am going." By referring to his disciples as "my children," Jesus expresses love and concern for them. When he said, "I will be with you only for a little longer," Jesus was referring to his death the next day and his ascension into heaven in less than two months. Just as Jesus had told the Jewish leaders, or the Pharisees, so he now told his disciples that he was going somewhere and they could not follow him. Jesus was referring to dying and going to heaven. The disciples would not die and go to heaven yet. Later they would be able to follow Jesus where he goes. But the Jews would die in their sins and not go to heaven.

Stop here and discuss the following with the group: Imagine you want to give a hard message to a group of people you dearly love. You want them to feel your love for them. What words would you use as you talk with them? How would you address them? Pause the audio here.

Jesus carried on, "I am giving you a new commandment: love one another. Following the example of how I loved you, so you must love one another. If you love one another in this way, then everyone will know that you are my disciples." Jesus had told the disciples to love before. But this commandment was new in quality, because Jesus was now giving himself as the standard and example of love. He commanded his disciples to love one another just as he loved them. Jesus' love was humble and made him willing to sacrifice himself on the cross. He wanted them to imitate him, serving and giving their lives for one another as he had done for them. It is because of this love they have for one another that other people would see that they are Jesus' disciples. Their love for one another would show their friends and neighbours that they are followers of Jesus.

Stop here and tell the group a story about how your friends or neighbors noticed the love between you and other people from your church. Did what they see make them think about Jesus? Pause this audio here.

Simon Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, where are you going?" The disciples did not understand what Jesus was talking about when he said he was going away. Simon Peter was one of Jesus' closest disciples. He was often just called Peter. Jesus responded, "You cannot follow me now where I am going, but you will follow me later." Jesus was

talking about going to God in heaven, but he did not say explicitly that he was going to God. Peter could not go with Jesus at that time, but he would go one day.

Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, why can I not come with you now? I will lay my life down for you!" Peter asked Jesus for more information. He did not understand that Jesus would die to pay for the world's sins. Peter thought that he should be able to go with Jesus. Then Peter said he would give up his life, or be willing to die, for the sake of Jesus. Here the phrase "for you" means "on your behalf."

Jesus responded, "You say that you are ready to die for me. Truly, truly I tell you, before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will say three times that you do not know me!" Jesus knew Peter. He knew that Peter's commitment to him was not as strong as Peter thought it was. The phrase "Truly, truly I tell you" introduces an important statement and means "pay attention to what I will say next." Jesus was saying that very early the next morning, before the rooster crowed, Peter would say three times that he did not know Jesus. "The rooster" means "cockere!" or "male chicken." Jesus was referring to a rooster, or male chicken, that typically calls loudly, or crows, early in the morning. By the time a rooster crowed early the next morning Peter would tell three different people he did not know Jesus. There would be three separate incidents of him denying Jesus.

Stop here and as a group look at a photo of a rooster and listen to an audio or watch a video of a rooster crowing. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 13:31–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus talks about how people will soon see the glory of the Son of Man and how God will receive glory because of the Son of Man. God will also glorify Jesus without delay.

In the second scene: Jesus tells his disciples that he will leave them soon and says that where he is going they cannot come.

In the third scene: Jesus gives the disciples a new commandment to love one another as he loved them. Jesus says that other people will know that the disciples are his followers when they see the disciples' love for one another.

In the fourth scene: Simon Peter wants to follow Jesus and says he would even die for him. Jesus predicts that before a rooster crows the next morning Peter will deny knowing Jesus three times.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The eleven disciples, who Jesus refers to here as "little children"
- And Simon Peter

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The events in this passage take place in the same room in Jerusalem where Jesus was with his disciples in the previous story. Jesus and the eleven disciples are probably finishing eating supper. After Judas had left the room Jesus started speaking to his disciples. However, his words at first sounded like a speech, which Jesus was not directing at anyone in particular. Jesus said, "Now people are about to see the glory of the Son of Man, and God will receive glory because of the Son of Man." Here the word "now" means that the time of those events was very near.

Jesus continued, "And since God receives glory because of the Son of Man, God will glorify the Son of Man in union with himself. And God will do it at once." Just as Jesus acted to glorify God, so God will act to glorify Jesus.

God will glorify Jesus without delay, because the events, which will bring honour to Jesus will take place very soon.

Jesus continued, now addressing his disciples very directly and personally, "My children, I will be with you only for a little longer. And as I told the Jewish leaders, you will search for me, but you will not be able to come where I am going."

Jesus carried on, "I am giving you a new commandment: love one another. Following the example of how I loved you, so you must love one another. If you love one another in this way, then everyone will know that you are my disciples."

Simon Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, where are you going?" The disciples did not understand what Jesus was talking about when he said he was going away. Jesus responded, "You cannot follow me now where I am going, but you will follow me later."

Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, why can I not come with you now? I will lay my life down for you!" Peter asked Jesus for more information. He did not understand that Jesus would die to pay for the worlds' sins. Peter thought that he should be able to go with Jesus. Then Peter affirmed his readiness to die, or lay down his life for Jesus. He was not making a prediction about dying for Jesus, but saying that he was willing to die for the sake of Jesus or on behalf of Jesus.

Jesus responded, "You say that you are ready to die for me. Truly, truly I tell you, before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will say three times that you do not know me!" Jesus knew that Peter's commitment to him was not as strong as Peter thought it was. The phrase "Truly, truly I tell you" introduces an important statement and means "pay attention to what I will say next." Jesus was saying that very early the next morning, before a rooster crowed, Peter would say three times that he did not know Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What phrase or words do you use in your language to draw someone's attention, especially if you want to say something important? Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 13:31–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The eleven disciples, who Jesus refers to here as "little children"
- And Simon Peter

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

After Judas had left the room Jesus started speaking to his disciples. Jesus said, "Now people are about to see the glory of the Son of Man, and God will receive glory in the Son of Man." Jesus continued, "And since God receives glory because of the Son of Man, God will glorify the Son of Man in himself. And God will do it at once."

Pause the drama.

Jesus continued, now addressing his disciples very directly and personally, "My children, I will be with you only for a little longer. And as I told the Jewish leaders, you will search for me, but you will not be able to come where I am going."

Pause the drama.

Jesus continued, "I am giving you a new commandment: love one another. Following the example of how I loved you, so you must love one another. If you love one another in this way, then everyone will know that you are my disciples."

Simon Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus responded, "You cannot follow me now where I am going, but you will follow me later." Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, why can I not come with you now? I will lay my life down for you!"

Jesus responded, "You say that you are ready to die for me. Truly, truly I tell you, before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will say three times that you do not know me!"

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 13:31–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the **Son of Man** glorified, and God is **glorified** in him."

Use the same word or phrase for **Son of Man** as you used in previous passages. For more information on Son of Man, refer to the Master Glossary.

Use the same word or phrase for **glorify** as you used in previous passages. For more information on glorify, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus said, "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the **Jews**, so now I also say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come.'" John normally uses the term Jews to refer to Jewish religious leaders. Use the same word or phrase for Jews as you used in previous passages. For more information on Jews, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus said that by the disciples loving each other, all people will know that they are his **disciples**. Use the same word or phrase for disciples as you used in previous passages. For more information on disciples, refer to the Master Glossary.

Then Simon Peter said to him, "**Lord**, where are you going?" Use the same word or phrase for Lord as you used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

Later in the story Jesus says to Simon Peter, Truly, truly, I say to you, the **rooster** will not **crow** till you have denied me three times. A rooster is a male chicken. Crowing describes the loud early-morning call of a male chicken.

Stop here and as a group look at a photo of a rooster and watch a video or listen to an audio of a rooster crowing. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 13:31–38

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3742567 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (6277166 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 14:1–14

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 14:1–14 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 14:1–14 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 14:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Jesus told Peter that Peter was about to deny knowing him. Peter was upset and worried about what Jesus said. Jesus told the disciples that he was about to leave them. The disciples are disturbed and confused. Jesus knows how the disciples are feeling. In this passage, Jesus talks to all of his disciples. Jesus is preparing the disciples for the time when he will die. Jesus is looking to reassure His disciples.

Jesus knew that his disciples were upset because he was leaving them. Jesus speaks to all of them when He said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled." This was a command to stop worrying and be at peace. Remember that in Jewish culture, the heart is where a person's feelings and decisions happen. The disciples know that Jesus is about to die, so it is understandable that they are anxious and worried.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time that you or someone you know was worried. How did others recognise that you were worried? How would you encourage a group of people to not worry even if they are in a troublesome situation? Pause this audio here.

Jesus continues, "Believe in God, believe in me." Jesus is telling his disciples to trust God and trust Jesus, rather than being troubled. Just like in previous passages, John emphasises the connection between belief in God and belief in Jesus. People who believe in God also need to believe in Jesus. Jesus is the promised Son of God. Therefore people can know God by believing in Jesus and trusting all that Jesus says and does.

Jesus then describes the hope of heaven to his disciples. Jesus says that his father's house, or heaven, the place where God lives, has many rooms or places to live. This is a word picture that means that in heaven there is enough space for everyone who trusts Jesus. God provides this place. The question Jesus asks does not require an answer.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your language, how would you describe the place that someone lives which is safe, and is a place to rest? What would you then say to show there are enough of these places for everyone? Pause this audio here.

Jesus continues, "And if I go and prepare a place for you," meaning when or after Jesus goes and prepares the place for them, He will return to take them to join him. This means that Jesus is going to prepare a place for each person, there isn't an option for him not to go. After Jesus has prepared a place, there is a certainty that Jesus will then come back to his followers. Jesus' followers will then be able to be with Jesus forever. Jesus was referring to His second coming, or returning to Earth. Jesus tells his disciples that they know the way, or path, to get to his Father's house. "The way" can be understood to be "the path" or "the road." There isn't any detail about what the place will be like which Jesus prepares, but it is enough to know that it will be with Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question with your group: The image of "a place for you" means that there will be enough space for Jesus' followers to all have permanent places to be with Jesus forever. In your culture, how do you describe places which have enough space for everyone to live permanently? Pause the audio here.

Thomas, who is one of Jesus' disciples, does not understand what Jesus has just said. Thomas is honest enough to ask Jesus. Thomas wants Jesus to make clear exactly how they will get to where Jesus is going. Thomas calls Jesus "Lord," meaning master. Thomas then says to Jesus that they do not know where Jesus is going. In the previous passage, Thomas overheard Jesus tell Peter that he could not go with him now but will follow later. Thomas wants Jesus to clarify what he means. Thomas asks, "How can we know the way?" Jesus has just told them, "You know the way where I am going."

Stop here and tell a story about a time when someone thought they had made something clear to you, but you did not understand. Pause the audio here.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." The words "I am" are important. These words remind the Jewish listeners of the name of God in the Old Testament. God told Moses that his name is "I am." When Jesus says "I am," he is saying that he is God.

Jesus tells Thomas that Jesus is the way to God. Jesus is showing he is the path to fully knowing God. By knowing Jesus, anyone can also know God. Jesus is reminding the disciples that he is the Promised Saviour.

When Jesus says that he is the "truth," Jesus is saying that He is totally trustworthy and dependable. Jesus reveals who God is. Jesus brings truth.

Jesus also says that he is the "life." Jesus means that He is the only one who can give people life, eternal life. Jesus says that no one will be able to come to the Father, to God, except through knowing and trusting in Him. Jesus is the way to know the truth about God, and to have eternal life with Jesus and with His Father.

Jesus says the only way to know God and to have a relationship with God is to believe in Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question with your group: Why do you think Jesus describes himself as "the way, the truth and the life"? Pause the audio here.

After responding to Thomas' question, Jesus tells all of the disciples, "If you really know me, you will know my Father as well." This statement could be both a promise or a slight rebuke. Most commentators believe we should read this sentence as a promise from Jesus that if the disciples know him, they can know God too.

Stop here and tell a story about a time you were getting to know someone. Explain what kind of things you did together, or what kind of things you talked about before you could say that you really "knew them." Pause the audio here.

Jesus then says, "From now on, you do know Him and have seen Him."

"From now on" refers to the time after Jesus has died. The disciples will fully know and understand who Jesus is: the promised saviour and God's Son. The disciples will not actually be able to see God with their eyes. However, to know Jesus fully will be to "see or understand God," to know Him and to understand how God works in the world and in people's lives. In the scriptures, people would not claim to know God. Jesus is changing this. By truly knowing Jesus, people can truly know God.

Stop here and discuss this question with your group: In your culture, give examples of people that you know and people that you know "about." What is the difference? Pause the audio here.

Philip, one of the disciples, asks Jesus to show them the Father. Philip is asking to see God the Father with his eyes. Philip says that once they have seen God the Father with their own eyes they will be satisfied and not need to ask for anything else. As the conversation continues, Jesus uses this question to show the extremely close relationship between himself and the Father. Jesus' answer is quite shocking. Jesus slightly rebukes Philip, reminding Philip that he has spent enough time-probably the last 3 years-with Jesus. Jesus says that to see Himself, to believe in Jesus, is to see and know the Father. This means that Jesus reveals who God the Father is. Jesus then states, "Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?" This is the second time that Jesus is saying that He is one with the Father and the Father is one with Him. They are together and linked; they are one. This time Jesus is making the claim to his close friends, who should know Him well.

Jesus then explains that what he says comes from what the Father does. The Father is acting, and Jesus is speaking what the Father is doing. Jesus is not acting on his own, only doing what the Father is doing. What Jesus says and does shows what the Father is like.

Stop here and play this game. Get yourselves into pairs. Get some rope or something you can use as a binding. Stand next to your partner and tie your middle legs together. The person who is standing on the right ties their left leg to the right leg of the person who is standing on the left. Now try and walk as a team. See if you can work together as one. Pause the audio here.

Jesus repeats the claim, "Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves." Jesus tells the disciples to "believe me," this is to believe or trust

what He is saying. Jesus would rather the disciples believed him because of what he says, but if they see the miracles and believe him, then that is better than not believing at all.

Then Jesus tells his disciples something very important. The disciples know they need to pay special attention. Jesus says that anyone who makes the personal decision to follow and trust Jesus will not only do what He has been doing, but will do even greater things. When Jesus goes to be with the Father God, he will send his followers the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will give them power to talk to people everywhere about Jesus. The Holy Spirit will also enable them to perform miracles. Jesus did not mean that they would do even more impressive miracles than He did. Jesus probably meant that they would do the same type of miracles, but all around the world.

Stop here and tell a story about a time you taught someone a skill, and they became better at it than you! Maybe it was baking, gardening, building, etc.

Stop here and discuss this question with your group: In your culture, how would you feel if a younger person or someone who was not important did more or "greater" things than the leader or elder? Pause the audio here.

Jesus tells his disciples, "You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father."

"In my name" is not a formula for the disciples to get whatever they would like. Names in Jesus' culture represented the person themselves. The disciples were connected to Jesus because they followed him. When they asked for something in Jesus' name, they are requesting it based on Jesus' power and authority, and on their connection with Jesus as his disciples. Jesus says there is no limit to the power of prayer. Jesus is saying He can do anything.

Stop here and tell a story about when you have asked Jesus for something "in his name." What happened? In what way did the answer bring glory or honour to God? Pause the audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 14:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus tells his disciples not to be troubled. He tells them he is going to prepare a place for them. Jesus says he will come back to the disciples and that they know how to get to where Jesus is going.

In the second scene: Thomas says to Jesus that they do not know how to get to where Jesus is going. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Jesus tells them they know the Father because they know Jesus.

In the third scene: Philip asks Jesus to show them the Father. Jesus states two times, "I am in the Father and the Father is in me." When Jesus speaks, it is the Father who is in Jesus doing his work. Jesus wants the disciples to believe Jesus, or at least believe because of what he has done.

In the fourth scene: Jesus says that once he has gone away, those who believe in Him will do greater works than He has done. Jesus will do whatever the disciples ask in His name, to bring glory to His Father.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Thomas
- Philip
- And the disciples

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: In the previous passage Jesus told the disciples that he is going to leave them soon. The disciples are upset, confused, and probably worried. This takes place during the Passover meal.

Imagine Jesus and his disciples sitting around the table, continuing to talk. Jesus' disciples are worried, so Jesus says, "Do not let your hearts be troubled." Jesus is using the word "heart" here to mean how the disciples are feeling and what they are thinking. The disciples would understand the "heart" to be the center and source of emotions and desires.

Jesus first tells his disciples to not worry. This could be thought of as a negative action: "Do not" worry. Then Jesus tells them to do something positive "by believing" in God and "by believing" in himself. A negative statement followed by a positive statement shows what Jesus says is important. Believing is to "keep on trusting."

Jesus says, "My Father's house has many rooms," or "There is more than enough room in my Father's house." "My Father's house" is a way of talking about Heaven-where God lives. Jesus is not saying that his Father lives in a literal house, but that this is the place where God himself lives and is with his people. Jesus is explaining that there is plenty of space for each and every person in heaven.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How can you say "my Father's house," or living space, in your area? Pause the audio here.

"If it were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you there?"

"If it were not so" is a phrase which means "if there were not enough rooms." This type of question does not need an answer. This type of question is used by Jesus to tell the disciples something. Jesus is telling the disciples there is enough room and everyone who believes in Jesus has a place there.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe a time when you would ask a question and expect your listeners to say "no." If you can't think of how you would do that, describe how you would remind your listeners that they should not doubt what you have said. Pause the audio here.

Jesus then tells his disciples that he will go to prepare a place for them, and then he will come back to them. Jesus will then take those who know him to be with him forever. It is likely that Jesus is talking about his "second coming," the time when Jesus will return to the earth in all of His glory. This time has not yet happened, so when Jesus says "I will come back again," it is at some point in the future.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about plans to come and get someone to take them with you on a journey. How do you talk to the person when you tell them you are coming to get them at some point in the future? Pay attention to the words you use to talk about coming back to a place and getting someone. Pause the audio here.

Jesus then says, "You know the way to the place where I am going." "The way" is a way of saying the means by which someone gets to a place, such as a road or path.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Give an example of how you give directions to someone to help them go somewhere. Pay attention to how you talk about the directions that someone must follow, or the path or road that they must walk on in order to reach the final destination. Pause the audio here.

In scene 2, the disciples respond to what Jesus has just said. Thomas is probably showing us what the whole group is thinking. Thomas says "Lord," or "master." Thomas and later Philip both address Jesus with the respectful title of Lord. They treat Jesus as their respected leader and teacher.

Thomas then asks a question which does not need a response. Thomas does not understand where Jesus is going, so he cannot know the way. Thomas uses the same word: "the way."

The next part of the passage is very important. Jesus is speaking to Thomas. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." This is the sixth time John has told us that Jesus describes himself using the phrase "I am." Jesus is saying he is the way for people to be able to have a right relationship with God. Jesus reveals the truth about God, who he is. Jesus is the only person who can give eternal life to people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What words and phrases would you use to describe each of these elements? What would you say to help people in your culture understand what Jesus is saying? Pause the audio here.

Jesus continues, "If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen Him." This is a shocking statement! Jesus is saying that He is the only way for people to know God, and more than that, that if people know Jesus, they also know the Father. Jesus is saying he is the only one that can restore people to God. Even more astonishing is that if they have seen Jesus, they have seen the Father—meaning that Jesus and the Father are one.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe a person who is the way, or means of getting somewhere, and also brings truth and life. What kinds of things would you expect that person to do? If people in your culture met someone who did all of those things, how would they react? Pause the audio here.

In scene 3, Philip speaks. Philip is asking Jesus a question, whilst all of the other disciples are still there and listening to the conversation. Philip calls Jesus "Lord." Philip asks Jesus to show them the Father and they will be satisfied. Philip does not understand the things that Jesus has already told them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time you had some information about something, but you wanted to know more, so you kept asking questions to get more information and proof. Pause the audio here.

Jesus responds to Philip, with a mild rebuke. Jesus also uses a question which does not require an answer, but Jesus is expecting Philip to realise his mistake. Jesus says, "Have I not been with you all this time Philip, and still you don't know me?" Jesus is saying that he has been with Philip for a long time, three years, and Philip has seen all that Jesus has said and done, and yet Philip has not understood who Jesus is. Jesus is saying that all through the time they have been together, Jesus has been showing Philip (and all of the disciples) who God is.

Jesus is saying that anyone who has seen Him has seen the father, so to ask to see the Father does not make sense. Jesus then says something shocking, that He is in the Father and that the Father is in Jesus. Jesus says that the reason he can say this is because the Father, who lives in Jesus, does his work, and Jesus then acts. Jesus is not just copying what the Father is doing, but Jesus wants to do what the Father is doing because they are one. The Father is the source of wisdom and power for Jesus to act. Jesus also wants to bring glory to the Father. Jesus then asks the disciples to look at what he has done, and that should be proof enough that the Father is in Jesus, and Jesus is in the Father.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In your culture, if someone is representing someone else, how would you say this or describe it? You may re-order the sentences Jesus speaks. For example, if it makes better sense for you to start with Jesus telling the disciples that what he speaks are not his own words, but are the Father's words, you can start there. You may then want to move onto Jesus' words saying that whoever has seen Jesus has seen the Father. Pause the audio here.

In the fourth scene, Jesus starts by saying, "Truly, truly, I say to you" or "Very truly, I tell you." Jesus is saying, "Pay attention to what I am telling you next."

Jesus says that anyone who believes in him, or who has trust in him, will also do the same things that Jesus has done. Jesus says they will do the same "works" He has done. Jesus goes on to say that those who believe in him will do even great deeds, because Jesus is going to the Father!

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you describe the Holy Spirit giving power to those who trust in Jesus? Which words or phrases could you use to explain this? Pause the audio here.

Jesus finishes all He has just said by telling the disciples that they can continue to ask Jesus for anything once He is in heaven with His Father. Jesus tells them if they ask anything in His name, using His power and authority, then Jesus will ensure that it is done.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 14:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Thomas
- Philip
- And the disciples

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

You do not need to act out the following, unless it will help you remember this passage: In the previous passage we saw Jesus tell Peter that Peter was about to deny knowing him. Peter was upset and worried about what Jesus said. Jesus told the disciples that he is about to leave them. The disciples are disturbed and confused. Jesus knows how the disciples are feeling. In this passage, Jesus talks to all of his disciples. Jesus is preparing the disciples for the time when he will die. Jesus is looking to reassure His disciples.

Our passage starts now.

Scene 1

Jesus says, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going."

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "What does He mean that God lives in a house?" or "Why does He need to leave now anyway? There is still so much to do," or "I am trying to not be fearful, but I feel sick with fear and I don't know what to do." [!end] Continue the drama.

Scene 2

Thomas, one of the disciples, says to Jesus, "No, we don't know, Lord. We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

Jesus replies to Thomas, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

Jesus then says to all of the disciples, "If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am giving my friends life, but they cannot understand. How I long for them to understand," or "I am so sad my friends still do not understand," or "Father, you and I are one, may I do what I need to do." [!end] Continue the drama.

Scene 3

Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied, or that will be enough for us."

Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me?"

Then Jesus spoke to all of the disciples, "The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Father, please strengthen them for what is to come," or "Father, one day may they understand," or "Father, please help my friends." [!end] Continue the drama.

Scene 4

Jesus continues, "Truly, Truly, or I tell you the truth, whoever believes in me will do the same works I have been doing, and they will do even greater works, because I am going to the Father. You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!"

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 14:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus says, "Do not let your **hearts** be troubled." Translate heart in the same way you have before. For more information on heart, refer to the Master Glossary.

There is more than enough room in my **Father's home or house**. This refers to **heaven**, the place where God lives.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **my Father's home/house**. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus said, "And you know the **way** to where I am going."

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **way**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Thomas, one of the disciples, says to Jesus, "No, we don't know, **Lord**. We have no idea where you are going." The meaning of the word Lord here is master or chief. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Lord that you have used in other passages.

Jesus replies to Thomas, "**I am** the way, the truth, and the life." The words "I am" are important. These words remind the Jewish listeners of the name of God in the Old Testament. God told Moses that his name is "I am." When Jesus says "I am," he is saying that he is God. Use the same word or phrase for "I am" as you used in previous passages. For more information on I am, refer to the Master Glossary.

"**Truly, Truly**, or I tell you the truth, whoever believes in me will do the same works I have been doing, and they will do even greater works, because I am going to the Father." Translate "truly" in the same way you have before.

"You can ask for anything **in my name**, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring **glory**, or glorify, to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!"

"In my name" means "in my authority" or "because you trust in me." Translate "name" in the same way you have before.

To bring glory or glorify someone is to give them praise or honour. Translate glorify in the same way you have before. For more information on glorify, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 14:1-14

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4902838 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (8464477 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 14:15–21

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 14:15–21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 14:15–21 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 14:15–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this narrative, Jesus is talking to His eleven disciples prior to his death. Judas has already left to go betray Jesus. Jesus and the disciples are still in the upper room after they have had the last supper together. Jesus' disciples have been asking Jesus many questions. Jesus is giving the disciples last instructions before He dies on the cross.

Jesus tells the disciples that if they love Him, they will obey or keep His commands, or what He has told them to do. Jesus says that He will ask the Father to send another Helper or Advocate to be with the disciples forever. This advocate is the Spirit of Truth, or the Holy Spirit. He is called the Spirit of Truth because He reveals the truth about who God is, and guides people to know and believe truth. Jesus also calls the Spirit an "advocate,"

or "helper." An advocate, or representative, is someone who pleads the case for someone else. The Holy Spirit also acts as a helper. Jesus says that the Holy Spirit will remind the disciples of the things that Jesus has taught them that night and explain those things to them. Although some translations describe the Holy Spirit as a "comforter" in this passage, the author John does not usually talk about the Holy Spirit as comforter.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture determine truth? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some of the roles in your culture where people are considered helpers or advocates? Tell a story about a time someone was an advocate or a helper to you. How do people in your culture respect advocates or helpers? Pause this audio here.

The world, or those who are not followers of Jesus, will not receive the Spirit of Truth because they do not know or see the Spirit. This means that they will not acknowledge the Spirit as their helper, or even accept that there is a Spirit of Truth. However, the disciples know Him because He dwells or lives with them and eventually the Spirit will live in them. At this time the Holy Spirit was an outside influence. They could see the Holy Spirit's work through them and the miracles they performed, and also through Jesus and the miracles He was performing. But it wasn't until later that the Holy Spirit came and lived within them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about someone in your culture who had a spirit living with or in them. How did they act? How did the community react? Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells His disciples that He will not leave them abandoned or as orphans. Orphans are children whose parents have left them in some way, or died. Jesus is saying that He will not leave the disciples as children without parents who show them the way, or to help them grow and learn. Jesus says that He will come back to the disciples. However, Jesus does not say when, or which event this may refer to. It's possible Jesus is referring to the coming Holy Spirit, or to Jesus' resurrection, or to His return at the end of time.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How are orphans viewed in your culture? Who are the people who take care of orphans? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is the role of parents in helping children grow and learn in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Jesus lets the disciples know that in a little while the world, or unbelievers, will not see Him any longer. Here Jesus is referring to His death on the cross, when the unbelievers will no longer be able to see Him. However, the disciples will see Him when He is raised from the dead because Jesus comes and shows Himself to them after Jesus is raised. The disciples will live because of Jesus' resurrection.

On that day, when the disciples will see Jesus again, they will realize that Jesus is in the Father, or that Jesus and the Father are one. The disciples will also realize that they are in Jesus and Jesus is in them. This is a reference meaning that they are very closely connected, or united as one person.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How and when do people in your culture talk about two people being very closely connected, or unified? Pause this audio here.

Jesus repeats, for emphasis and to show that whoever has or accepts Jesus' commandments and follows them, loves Jesus. Jesus tells them that those who love Jesus will also be loved by Jesus' Father, who is God himself, and by Jesus, and Jesus will show Himself to those people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some of the commandments that people in your culture are expected to obey? Why do people choose to obey commandments? When they obey, how do the people they obey feel about them? How do the people who obey the commandments feel about those people they are obeying?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 14:15–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus talks with his disciples and tells them that if they love Jesus they will obey his commands. Jesus promises to ask the Father to send the Helper, or Spirit of Truth, to be with the disciples forever. Jesus says that the world cannot accept the Spirit of Truth because they do not know or see Him. But the disciples know the Spirit because He dwells with the disciples, and will live in them.

In the second scene: Jesus promises that He will not leave the disciples like orphans who have no help or guidance or care from parents, but that Jesus will come back to them at some point. Jesus tells the disciples that in a little while the world will not see Jesus anymore. However, Jesus says that the disciples will see Jesus. Because Jesus lives after his resurrection, so the disciples are also able to live. Jesus tells the disciples that when they see Jesus again, they will understand that Jesus is in the Father, and the disciples are in Jesus and Jesus is in them.

In the third scene: Jesus says again that those who accept Jesus' commandments are the ones who love Jesus. Jesus tells the disciples that those who love Jesus will be loved by Jesus' Father, and Jesus will love them and reveal Himself to them.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples
- The Father, who is God
- The Helper, Advocate, or Spirit of Truth, who is the Holy Spirit
- The world, or the people who do not follow Jesus.

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Remember that Jesus is still talking with his now eleven disciples in the upper room where they have just had the last supper. Jesus is answering their questions, and giving them instructions prior to Jesus' death.

Jesus talks with his disciples and tells them that if they love Jesus, they will obey his commands. This means that it is important for them to love Jesus so that they can be able to obey His commands. Jesus promises to ask the Father to send the Helper, or Spirit of Truth, to be with the disciples forever. Jesus makes an important comparison between the world who do not know Jesus, and the disciples who follow Jesus. Jesus says that the world cannot accept the Spirit of Truth because they do not know or see Him. But the disciples know the Spirit because He dwells with the disciples, and will live in them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Can you give examples of situations where someone promises to do something good for someone if they do a certain thing? The person who promises the good thing expects the other person to obey what they have asked. Then, the person who obeys expects to receive the good thing. Pay attention to the way that you talk about these expectations from both people. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Jesus' promises do not have a timeline. Jesus makes a promise to the disciples that He will not leave the disciples like orphans who have no help or guidance or parental care, but that Jesus will come back to them at some point. We do not know if Jesus is speaking about the coming of the Holy Spirit, His appearances after His resurrection, or Jesus' eventual return at the end of the world.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you show the difference between events that will happen soon, or in the immediate future, and those that will happen in a longer time to come, in the far future? Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus shifts to speak about a specific moment: His death and resurrection. Jesus tells the disciples that in a little while the world will not see Jesus anymore, which refers to Jesus' death the next day. However, Jesus says that the disciples will see Jesus again, which is when Jesus is resurrected and appears to the disciples. Because Jesus lives after his resurrection, so the disciples are also able to live. Jesus tells the disciples that when they see Jesus again, they will understand that Jesus is in the Father, and the disciples are in Jesus, and Jesus is in them. This concept of being in each other means that no one can separate them, or that they are unified in a way that means oneness in every possible way.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Practice explaining this relationship between the Father God, Jesus, and his disciples. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Jesus repeats that those who accept Jesus' commandments are the ones who love Jesus. Jesus tells the disciples that those who love Jesus will be loved by Jesus' Father, and Jesus will love them and reveal Himself to them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are the different ways that God, gods, or spirits reveal themselves to people in your culture? Pay attention to the way you talk about the spirits revealing themselves to people. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 14:15–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- The disciples
- The Father, who is God
- The Helper, Advocate, or Spirit of Truth, who is the Holy Spirit
- The world, or people who do not follow the Holy Spirit

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus talks with his disciples and tells them that if they love Jesus they will obey his commands. Jesus promises to ask the Father to send the Helper, or Spirit of Truth, to be with the disciples forever.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says that the world cannot accept the Spirit of Truth because they do not know or see Him. But the disciples know the Spirit because He dwells with the disciples, and will live in them. Jesus promises that He will not leave the disciples like orphans, but that Jesus will come back to them at some point.

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells the disciples that in a little while the world will not see Jesus anymore. However, Jesus says that the disciple will see Jesus. Because Jesus lives after his resurrection, so the disciples are also able to live. Jesus tells the disciples that when they see Jesus again, they will understand that Jesus is in the Father, and the disciples are in Jesus and Jesus is in them.

Jesus says again that those who accept Jesus' commandments are the ones who love Jesus. Jesus tells the disciples that those who love Jesus will be loved by Jesus' Father, and Jesus will love them and reveal Himself to them.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 14:15–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus is talking to His disciples and tells them that if they love Him, they will **obey** or **keep** His **commands**, or what He has told them to do. To obey or keep means to take care of something or do what someone has told you to do. Use the same words for obey or keep, and commands that you have used in previous passages.

Jesus says that He will ask the **Father** to send another **Helper**, or **Advocate**, to be with the disciples forever. The Father is a reference to God the Father. Use the same word you have used for Father, in reference to God, in previous passages. The word for advocate often means a legal representative: someone who pleads the case for a person on trial. In this case, it is most likely that this advocate is more like a helper, reminding and explaining to the disciples the things that Jesus has taught them.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Helper**, or **Advocate**. Advocate is in the Master Glossary. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

This advocate is the **Spirit of Truth**. He is called the Spirit of Truth because He reveals the truth about who God is and guides people to know and believe truth. The Spirit of Truth is another name for the Holy Spirit. Though Holy Spirit is not used in this passage, feel free to look up Holy Spirit in the Master Glossary for more information.

The **world**, or those who are not followers of Jesus, will not receive the Spirit of Truth because they do not know or see Him. However, the disciples know Him because He dwells with them and eventually will live in them.

Jesus tells His disciples that He will not leave them abandoned or as **orphans**, which are children whose parents have left them in some way. Jesus says that He will come to the disciples. Jesus lets the disciples know that in a little while the world will not see Him any longer, but the disciples will see Him when He is raised from the dead. The disciples will live because Jesus lives.

On that day, the disciples will see Jesus again, and they will know that Jesus is in the Father, and that the disciples are in Jesus and Jesus is in them. Remember how you talked about these relationships in previous steps.

Jesus repeats again that whoever has Jesus' commandments and obeys or keeps them, loves Jesus. Jesus tells them that those who love Jesus will also be loved by Jesus' Father and by Jesus, and Jesus will reveal Himself to those people. God and Jesus talk about "revealing" themselves to people because they want to show people their character and who they really are. They want to come and be with people personally.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 14:15–21

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3074748 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5461556 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 14:22–31

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 14:22–31 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 14:22–31 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus? Pause this audio here.

4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 14:22–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Jesus has been talking to his disciples. They are all together in the room where they ate the Passover meal together. Jesus has been encouraging the disciples because he knows that they will be sad when the people execute him. Jesus knows that his execution will happen very soon. Jesus has promised his disciples that he will send them the Spirit of Truth to be with them forever. Jesus has assured his disciples that the Father God will love the people who love Jesus. Jesus will show himself, meaning that Jesus will reveal who he is, to those people.

Now, again, one of Jesus' disciples interrupts Jesus while he is teaching. Jesus' disciples feel free to interrupt him because they have been with him for a long time, and they are his friends. This time, Judas asks Jesus why Jesus will only reveal himself to his disciples, and not to the rest of the world. John makes it clear that the disciple asking the question is not Judas Iscariot, the disciple who will betray Jesus. You will remember from a previous passage that Judas Iscariot has already left the group to go to the religious leaders to betray Jesus.

Jesus has already explained to his disciples that people who love Jesus will show this by obeying Jesus. Now Jesus explains this again. Judas' question shows that the disciples still do not understand that people obey Jesus when they love Jesus. Judas' question also shows that he believes that Jesus will show himself physically to the disciples. However, Jesus probably means that he will reveal more of his character and more of his power to the disciples.

Love is the theme of Jesus' teaching. Jesus says that if someone loves Jesus, they will obey Jesus. Then, the Father God will love them because they love Jesus. Then the Father God and Jesus will come and "make their home" with them. Jesus says that it will be like someone coming to live with someone else. This is what happens when someone loves Jesus. When someone loves Jesus, they will experience the presence of God himself in their lives. It will be like God the Father and Jesus will come to live in and with that person.

Love is so important to this teaching that Jesus repeats what people who love him will do, by stating the opposite. Jesus says, "Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching." Jesus reminds his disciples that everything Jesus does is because God the Father, the one who sent Jesus, told him to do it. Jesus repeats often in his teachings that God has sent him, and that he follows what God tells him to do. This is very important to understand that Jesus willingly obeyed the Father God when he was on the earth.

Then Jesus gives the disciples even more good news. God the Father will send the Holy Spirit in Jesus' name, meaning as Jesus' representative and in Jesus' authority and power. Earlier, Jesus called this the "Spirit of Truth." Jesus also calls this spirit an "advocate," or "helper." Some translations call this spirit a "comforter." However, the Holy Spirit most likely acts mostly like an advocate or like a helper. An advocate, or representative, is someone who pleads the case for someone else. The Holy Spirit also acts as a helper. Jesus says that the Holy Spirit will remind the disciples of the things that Jesus has taught them that night and explain those things to them. Although some translations describe the Holy Spirit as a "comforter" in this passage, the author John does not usually talk about the Holy Spirit as comforter.

Jesus gives his disciples peace. In those times, most people thought that peace just meant that there was no war. But Jesus said that his peace was not like "the world gives." Jesus' peace is about *both* the absence of war *and* the filling of God's presence, which brings full life and joy. Jesus says that because of his peace, his disciples should not be worried, sad, or afraid when he leaves them. People considered that the heart was the center of emotions, so Jesus said to not be worried "in their heart."

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: When you hear the word "peace," what do you think about? What is happening in your community when there is peace? How do you describe this kind of peace, where there is no war, but also joy in people? Pause this audio here.

Jesus reminds his disciples that he has told them that he will go away, but that he will come back. His disciples love Jesus. Therefore, his disciples should be glad that Jesus is going back to the Father God. Jesus says that the Father is greater than he is. Jesus does not mean that he is less than the Father. However, when Jesus is on earth as a man, he purposely does the things that the Father tells him to do. Jesus willingly obeys his Father, and that's why he says that his Father is greater than he is.

Jesus again reminds his disciples that he is telling them that he is going away, and that the Father will send the Holy Spirit. Jesus wants his disciples to remember that he told them these things so that when the things happen, they will realise that Jesus was who he said he was. Jesus then says that the prince of this world is coming. In earlier teaching, Jesus referred to the ruler, or prince of the world, as Satan. Jesus knows that Satan is about to make him suffer and die. But Jesus reassures his disciples that Satan will not win, or in other words, Satan has "no hold over me." These difficult things will happen because people need to see that Jesus is willing to obey anything that the Father God asks him to do.

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: How does it feel when you have to do something difficult in order to be a good example to others? Tell a story about a time when someone did a difficult thing so that others would have joy or a better life. Pause this audio here.

Now Jesus says something interesting. He says, "Come, let us leave." However, we will see in the next passage that Jesus continues to teach! We are not sure why Jesus says this here. Remember that until now Jesus and his disciples are in the room where they have eaten the Passover meal together. Perhaps Jesus is telling his disciples that they should leave the room and start walking back to Bethany where they are staying. It would not be unusual for Jesus to say something like this, and then continue teaching for a while longer. It is also possible that Jesus taught the following things while they were walking. In any case, this statement, "Come, let us leave" marks the end of this section of Jesus' teaching.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 14:22–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Judas asks Jesus why he intends to show himself to the disciples, but not to everyone else. Jesus answers that the people who love Jesus will obey Jesus.

In the second scene: Jesus tells his disciples that the Holy Spirit will come to teach them, and that Jesus will give his disciples peace. This peace is not like the peace that the people in the world have. It is better!

In the third scene: Jesus talks about how he will go away, and that the prince of this world, or Satan, is coming. Jesus tells them to leave.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' 11 closest disciples, not including Judas Iscariot, who has already left
- And any other disciples who might have been at the Passover meal with Jesus and the closest disciples

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This passage begins with Judas asking Jesus a question. John makes it clear to us that this is not Judas Iscariot, the disciple who betrayed Jesus. John wants to make sure that we do not think it is the same person, although one of his names is the same. Judas interrupts Jesus' teaching with a question, and Jesus uses this question to teach some more.

Judas asks Jesus why Jesus will not reveal himself to everyone, but only reveal himself to the disciples. Judas knows that Jesus is wonderful and that Jesus will show his glory to the disciples. Judas wonders why the rest of the world does not get to also see how wonderful Jesus is.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In your culture, how do disciples of a religious teacher ask questions of the religious teacher when they do not understand something? How do the religious teachers usually respond? Pause this audio here.

Jesus answers Judas by continuing to teach. Jesus says that the people who love Jesus will obey Jesus' teaching. Then the Father God will also love those people, and the Father and Jesus will come to live with, or be with, those people.

Jesus then says something similar but in a negative way. Jesus says that those people who do *not* love Jesus will *not* obey his teachings.

Jesus makes it clear to the disciples that the things he teaches and says are directly from his father God-Jesus also obeys the Father God.

In the second scene, Jesus turns his focus to the Holy Spirit, whom he calls an Advocate or Helper. Jesus is preparing to leave his disciples, and so he tells them how he will help them when he is gone. An advocate, or representative, usually helps someone in need by pleading his case to someone in authority. Perhaps that is what Jesus is saying that the Holy Spirit does for us. Perhaps Jesus is saying that the Holy Spirit helps us by reminding us of what he taught us and explaining everything that Jesus taught. "Everything" or "all things" probably refers to the things that Jesus taught them that night. Remember that some translations describe the Holy Spirit as "comforter" here, but that is not a likely meaning of the term. God will send the Holy Spirit in Jesus' name, or because the disciples belong to Jesus and Jesus has all authority and power.

Jesus goes on to say that he will give his disciples peace, but Jesus makes it clear that it is not the same peace that the world gives. In other words, Jesus' peace is more than just the absence of war, which is what most people define peace as. Sometimes we need to talk about peace as an action. In that case, you could say that Jesus causes his disciples to have "joy in the heart," or "joy with no anxiety." Jesus adds extra information: He says that his disciples should not be worried or upset, and they should not be afraid about what will happen. Remember that in Jewish culture, the heart was where people said they experienced emotion.

Stop here and discuss the following question as a group: When you talk about how you feel peace, how do you talk about it? Maybe try telling a story about a time when you felt peaceful in that there was no war, and when you felt God's presence filling you with joy. Pay attention to the words that you used to describe that peace. Do you talk about peace in your heart, or do you have another way to talk about emotions that you feel? Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Jesus turns his attention to him going away. Jesus implies that his disciples do not yet really love him. He says that if they really loved him they would be glad that he is going away. Jesus realizes that his disciples are not glad that he is going away. However, Jesus says that the Father God is greater than he is. Jesus does not mean that he is any less God-Jesus means that because he is in a human state at that time, it is better for him to be with God in heaven where no human constraints hold him. Jesus tells his disciples all these things so that when these things happen, they will understand that Jesus spoke the truth and they will believe what he said.

Now Jesus pays attention to time. He says that he will not speak to them much longer. That is true; in only a few hours Judas will betray Jesus and religious leaders will arrest Jesus and have him killed. Jesus considers these actions acts of the "prince of this world," or Satan. Although it seems that Satan is the ruler of the world, Jesus assures his disciples that Satan has "no hold," or "no power," over him. However, when Satan does his evil work, Jesus will obey God the Father and die. In doing this, Jesus is showing the world that he loves his Father, and therefore, he obeys his father. Notice that Jesus does exactly what he tells his disciples to do: to love and therefore to obey their Father God.

Jesus says something interesting here. He says, "Come, let us leave." Although he continues to teach, it is possible that either they begin walking out of Jerusalem on the road, or Jesus is simply saying that they should go soon. In any case, you should translate this as it was written.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 14:22–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' 11 closest disciples, not including Judas Iscariot, who has already left
- And any other disciples who might have been at the Passover meal with Jesus and the closest disciples

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Judas interrupts Jesus' teaching. He asks, "Why do you plan to show how wonderful you are to us and not to the rest of the people in the world?" Jesus answers that the people who love him will obey his teaching. And then the Father God will also love those people, and Jesus and the Father God will come and live together with those people. However, if people do not love Jesus, they will not obey his teaching. Jesus then tells his disciples that everything he says comes directly from the Father God.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I really want my disciples to understand who I am and to really love me. That is more important than anything else!" or "I know my disciples want me to be more like a conquering king, can't they understand?" [!end] Continue the drama.

Jesus goes on to say that he has been teaching them while he is still in the world, but now when he leaves, God will send the Holy Spirit to those who belong to Jesus. Jesus calls the Holy Spirit the Advocate or Helper. Jesus says that the Holy Spirit will remind his disciples of everything he taught them. Jesus says that he gives his disciples peace, or causes his disciples to have joy in their heart. Therefore, they do not need to be worried or upset, or afraid.

Pause the drama.

Jesus reminds his disciples that he is going away. Jesus does not seem to think that the disciples love him. If they loved him, they would be glad he was going to the Father, because the Father is greater than Jesus is. The Father is in heaven, not constricted to a man's body. Jesus continues to say that he tells them these things now so that when everything happens, they will finally believe. Then Jesus says he does not have long to talk because the prince of the world, or Satan, is coming. Although the prince of the world has no power over Jesus, Jesus will submit to his evil plans so that everyone can see that Jesus obeys the Father God and loves the Father God. Then Jesus says, "Come, let us leave."

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 14:22–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Judas asks Jesus, "But **Lord**, why do you plan to show only us how wonderful you are, and not the rest of the people in the world?" Use the same word for Lord as you have in previous passages, and remember that Lord is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus says that the Father will love the people who love Jesus and obey his teachings. Jesus refers to God as the "Father" to show respect, affection, and the special relationship that he has with God, his father.

Jesus says that the Father will send the **Advocate**, also called the **Holy Spirit**, to teach his disciples everything that Jesus has taught them that night. The word for advocate often means a legal representative: someone who pleads the case for a person on trial. In this case, it is most likely that this advocate is more like a helper, reminding and explaining to the disciples the things that Jesus has taught them.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **advocate**. Advocate is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.*

Use the same term for **Holy Spirit** that you have used in previous passages, and remember that Holy Spirit is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus says that he gives **peace** to his disciples, but not the same kind of peace that people in the world think of. Jesus' peace is more than the absence of war, but a fulness of life and joy.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **peace**. Peace is in the Master Glossary.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 14:22–31

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3959586 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (6609949 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 15:1–17

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 15:1–17 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 15:1–17 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 15:1–17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, Jesus continues speaking to his disciples in the upper room of the home where they are observing the Passover Feast together. This is the seventh and final time in the Gospel of John where Jesus says, "I am." He is comparing himself to something familiar to help his disciples know more about him and he is using the words God the Father used when he told Moses his name is "I am." When the disciples hear those words, they know Jesus is saying he is God.

In this passage, Jesus says he is the true vine. In the Jewish scriptures, Israel was sometimes compared to a vine, but they had no faith. They did not trust God or obey him. Unlike Israel, Jesus is the faithful vine who obeyed God perfectly. Jesus says his Father is the vinedresser, or gardener, who cares for the vine.

Stop here and look at a picture of a grapevine as a group. Pause this audio here.

God the Father cares for the vine so it will bear, or grow, much fruit. He cuts off, or takes away, every branch in Jesus that doesn't produce fruit and he prunes, or cleans, every branch that does produce fruit, so they will grow even more fruit. In other passages Jesus makes it clear that those who are his will not be taken away from him, so the branches that are cut off here probably refer to people who say they follow Jesus but they are not true followers. Their actions, or their fruit, show that they are not really in Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your community, do you have any plants that produce fruit year after year? How do you help the plants produce more fruit? What do you do to plants you care for that do not produce fruit? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says the word he has spoken to his disciples has already made them clean. He uses the word clean to show that God's pruning makes Jesus' followers righteous, or right with God. He is also assuring his true disciples they are clean, so they need not fear being cut off from him. He tells them to abide in him, or remain joined to him, and he will remain joined to them. The branch can only produce fruit if it is connected to the vine, so Jesus' followers must stay connected to Jesus if they want to produce spiritual fruit and be right with God. Spiritual fruit is the good that results when the disciples obey God, which makes them more like Jesus. Spiritual fruit can also be other people who place their faith in Jesus because the disciples share the word with them.

Even though Jesus and his followers are joined to each other, he makes their roles clear when he says that he is the vine and his followers are the branches. He is the source of life, not them. His followers cannot produce any spiritual fruit without his help. If they remain in him they will certainly produce much spiritual fruit.

On the other hand, anyone who does not remain in Jesus is compared to a branch that someone cuts off from the vine. The branch withers and dies because it has no life on its own. Someone throws the dead branches into a fire where they are burned. Throughout the Bible, fire is a symbol for God's judgment against sin.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Share a story from your culture about what will happen to people at the end of time? How will good people be rewarded and bad people punished after they die? Pause the audio here.

Jesus says that if his followers abide in him and his words abide in them, or they believe what he has taught them, they may ask the Father for whatever they wish in prayer and he will do what they pray for. When Jesus' followers bear much spiritual fruit, it shows they are connected to him as true disciples and they glorify, or give honor to, God the Father.

After telling them what they must do, Jesus says he loves his followers the same way God the Father loves him. He tells them to abide in his love for them, and then he tells them how to do that. If they keep his commandments, or obey him, and remain close to him, depending on him and living life aware of his presence, they will abide in his love. This is the example Jesus himself has given. Jesus obeyed his Father's commandments and abides in his Father's love.

When Jesus says, "These words I have spoken to you," or "I have told you this," he is referring to this passage about the vine and the branches. Jesus said these things to his disciples so his joy may be in them and their joy may be full or complete. Jesus experienced the joy of perfect fruitfulness, the joy of having a character like God's, because he obeyed the Father perfectly, and he enjoys the love of his Father. He wants his disciples to experience that full joy too.

Jesus then commands his followers to love one another continuously as he has loved them. In other parts of the Bible, the law commands that people love their neighbors as they love themselves, but here Jesus tells them to love each other as he has loved them. He says a person can have no greater love than the love that causes him to give his life for his friends. Jesus loves his followers by giving his life for them. They must love each other the same way.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: Share any stories in your culture about someone loving another person so much that he dies for him or her. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says they are his friends if they obey him. He says he no longer calls them servants. There is no place in the Bible where Jesus calls his disciples servants, but he does say "a servant is not greater than his master" when speaking to them, and he says they are right to call him master and teacher. He says they are not servants

because servants must obey without knowing their master's plans, but Jesus has treated the disciples as friends because he has told them everything his Father told him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In what ways do people in your culture treat those who work for them the same way they treat their friends? In what ways do they treat them differently? Why is it better to be someone's friend than it is to just work for them? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says his disciples did not choose to follow him, but he chose them to follow him. He does not mean literally that they did not choose him, but he is emphasizing that he chose them first. He also appointed specific work for them to do. They are to go and bear fruit, or accomplish much, that will last. When they do this, the Father will give them whatever they ask for in Jesus' name, or because they are joined to Jesus. Jesus commands his disciples to love each other.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 15:1–17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus is speaking to his disciples in the upper room where they are having the Passover Feast together. He tells his disciples that he is like a faithful vine and his father is like a vinedresser, or a gardener who tends the vine. Jesus' father cuts off every branch in him that doesn't grow fruit, but he prunes every branch that does grow fruit, so it will grow even more fruit. Jesus says the word he has spoken to his disciples about himself has already cleaned, or pruned, them. Jesus' disciples must remain in him and he in them. Just as a branch cannot grow fruit unless it's connected to the vine, Jesus' disciples cannot grow spiritual fruit unless they are joined to Jesus.

In the second scene: Jesus continues with the vine and branches comparison. He says that if his disciples stay connected to him, they will bear much fruit, but they cannot produce any good fruit apart from him. If anyone does not remain in Jesus, they are like a branch that is thrown away. That branch, or that person, withers and dies because it has no life apart from the vine, Jesus. Someone will take that branch and throw it into the fire and the fire will burn it. Anyone who stays joined to Jesus and who lives by his words will be able to ask whatever they want of God in prayer and he will give it to them. When the disciples show they are connected to Jesus by producing good fruit, they glorify God.

In the third scene: Jesus tells his disciples that he loves them the same way his father loves him, and he tells them to stay in his love. If they obey Jesus, the disciples will stay in Jesus' love. In the same way, Jesus obeyed his father's commands and he stays in his father's love. He has told the disciples these things about the vine and branches because he wants the joy he experiences from obeying the father to be in them and for their joy to be full and complete. Jesus says they are his friends if they obey him. He no longer calls them servants because servants must obey their master without knowing what he is doing, but Jesus has told his disciples everything his father told him. He emphasizes that he chose the disciples before they chose him, and he also gave them work to do. They are to go and produce spiritual fruit that will last. If they do, the Father will give them whatever they ask for because they are connected to Jesus. Jesus commands them to love each other.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' 11 disciples, because Judas had already left the group that night
- A vine
- A vinedresser or gardener
- Branches of a vine
- And items to represent fruit

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is evening and Jesus and his disciples are in the upper room of a home where they are reclining around a table of food, eating the Passover Feast together. There would be many items of food on the table, including bread and wine. The setting does not change but Jesus teaches the disciples by using the illustration of a vine, a vinedresser, the branches of the vine, and the fruit of the branches.

It will be important that some of the branches connected to the vine produce fruit and other branches do not. You should choose an object that you have many of to represent the fruit, like small stones or seeds or berries, for example. Some branches will not have any fruit. Other branches will start with some fruit and will have even more after the vinedresser prunes them. The vinedresser removes the branches that do not produce fruit, but he cleans, or prunes, the branches that do produce fruit so they will produce even more. Pruning, or cleaning, meant to cut off parts of the branch while leaving some healthy wood and buds, which helps the vine produce the largest crop possible. After they are pruned, vine branches produce more fruit. The branches the vinedresser removes from the vine wither and die because they no longer receive life from the vine. Someone, we do not know who, takes those dead branches and throws them into a fire and the fire burns them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a team: Share a story from your culture in which you compare different things to each other. Why did you choose to compare those things to each other? How does it help you to understand each thing better? Pause this audio here.

The disciples do not become disciples by bearing fruit. They are already disciples, but they prove they are disciples by bearing fruit. We do not know exactly what this fruit is, but it is something other people can see about them, so everyone knows they are disciples. In another part of the Bible, one of the apostles says that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control. These are character traits of Jesus, and his disciples will prove they are his disciples by having the same traits Jesus has.

In the rest of this passage Jesus explains why it is important for the disciples to be like branches who stay connected to the vine, Jesus. He emphasizes that he is the vine, or the source of life, and they are the branches. They depend on him, but he does not depend on them. Then he tells them what will happen to those who stay connected to him by obeying his commands and what will happen to those who do not stay connected to him or do not obey his commands. He gives them the command to love each other, but his command is different than what the Jewish scriptures taught them. The Jewish scriptures commanded them to love others as they love themselves. Now Jesus is saying they should love each other as he has loved them and as his father has loved him. Jesus loves his disciples by giving his life for them. He commands them to love each other the same way.

Jesus says his disciples are his friends if they obey his commands. He does not call them servants, because servants must obey their masters without knowing what their masters are doing, but Jesus has treated his disciples as friends by telling them everything his father told him. He emphasizes that he chose them to follow him before they chose to follow him. He has also given them work to do. He wants them to go and produce fruit that will last. If they do, the Father will give them whatever they ask for in prayer because they are joined to Jesus. His final command in this passage is for them to love each other.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 15:1–17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' 11 disciples, because Judas had already left the group that night
- A vine
- A vinedresser
- Branches of a vine
- And items to represent fruit

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus and his disciples are in the upper room of the house where they are eating the Passover Feast together. There would be food on the table, including bread and wine, and Jesus and his disciples probably reclined around a table where they ate and talked together. In this passage, Jesus teaches his disciples by comparing himself to a vine, his father to a vinedresser, and his disciples to branches of the vine. The setting does not change throughout this passage, but it might be helpful to act out the illustration of the vine and branches with actors playing the vine, the vinedresser, and the branches, and using items to represent the fruit.

Jesus says he is the true vine and his father is the vinedresser.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says his father is the vinedresser, or gardener, and he cuts off every branch in Jesus that does not grow fruit, but he prunes, or cleans, every branch that does grow fruit so it will grow more fruit. Jesus says the disciples are already clean because of the word he spoke to them about himself.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says he is the vine and his disciples are the branches. They cannot grow fruit apart from him. If anyone does not remain in Jesus, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers. Someone picks up that branch and throws it in the fire and the fire burns it.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says if the disciples remain in him and his words remain in them, they can ask his Father for whatever they want in prayer and he will give it to them. When they bear fruit it shows they are Jesus' disciples and they glorify his Father.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says he has loved the disciples the same way his Father has loved him. He tells them to remain in his love by obeying his commands the same way he obeyed his Father's commands and remains in his Father's love. He has told them this so that his joy may be in them and their joy may be full.

Pause the drama.

Jesus commands his disciples to love each other as he has loved them. The greatest love a person can have is the love that causes him to give his life for his friends. The disciples are Jesus' friends if they do what he commands them to do. He has not treated them like servants, because servants obey their masters without knowing what the master is doing. Instead, Jesus has treated the disciples as friends by telling them everything his Father told him.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says the disciples did not choose him but he chose them and appointed them to go and bear fruit-fruit that will last. If they do that, the Father will give them whatever they ask because they are joined to Jesus. Then Jesus commands them to love each other.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 15:1–17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus says, "**I am** the true vine." He uses the words "I am" in two ways here. One is simply to compare who he is to something familiar. In this case he compares himself to a vine. But he also uses these words to connect himself to God the Father. In the Jewish scriptures, God told Moses his name is "I am." When Jesus uses those words, his disciples know he is calling himself God. Translate this phrase the same way throughout the Gospel of John.

Jesus says he is the **true vine** in contrast to Israel, the faithless vine. Israel was compared to a vine several times in the Jewish scriptures, but they are the vine God judged for not bearing fruit. Jesus, on the other hand, is the vine that produces fruit, or obeys God perfectly, so he is the *true*, faithful, trustworthy vine.

A **vine** was a plant that spread and clung to a supporting structure. Jesus and his disciples are probably thinking about a **grape vine** here because that was a very common vine in Israel, and it is mentioned in other scripture as well. The grape vine produced grapes, which could be eaten and whose juice was often turned into wine for drinking. When translating this passage, if your culture does not have a vine that produces fruit year after year, you might prefer to use the word tree, because bearing fruit is an important part of the image Jesus is talking about here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a grapevine as a group. Pause this audio here.

In some translations, Jesus calls God the Father a **vinedresser**. A vinedresser is a gardener who tends vines. Vines had to be **pruned** in order to produce the most fruit. To prune a vine is to cut off parts of the branch while leaving some healthy wood and buds, which helps the vine produce the largest crop possible.

Stop here and look at a picture of a vine that has not been pruned and another that has been pruned. Pause this audio here.

Jesus told his disciples they were **clean** because of the word he had spoken to them. The word clean has two meanings in this passage. When a vinedresser pruned the branches of a vine, the branches would be clean of any dead portions. Here Jesus is also talking about righteousness. His disciples are righteous, or right with God, because they have believed what he has taught them about himself.

In some translations, Jesus tells his disciples to **abide** in him. In others he says **remain**. The phrase "abide in" means to "live in." Jesus wants his disciples to find their life in him, to dwell in him. The word remain means to stay. They must continue to abide in Jesus, not just sometimes, but always. They cannot live and produce spiritual fruit if they are not connected to Jesus. When Jesus says, "abide in me, and I in you," the words he uses could mean "remain in me *even as* I remain in you" or "*if* you remain in me, I will remain in you."

The **fruit** Jesus speaks of is the spiritual result of living in obedience to God the Father. When Jesus' followers love others the way he commands them to, he compares the results of their obedience to the fruit of a vine. Jesus also says he has appointed, or commanded, the disciples to go and bear fruit. This fruit probably has two meanings. One type of fruit is the good that results from each disciples' obedience to God which makes the disciple more like Jesus. The other fruit is those who place their faith in Jesus when the disciples share the word with them.

Jesus says that his Father takes away every branch in him that does not bear fruit. It is like a branch that withers and someone throws it into the **fire** and the fire burns it. Throughout the Bible, fire is a symbol of God's judgment. Jesus is talking about God's judgment against those who say they belong to him but they do not. It is important to use the word fire here because it is talking about God's judgment.

Jesus says when his **disciples** bear much fruit and show they are his disciples, his Father is **glorified**. To glorify someone, or to give them glory, is to speak well of someone or to give them honor. It is most often used when talking about praising, honoring, and speaking well about God. Translate glorify or glory in the same way you have in previous passages. The word glorify is in the Master Glossary.

You will remember that a **disciple** is a person who follows and learns from a specific religious teacher about God, faith, and life. Jesus chose 12 people to follow him and be his disciples. Translate disciples the same way you have in previous passages. The word disciple is in the Master Glossary.

When Jesus says "I have told you **this**" he is referring to what he has taught them in this passage about the vine and the branches as a picture of the way the disciples must stay joined to Jesus.

Jesus wants his disciples' joy to be complete. This expression "**joy may be complete**" is common throughout the Gospel of John and refers to joy that is completely full and not lacking in any way. Translate this expression the same way each time it is used in the Gospel of John.

Jesus says he no longer calls his disciples **servants**, but there is no place in the Bible where he calls them servants. He does tell them a servant is not greater than his master and that they are right to call him master and Lord. Here he is emphasizing that he has treated them as friends by telling them everything his Father has told him. Servants is in the Master Glossary.

When Jesus says, "**You did not choose me**," he does not mean it literally. The disciples did choose him, but he is emphasizing that he chose them first. Jesus started the relationship and made it possible for the disciples to be his friends. You should translate this in a way that shows both of these things: the disciples did choose Jesus, but he was the first to choose them.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 15:1–17

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4234164 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (7080567 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 15:18–27

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 15:18–27 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 15:18–27 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 15:18–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus is still talking with his 11 disciples in the upper room of the house where they are celebrating the Passover Feast together. Judas already left the group to betray Jesus to the religious leaders. Jesus has just told his

disciples to stay connected to him like a branch to a vine, and to love one another. Now he talks about what will happen as they obey those commands.

Jesus says, "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first," but he does not mean that the world might not hate them. The world will certainly hate them because the world hated Jesus first. "The world" refers to all the people who are against God and do not believe Jesus' message about him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you speak about people who do not share your belief in God? Pause this audio here.

The world, or the people in the world who do not believe in God, love the other people in the world who also do not believe in God. Those people would love the disciples if the disciples shared their beliefs. The disciples used to be like the world, but Jesus chose them to be joined to him. Now the disciples are different than the people of the world, so they hate the disciples. The disciples should not be surprised when the people of the world hate them because they also hated Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture talk about people who are part of a group but who believe differently and live differently within that group? Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells the disciples to think about what he said to them earlier, that "a servant is not greater than his master." Jesus' disciples should not expect to be treated better than people treated Jesus. However much the world persecuted Jesus, they will persecute his disciples. However much they obeyed Jesus' teaching, they will obey the disciples' teaching.

Jesus says they will do all these things to the disciples "on account of Jesus' name" because the disciples are joined to him. This is because the world does not know God who sent him. When people persecute the disciples, it is because people reject God the Father.

Now Jesus changes his focus to talk about people not believing in him. Jesus says if he had not spoken to the people about who he is and who sent him, they would not be guilty of sin. He does not mean they would not be guilty of any sin at all, but that God would not consider them guilty of rejecting Jesus' message if they had not heard it. Jesus *did* speak to them, so they cannot excuse their sin. Jesus and God the father are one, so anyone who hates Jesus also hates his Father.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about what happens when someone in your culture breaks a rule that they didn't know existed. Maybe this is a new person in your culture who has not heard the rule before. What happens to that person? How do other people treat them? Pause this audio here.

In a similar way, Jesus says if he had not done works among them that no one else had ever done, they would not be guilty of sin. Jesus's works include both his teaching and his miracles. Again, he does not mean they would not be guilty of any sin, but that they would not be guilty of rejecting Jesus' works. But they did see Jesus' works, which were completely different than anyone else had ever done. His works showed that Jesus is God. In other passages of Scripture, Jesus says his works are from his Father, God. When people rejected Jesus even after seeing his works, they rejected both Jesus and his Father. Jesus' works gave the world evidence to believe what he taught them, but they refused.

Jesus says, "But the word that is written in their law must be fulfilled," or come true. The Jews thought of themselves as the keepers of the law. Usually the law refers to the first five books of the Jewish Scriptures, but here Jesus quotes from the Psalms, so he is using the word law to refer to all of the Jewish Scriptures. The law prophesied about Jesus, but the keepers of the law did not believe Jesus' message about himself. The verse, "They hated me without cause" was true of King David, but it is also true of Jesus in an even more important way. Jesus gave the world no reason to hate him. By rejecting Jesus, the Jews made this prophecy from the law come true. But they became guilty of sin because they rejected Jesus who the law prophesied about.

Jesus says that when the Helper comes, he will bear witness about Jesus. The Helper is another name, or title, for the Holy Spirit. A helper is "someone a person calls to his aid in a court of justice." The Helper, or Advocate, is like a legal helper defending a person in court. He helps believers in many ways, including defending them before God the Father. He also helps Jesus's followers by reminding them about what Jesus taught them. Jesus says the Helper is the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father. Jesus will send the Helper to his disciples when he returns to heaven, and the Helper will always be with them. The Holy Spirit has seen and experienced Jesus

for eternity, because he is one with Jesus and the Father. The Holy Spirit will testify or bear witness to the important truths he knows about Jesus. For unbelievers, he will convict them of the truth about sin and righteousness and judgment. The Holy Spirit does not usually speak words that can be heard by people's ears, but he can cause people to understand the truth that they do hear. The disciples have been with Jesus since the beginning of his ministry on earth. They will also tell others what they have seen and learned of Jesus. Both the Holy Spirit and the disciples have important work in explaining the truth about who Jesus is.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture describe the way spiritual beings talk to people? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 15:18–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus tells the disciples that if the world hates them, they should remember it hated him first. The world would love them if they belonged to the world, but Jesus chose them to belong to him, so the world hates them. He reminds them of what he said before: "A servant is not greater than his master." Some people in the world persecuted Jesus, so some will persecute the disciples too. Some people in the world obey Jesus' teaching, so some will obey the disciples' teaching too. They will treat the disciples this way because they are joined to Jesus and because they do not know God the Father who sent Jesus.

In the second scene: Jesus says if he had not come and spoken to them, the world would not be guilty of the sin of rejecting Jesus. But he did come and speak to them, so they have no excuse. Anyone who hates Jesus also hates his Father. Jesus says if he had not done among them works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of the sin of rejecting Jesus. But they did see the works that Jesus did among them, so they have no excuse. They have hated both Jesus and his Father. By hating Jesus, they are actually making a prophecy from the Psalms true. The prophecy said, "They hated me without reason."

In the third scene: Jesus says he will send the Advocate, or the Helper, to his disciples from his Father. When the Helper comes, he will testify about Jesus. He says the disciples must also tell the truth about Jesus because they have been with him since he started his ministry. They will tell what they have personally seen Jesus do and what they have heard him say.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- 11 of Jesus' disciples (Judas has already left)
- The people in the world
- The Helper (which is another title for the Holy Spirit)

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Like the passage just before this, Jesus is sitting around a table with his disciples as they eat the Passover Feast together. He is talking to them while they eat. There is food on the table, including bread and wine. Judas is not with them when Jesus speaks in this passage.

The setting does not change, but it might be helpful to act out what Jesus teaches the disciples here.

Jesus says if the people of the world hate the disciples, they should remember the people of the world hated him first. You might want to show the way the world hated Jesus and then how they also hate the disciples while Jesus talks about that. Remember that some people in the world persecuted Jesus, so some will persecute the disciples, but some obeyed Jesus' teaching, so some will also obey the disciples' teaching. You might want to visualize things you remember people doing to Jesus earlier in the Gospel of John that show how some people hated Jesus and rejected his message while others obeyed him.

Several times in this passage, Jesus uses the word "if" about something that is not just a possibility, but is already true. He says, "If the world hates you" when they do hate the disciples. He says "If I had not spoken to them" when he has spoken to them. And he says, "If I had not done among them the works no one else did" when he has done works among them that no one else did. This is an unusual way to use the word "if."

Stop and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture speak about something that is true as if it might not be true? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says if he had not spoken to them about who he and God are or done works among them that no one else did, the world would not be guilty. But Jesus did tell them who he and God are, and he did teach them things and perform miracles that no one else ever did. You might want to show Jesus speaking to the world and doing works among them and the world rejecting Jesus. You might want to visualize things Jesus said and did from earlier in the Gospel of John.

Jesus promises to send the Helper to his disciples from his Father. The Helper and the disciples will both testify about Jesus because the Holy Spirit and the disciples have both seen and heard Jesus personally, so they will tell the truth about him to others. The Holy Spirit does not have a body and does not usually speak with a voice that people hear with their ears, so you will want to think about how to show the way he testifies about Jesus.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story from your culture about something someone predicted that came true. How do you talk about that? Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 15:18–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- 11 of Jesus' disciples (Judas has already left)
- The people of the world
- The Helper (which is another title for the Holy Spirit)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus says, "If the world hates you, keep in mind it hated me first." If the disciples belonged to the world, the world would love them, but Jesus chose them out of the world to belong to him instead. That is why the world hates them. He tells them to think about what he said before, that "a servant is not greater than his master."

Pause the drama.

Jesus says if the world persecuted him it will persecute his disciples. If the world obeyed him, it will obey his disciples. They will do this because the disciples are joined to Jesus and because the world does not know Jesus' Father who sent him.

Pause the drama.

Jesus said that if he had not come and spoken to the people, they would not be guilty of the sin of rejecting him. But he did speak to them, so they have no excuse for their sin. He also said if he had not done works among them that no one else did, they would not be guilty of the sin of rejecting him. But he did do works among them that no one else did, so they have no excuse for their sin. Anyone who hates Jesus hates his Father too. The people who reject him are making a prophecy in the Psalms come true. They hated Jesus without reason.

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells the disciples he will send them the Helper from his Father. The Helper is the Spirit of truth who will testify about Jesus, and the disciples must also testify about Jesus because they have been with him since the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 15:18–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus says, "If the **world** hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first." He uses the phrase "the world" to refer to all the people who are against God and who have rejected Jesus' teaching about him. He uses the same phrase to mean the same thing in other parts of the Gospel of John. Translate this phrase the same way you did in those passages.

Several times in this passage, Jesus uses the word **if** about something that is not just a possibility, but is already true. He says, "If the world hates you" when they *do* hate the disciples. He says "If I had not spoken to them" when *he has* spoken to them. And he says, "If I had not done among them the works no one else did" when *he has* done works among them that no one else did. This is an unusual way to use the word "if."

Jesus says he "chose the disciples **out of the world**." He does not mean he is taking them out of the world, but that he chose them to be joined to him, which makes them different than the world.

Jesus tells the disciples to remember, or think about, what he said when he washed their feet: "A servant is not greater than his master." You should translate this the same way you did in that passage earlier in the Gospel of John.

Jesus says that if the world persecuted him, it will persecute the disciples. The word **persecute** means to hurt someone or to cause them suffering. It can refer to physical suffering or suffering from not having enough money. The word persecution is in the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **persecution**. Tell a story from your culture about a person or group of people causing another person or group of people to suffer by harming them physically or by taking away their ability to work so they can take care of themselves. Pause this audio here.*

Jesus says that if he had not spoken to them or done works that no one else did, the people would not be guilty of **sin**. Translate the word sin here the same you translated it previously. The word sin is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus says, "This is to **fulfill the word** that is written in their law." He says similar things in other parts of John when he refers back to passages from the Jewish scriptures. For example, he said "this was to **fulfill the word** of Isaiah the prophet" before quoting from Isaiah, and he said, "this is to **fulfill this passage of Scripture**" before he quoted a Psalm about who would betray him. You may want to use similar words for each of these passages in your translation.

Jesus says when the **Helper** or the **Advocate** comes, he will **testify**, or **bear witness**, about Jesus. Jesus used the same title for the Holy Spirit earlier in the Gospel of John when he promised his disciples he would send the Holy Spirit to them. An advocate is someone who speaks in favor of someone when another person has accused

them of doing something wrong in court. The advocate defends the accused person in front of the judge and others who hear the accusation. The Holy Spirit also helps the disciples by reminding them of the things Jesus taught them, and he helps unbelievers by convicting them of the truth about sin and righteousness and judgment. Use the same word for Helper or Advocate here that you used in the previous passage. If it is helpful, you could translate it as "the one who is called Helper." To **testify** or to **bear witness** means to declare the truth about something from one's own experience. The Holy Spirit and the disciples both share the truth about Jesus from their own experience of him.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you talk about the true things someone says about another person based on what they personally saw or heard? What word or words will you use for "testify?" Pause this audio here.

Jesus calls the Holy Spirit the **Spirit of truth**, which means the Spirit who reveals the truth about God. The Holy Spirit knows the truth about God because he is one with Jesus and the Father. He explains the truth about God to others.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 15:18–27

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3303155 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (5496356 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

John 16:1–15

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 16:1–15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 16:1–15 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 16:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus is still in the upper room of the house where they are eating the Passover Feast with eleven of his disciples. Judas has already left to betray him. Jesus continues preparing his disciples for when he will die and God will raise him to life again.

He says he has told the disciples "all these things" so they will not "fall away," or abandon their faith in him. He is referring to what he was just telling them about how the world will hate them because they are joined to him. He knows that if he does not prepare them before it happens, it might surprise the disciples and cause them to doubt the truth.

Jesus tells the disciples, "They will put you out of the synagogues." When he says "they," he is referring to the Jewish religious leaders. The religious leaders will not only ban the disciples from the building during worship. They will also reject them from the community. Jesus says the time will come when people will kill the disciples and think they are pleasing God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What things in your culture might cause someone to be put outside of the community, so they can no longer share life with the people of the community? What happens to people who are put outside the community? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says people will do those things because they do not know the Father or Jesus. The word "know" here means they have never known the Father or Jesus, and it is a way of knowing someone closely through a relationship with them. The Jews should have recognized the Father in the works and character of Jesus, but they did not. They should have understood that Jesus was sent by the Father because of the way he lived.

Jesus is telling his disciples these things so that when they happen, the disciples will remember that Jesus warned them about what would happen. He does not mean they will forget his words and later remember them. He is telling them to keep thinking about what he said.

Jesus did not tell them these things when he first began to teach them because he was with them. When Jesus was with the disciples, his enemies directed their hatred at Jesus and he could guide the disciples about how to respond. Now Jesus is going away and Jesus' enemies will direct their hatred at the disciples because the disciples are joined to Jesus.

Jesus says "but now" to indicate that things are changing. Now he is going to "him who sent me" which is his Father, God. He says not one of the disciples ask him where he's going even though Peter did ask him once. But he knows that Peter was not really asking about where Jesus is going. Peter was concerned about Jesus leaving them, but he was not curious about where he was going. Jesus knows his disciples feel very sad because he has told them he is going away.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you talk about a person being very sad? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says "very truly I tell you" or "I tell you the truth." He wants the disciples to listen carefully to what he is going to say next because it is true and important. Even though he has just prophesied very sad things for the disciples, he says it is better for them that he goes away.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how does a leader or a teacher show that what he is about to say is very important and the people should listen carefully? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says "if I do not go away" the Helper, or Advocate, will not come to them, but "if I go away I will send him to you." He is using the word "if" the same way he used it in the previous passage. It does not mean he might not go away. He will certainly go away, but when he does, he will send the Helper to his disciples and that will be better for them. When Jesus was on earth, he could only be in one place at a time like all other people. When Jesus returns to his Father, the Holy Spirit will be with all of the disciples all the time, wherever they are.

When the Helper comes, he will convict the world, or show the world they are wrong, about sin and righteousness and judgment. He will prove to the people of the world that they sin by refusing to believe in Jesus. He will show the people that Jesus was righteous, or right with God, because Jesus will go to the Father, which proves that he is innocent and the Father accepts him. This might also mean that the Holy Spirit will show the world that they can only be right with God by believing in Jesus. When Jesus says his disciples won't see him anymore, he is probably talking about the time when he will rise up to heaven in his new body after God raises him from death to life. Since Jesus will not be on earth to teach people anymore, the Holy Spirit will teach them. The Holy Spirit will show the world they judged Jesus wrongly. When Jesus rises to the Father in heaven, the Holy Spirit will prove that Jesus was innocent and that God has judged Satan, the ruler of the world, guilty.

Stop and discuss this question as a team: In your culture, who helps people who have an argument with each other? Do you have a story about a time when someone accused another person of doing wrong and gave proof for what they said? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says he has many more things to tell the disciples but they cannot bear them now. He probably means they cannot understand everything he could tell them right now. When the Spirit of truth, or the Helper, comes, he will cause the disciples to understand more truth from God. The Spirit will not teach them his own ideas. He will teach them only what Jesus and the Father tell him. He will tell the disciples about things that will happen in the future. The Spirit will glorify Jesus because he will accept Jesus' words and tell them to the disciples. Everything God the Father has also belongs to Jesus. That is why Jesus said the Spirit will accept his words and tell them to the disciples.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 16:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus warns his disciples that a time is coming when the Jewish religious leaders will not allow them into the synagogues for worship anymore. Also, people will kill the disciples and think they are pleasing God. They will do these things because they do not know his Father or Jesus. He is warning them about these things so that when they happen, the disciples will remember that he already told them about it.

In the second scene: Jesus tells the disciples he is going to the Father even though none of the disciples have asked him where he is going. He knows they are filled with grief because he has told them he is leaving, but he says it is better for them that he goes away. When he goes away he will send the Helper, or Advocate, to them. The Advocate will convict the world that it is wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment because Jesus is going to the Father and God judges Satan guilty.

In the third scene: Jesus says there is much more he wishes he could tell his disciples but right now it would be more than they can understand. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will cause the disciples to understand all the truth Jesus wants them to know. The Spirit will not speak his own ideas to the disciples. He will only speak what he hears from Jesus. He will tell them about things that will happen in the future. He will bring honor to Jesus by accepting Jesus' words and telling them to the disciples. Everything the Father has belongs to Jesus. And everything the Father gives to Jesus, Jesus will give to the Spirit, and the Spirit will give it to the disciples.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- 11 of Jesus' disciples (Judas already left the group)
- Jewish religious leaders
- People who hate the disciples
- The Father
- The Holy Spirit (also called the Advocate or the Helper or the Spirit of truth)

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This passage takes place in the upper room of the home where Jesus and his disciples are eating the Passover Feast. Jesus and his disciples are reclining around a table with food on it, including bread and wine. The whole passage takes place here and Jesus is teaching his disciples, but it might be helpful to act out what he tells them. Jesus and the disciples might still continue to eat and drink while he is speaking to them.

Jesus says, "I have told you these things so you will not fall away" referring to the things he told them in the previous passage. There he told them he is the vine and they are the branches. They need to stay connected to him so they will not be cut off. He also warned them that the world would hate them as it hated him. And he promised to send them the Advocate or Helper. He has told them all these things so they will not fall away.

Jesus says the religious leaders will put the disciples out of the synagogue. It will be helpful to show the leaders keeping the disciples out of the building and also rejecting them and telling other synagogue members to reject them too. The Jewish people who reject Jesus will also reject the disciples, so the disciples will lose their communities.

Jesus says they will do these things because they do not know the Father or Jesus. The word "know" here means they have never known the Father or Jesus, and it is a way of knowing someone closely through a relationship with them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a team: How does your culture show the difference between knowing information and knowing people who you have a relationship with, such as close friends and family members? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says "in fact" or "in addition" to emphasize that people will do more than just throw them out of the synagogues and stop fellowshiping with them. People will even kill the disciples and think they are pleasing

God. You will want to show that the people believe they have done something good that pleases God after they kill a disciple.

After Jesus tells the disciples he is going to the Father, they are filled with grief. The disciples' grief is very strong. Jesus says the disciples are "full of sorrow" or "full of grief" and he means they are so sad they could not be more sad than they are.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you speak about a person being so sad they could not be more sad than they are in that moment? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says "truly I tell you" in order to show the disciples that what he is going to say next is very important and they should listen carefully. Translate this phrase the same way you translated it previously when Jesus uses this phrase.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what does a leader or a teacher say to show that what he is going to say next is very important and people should listen carefully? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says the Advocate will show the world they are wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment. Remember that the Advocate is the Holy Spirit and he does not have a body and he does not usually speak with a voice people can hear with their ears. You will need to think carefully about how to show the spirit revealing to people that they are wrong. You will also want to show Jesus rising to heaven to be with his Father because that is proof that the world was wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment.

Jesus tells the disciples that the Spirit of truth will not speak on his own, but will tell them what he hears from Jesus. Jesus tells the disciples that everything the Father has belongs to him and the Spirit will accept what Jesus tells him and share it with the disciples. Jesus wants the disciples to understand that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are united. All that the Spirit will teach the disciples comes from Jesus and the Father.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 16:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- 11 of Jesus' disciples (Judas already left the group)
- Jewish religious leaders
- People who hate the disciples
- The Father
- The Holy Spirit (also called the Advocate or the Helper or the Spirit of truth)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus says the religious leaders will put the disciples out of the synagogue.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says a time is coming when people will kill the disciples and think they are pleasing God.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says that because he told them he is going to the Father, the disciples are filled with grief.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says the Advocate will show the world they are wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment because Jesus is going to the Father where the disciples will not see him anymore.

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells the disciples that the Spirit of truth will not speak on his own, but will tell them what he hears from Jesus. Jesus tells the disciples that everything the Father has belongs to him and the Spirit will accept what Jesus tells him and share it with the disciples. Jesus wants the disciples to understand that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are united. All that the Spirit will teach the disciples comes from Jesus and the Father.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 16:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

When Jesus says, "**I have told you this** so you will not **fall away**," "this" refers to what he just told them about how the world will hate them because they belong to him. "Fall away" means to stop believing the truth about Jesus. The phrase, "I have told you this" also appears in two passages before this. Translate "I have told you this" the same way here that you translated it in those passages.

When he says, "**They** will put you out of the **synagogue**," "they" refers to the Jewish religious leaders. Being "put out of the synagogue" means they would not be allowed to worship with the other Jewish people in the synagogue and also they will not be allowed to do other things that members of the community do together. Translate synagogue in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that synagogue is in the Master Glossary.

In some translations, Jesus says, "the **hour** is coming." He uses the word hour to mean time, as in "the time is coming."

Jesus says they will do these things "because they have not **known the Father** or me." The "Father" here refers to God. Use the same word for Father here that you have used previously when speaking of God. The word "know" here means they have never known the Father or Jesus, and it is a way of knowing someone closely through a relationship with them.

Jesus tells the disciples to **remember**, but he does not mean that they will forget and later remember. He is telling them to keep thinking about what he said.

Jesus says he is going to "**him who sent me**," which is God, the Father.

Jesus says "**if** I do not go away" and "**if** I go away." Both times he is using the word "if" the same way he used it in the previous passage when speaking about something that will certainly happen. Translate the word "if" here the same way you translated it in the previous passage when it referred to things that were certainly going to happen.

Jesus says the **Advocate** or **Helper**, also called the **Spirit of truth**, will **convict** the world regarding sin and righteousness and judgment. Advocate is another title for the Holy Spirit because he supports and defends

Jesus' followers like a legal helper for a person in court. The Spirit of truth is also a title for the Holy Spirit because he speaks the truth about God. The word convict means to declare that someone is wrong about something with proof that they are wrong. Here, the Holy Spirit declares the people wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment, and he proves that they are wrong. The word convict is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus says he wants to tell the disciples more, but they cannot **bear** it now. To bear something means to carry the weight of something or to endure something. Jesus might mean the disciples cannot yet understand all that he wants to tell them or that it would be too sad or too scary for them to know everything until he sends the Holy Spirit to help them.

Jesus says the Spirit of truth will **glorify** him. To glorify someone is to speak well about someone or to give them honor. Translate this word the same way you translated it previously. Glorify is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 16:1–15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3249898 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5421543 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 16:16–24

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 16:16–24 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 16:16–24 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 16:16–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus is still eating the Passover Feast in the upper room of a home with his 11 disciples after Judas left. He is still teaching them and preparing them because he will soon die and God will raise him to life again three days later.

Jesus says, "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me." The phrase "a little while" means a short time, such as a few days or a few weeks. Jesus knows the religious leaders will have him crucified the next day and that God will raise him to life again three days after that.

Jesus used this phrase "a little while" several other times previously in the Gospel of John. Once when Jesus told the crowd of people around him that they would only have the light a little while longer. Another time after he told the disciples Judas would betray him, he said he would only be with them a little longer. He also used this expression after he promised to send the Holy Spirit, when he told them before long the world would not see him anymore.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture talk about a short period of time that is not specific? Pause this audio here.

When Jesus says, "In a little while you will see me no more," it seems clear he is speaking about the time coming soon when the Jewish leaders will have him crucified. When he says "after a little while you will see me," Jesus is probably talking about the time when God raises him from death to life three days after the Jewish leaders have Jesus crucified. However, Jesus could also be talking about the disciples seeing him in the person and work of the Holy Spirit when he comes after Jesus ascends to heaven. Or he could be talking about his final return when he will judge the world. If possible, it will be best to translate this in a way that keeps each of these ideas possible. It is also okay to use a phrase that literally means "in a little while" or a short period of time.

The disciples are confused about what Jesus is saying, so they ask each other what he meant when he said "after a little while you will not see me" and "then after a little while longer you will see me" and "because I am going to the Father." Jesus said "because I am going to the Father" in the previous passage, but the disciples are making the connection that the reason they will not see him in a little while is because he is going to the Father God. They understand that he means God when he says "the Father" but they are probably still struggling to understand how Jesus will establish his kingdom by going away to the Father.

Some translations say "Jesus saw" while others say "Jesus knew" that they wanted to ask him about what he said. It is not clear if Jesus could see or hear the disciples asking one another about his words or if he knew what they were saying because he knows people's thoughts. He said to them, "Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, 'in a little while you will see me no more and then after a little while you will see me?'" This is the third time this phrase is repeated in this passage.

As he often does, Jesus responds to what is really troubling the disciples rather than to their actual question. He says "very truly I tell you," which is a phrase he uses when he wants the disciples to listen carefully to what he says next. He says "*You* will weep and mourn while the world rejoices." The word he uses for "*you*" emphasizes the contrast between Jesus' disciples and the world. The disciples' reaction to not seeing Jesus will be the opposite of the world's reaction. The words he uses for weep and mourn refer to the loud wailing and weeping, or crying, that were customary of mourners when someone died in Israel at that time. Then he says the same thing with different words, telling them that they will be very sad, but he follows it quickly with the promise that their sadness will turn to joy.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: Share a story from your culture about a time of great mourning. What do people in your culture do when they are mourning something very sad, like the loss of a child or a parent? Pause this audio here.

Here he switches to sharing an image that will help the disciples understand the grief they will have when they don't see him anymore. He compares their grief to a pregnant woman who feels pain and dread when her time to give birth has come. She feels great pain and dread in that moment, but as soon as she gives birth to her baby, she no longer thinks about the pain she felt just moments before, because she is so joyful about bringing a baby into the world. It is like that for the disciples now. They will weep and mourn when they don't see Jesus anymore, but Jesus comforts them by promising that he will see them again and they will rejoice then. Sometimes people must have great suffering before they can have great joy. The same thing that causes sorrow can later cause joy. Jesus adds that no one will destroy their joy. He does not mean they will never be sad again, but after his resurrection they will have a deep joy that the world cannot destroy.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: How do you talk about the time just before a woman gives birth to her baby? How do you talk about her feelings at that time? Can you think of other situations where people have great suffering that leads to great joy? Pause this audio here.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: Share a story from your culture about someone who is very happy about something. How do you describe their happiness? Pause this audio here.

Then Jesus switches again to telling the disciples what is about to happen. He says when that joyful day comes, the disciples will no longer ask Jesus anything. The word used for "ask" here can either mean to ask a question or to ask for something. He then says "Very truly I tell you," the phrase he uses when he wants them to listen carefully. The phrase might also mark a difference in the type of asking that Jesus is talking about. The disciples will no longer ask questions of Jesus because they will have the Holy Spirit to guide them. They will ask the Father for things they want, and the Father will give the disciples whatever they ask for in Jesus' name, because they are joined to him, and because they are joined to Jesus, they will ask for things that he wants, according to his will.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: Share some stories from your culture in which people ask someone a question or ask someone to give them something. Do you have different ways of talking about different kinds of asking? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that until now the disciples have not asked the Father for anything in Jesus' name, or because they are his disciples. He tells them to ask, and the word he uses means to keep asking continuously. The Father will give them what they ask for, so their joy will be full.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 16:16–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus and 11 of his disciples are eating the Passover feast in the upper room of a house. Jesus tells his disciples that in a little while they will not see him and then after a little while longer they will see him again. The disciples are confused about what he means so they ask each other about the phrases "in a little while" and "because I go to the Father." Jesus says, "Are you asking each other what I meant when I said "in a little while you will not see me and then again a little while longer and you will see me again?"

In the second scene: Jesus says "very truly I tell you" and he shares an illustration to help the disciples understand what he meant. He compares their situation to that of a woman giving birth to a baby. The woman feels great pain and dread when she is giving birth, but as soon as the baby is born she stops thinking about the pain because she is so joyful that she has brought a baby into the world. Like her, the disciples have great sadness now, but their sadness will turn to joy when they see Jesus again. When that day comes, no one will destroy their joy.

In the third scene: Jesus says that when that joyful day comes, the disciples will no longer ask Jesus questions. They will ask the Father for things they want and the Father will give them whatever they ask for because they are connected to Jesus. Until now, they have not asked the Father for things because they are connected to Jesus, but now they can ask for anything and God will give it to them and their joy will be full.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' 11 disciples (Judas had already left)
- A woman giving birth
- A baby
- The world
- Father God (but he is not seen)

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Jesus is still in the upper room talking with his disciples. He continues his conversation with them, preparing them for when the religious leaders have him crucified. He tells the disciples that in "a little while" they will not see him, and then "after a little while" and they will see him again. Jesus used this phrase "a little while" several other times previously in the Gospel of John. Once when Jesus told the crowd of people around him that they would only have the light a little while longer. Another time after he told the disciples Judas would betray him, he said he would only be with them a little longer. He also used this expression after he promised to send the Holy Spirit, when he told them before long the world would not see him anymore. Perhaps he wants to emphasize that the sad time he is talking about is coming very soon, but the joyful time is also coming soon.

The disciples ask each other what Jesus meant when he said, "In a little while you will see me no longer, and then after a little while you will see me" and why he said, "because I am going to the Father." They are not asking Jesus these questions; they are asking each other. Maybe they are beginning to understand that because Jesus is going to the Father, they will not see him anymore.

Stop here and discuss this question as a team: How do people in your culture respond when they do not understand something their teacher has just taught them? Share a story about a time this happened. Did the people ask the teacher directly what he meant, or did they ask each other what he meant? Pause this audio here.

Jesus saw or knew that they wanted to ask him about these things. They were all sitting together at a table, but it does not say that he heard them asking each other. Somehow, he saw or knew that they wanted to ask him about these things.

He tells the disciples, "You will weep and mourn" at the same time that the world rejoices. He is describing the kind of weeping and wailing the Israelites did to mourn when someone died. The disciples will weep and mourn, but Jesus says the world will rejoice. The world's reaction will be opposite the disciples' reaction.

He repeats that the disciples will grieve, "but their grief will turn to joy." Grief does not usually turn to joy, but Jesus shares an illustration that helps them understand what he is saying. The setting does not change, but it might be helpful to somehow show the illustration he shares.

He says they will be like a woman at the time she gives birth to her baby. She has pain because her time has come. This expression "her time has come" refers to the time just before and while she gives birth.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture talk about the time shortly before a woman gives birth when she has great pain and she knows she will give birth soon? Pause this audio here.

As soon as the woman's baby is born, she stops thinking about the great pain she endured because she is joyful that she has brought a baby into the world. Jesus says this is what it is like for the disciples. Now they are very sad, but he will see them again and they will rejoice. In fact, the joy they have will be such deep joy that no one will be able to stop them from being joyful even when sad things still happen.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Share a story from your culture of a time one person or group of people tried to stop another person or group of people from having joy. Pause this audio here.

When that joyful day comes, they will no longer ask Jesus any questions. This might mean they will not ask Jesus any questions because the Holy Spirit will teach them what they need to know, or it might mean they will not ask Jesus for anything. He says "very truly I tell you" to emphasize that they should listen carefully to what he says next, because it is true and important. He says that when that joyful time comes, the Father himself, rather than Jesus, will give the disciples whatever they ask for because they are in relationship with Jesus. Being in relationship with Jesus means they are also in direct relationship with God the Father.

Until this time they have not asked the Father for anything in Jesus' name, or because they are joined to him, but at the joyful time Jesus says they should ask the Father for anything and they will receive what they ask for, and their joy will be complete or full.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: Share a story of a time when someone or a group of people were so joyful their joy was completely full. Pause this audio here.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 16:16–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' 11 disciples (Judas had already left)
- A woman giving birth
- A baby
- The world
- The Father (but he is not seen)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus is still eating the Passover feast with his 11 disciples in the upper room of a house after Judas left to betray him. They are reclining around a table, eating food and drinking wine together.

Jesus says, "In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me."

The disciples begin to ask each other what he meant when he said "in a little while you will see me, and then after a little while you will see me" and "Because I am going to the Father."

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells the disciples that very truly, they will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. They will grieve but their grief will turn to joy. Then he shares the illustration of a woman giving birth to a baby who has great pain before giving birth but then when she has her baby she forgets her pain because she has great joy that she has brought a baby into the world.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says it is like that with the disciples. Now they grieve, but he will see them again and then they will rejoice and no one will take away their joy.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says when that joyful day comes, the disciples will no longer ask Jesus anything.

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells the disciples, "Very truly I tell you, the Father will give you whatever you ask for in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive and your joy will be complete."

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 16:16–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus says **in a little while** the disciples will not see him anymore and then "in a little while" they will see him. This phrase "in a little while" means a short time, but it is not specific. This phrase "a little while" appears several times throughout the Gospel of John. Use the same word or phrase for "a little while" throughout this passage.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "a little while." Pause this audio here.

Jesus says "**very truly I tell you**" because he wants his disciples to listen carefully to what he is going to say next. He has used this phrase the same way in previous passages in the Gospel of John. In some cases, he says "truly I tell you." This time he adds the word "very" which adds even more emphasis. Use the same word or phrase for "very truly I tell you" as you used in previous passages.

Jesus says the disciples will **weep and mourn**. The disciples would understand he is talking about the loud weeping and wailing that were customary in Israel at that time when someone died.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for "weep and mourn." Pause this audio here.

Jesus says that "a woman giving birth has pain because **her time has come.**"

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for "her time has come." Pause this audio here.

Jesus says when that day comes, "no one will **take away your joy.**"

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for "take away your joy." Pause this audio here.

Jesus says in that day the disciples will no longer **ask** him anything. The word he uses for ask means to ask a question. If your language uses different words for ask a question and ask for something, use the word for ask a question.

Jesus says, "The Father will give you whatever you **ask** in my name." This time he uses the word that means to ask for something. If your language uses different words for ask a question and ask for something, use the word that means to ask for something here.

Jesus tells the disciples to ask for anything "**in my name**" and "until now, you have not asked for anything in my name." To ask for something "in Jesus' name" means to ask because you are his disciple and you are connected to him. Being connected to Jesus also means having your desires changed to become like his so that you want the same things he wants and ask the Father for the same things he would ask for.

Jesus says the Father will give the disciples what they ask for and their **joy will be complete.**

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "joy will be complete." Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 16:16–24

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3432510 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (5732356 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 16:25–33

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 16:25–33 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 16:25–33 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 16:25–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus is still in the upper room eating the Passover Feast with 11 of his disciples after Judas left to betray him. He knows the religious leaders will have him crucified the next day and he is preparing his disciples for that time.

Jesus tells his disciples he has been speaking to them in "figures of speech" or parables. He means he has not been telling them plainly and clearly what he means. He has said things in a way that his meaning is not on the surface but is mysterious and must be searched for and thought about more carefully. He is referring to the way he has been speaking to them throughout their time in the upper room, not only to the image of the woman giving birth. This is why the disciples have often been confused about what he means.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture refer to speech that is not plain and clear, but is mysterious and has hidden meaning that the listener must look for? When do people in your culture use this kind of language? Share a story from your culture in which the language makes the meaning harder to understand unless the listener thinks about it more carefully. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says a time, or an hour, is coming when he will no longer speak to them in figures of speech, but will tell them plainly, or clearly, about his Father. His words will not hide his meaning from them. The disciples seem to think the time, or the hour, is immediate, but Jesus seems to be talking about the time after God raises him from death to life, which will happen in about three days.

In that day, or at that time, when Jesus speaks clearly to his disciples, they will ask God for things in Jesus' name. He means they will pray to God the Father and ask him for things because they belong to Jesus. Jesus knows that he will die to take the punishment for their sins and give them salvation. Because they accept that salvation, they will belong to Jesus. Jesus says that he himself will not ask the Father for them because he will not need to. No, they will ask the Father themselves, because God the Father loves Jesus' disciples as much as Jesus loves them. God the Father loves them because they have loved Jesus and have believed that he is truly God's messenger. Jesus repeats that he came to earth from God the Father and now he is leaving the world and returning to the Father.

In response to this, the disciples say that now he is speaking plainly and not using figures of speech. Because Jesus knew their questions even without them asking, now they are certain that he knows all things and does not need anyone to ask him questions. He knows what is in people's minds. This is why they believe he came from God.

It will become clear in the next few days that there is much the disciples still did not really understand of what Jesus has been telling them in the upper room. Here they do not say they fully understand him, but they are confident that he knows all things and that he came from God. Jesus did not need the disciples to ask him what he meant; he knew what the question of their hearts was and he answered them. This shows them his power and proves that he comes from God the Father.

Jesus asks the disciples, "Do you really now believe in me?" He is not really asking a question. He knows, even better than they do, the weakness of their faith. He says "behold" because he wants them to listen carefully to what he says next. He tells them the hour, or time, is coming soon, and has already come, when Jesus' disciples will scatter, each to their own home. They have just expressed their faith in Jesus, but Jesus knows that when he is arrested and crucified the next day, they will run away and leave him alone. Even though none of his disciples will stay with him, Jesus says he is never really alone because his father is always with him. The prophet Zechariah prophesied that the disciples would be scattered when he said, "Strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered." When Jesus was arrested and the disciples ran away, this prophecy was fulfilled.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture speak about something that will happen within a short period of time, such as in several hours or a few days? Pause this audio here.

Jesus explains that he has told them all these things so that by being united to him they may have peace. The word used for peace here does not mean the absence of trouble but the presence of deep joy. Maybe the things Jesus has told the disciples will bring them peace because they will not be surprised when the sad things happen, but they will remember that God planned them. Jesus will soon be crucified. However, the disciples will have deep joy because Jesus will show them very clearly how he has victory over peoples' sin and over death when God raises him to life again.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: Share a story from your culture about a time when a person was joyful and content even though they experienced trouble. What word or phrase do you use for that feeling? Pause this audio here.

Jesus ends by saying that in this world the disciples will have trouble, but take heart, or be brave! Jesus has overcome the evil power of the world. Everyone who is in the world will have trouble, because the world is cursed by sin, but those who are in Jesus can have peace even in the midst of trouble.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do leaders in your culture encourage their people to be brave when they must face something difficult or scary? Is there a word or phrase they use to give the people courage in these moments? Pause this audio here.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture talk about the evil powers and evil spirits of the world? What word or phrase do you use when you talk about them? Pause this audio here.

These words would be a great comfort to the disciples when Jesus' prophecies came true. The religious leaders would have Jesus crucified the next day. It would appear that Jesus had been defeated, but he would not really be defeated. His death and later resurrection would be his great victory over sin and death for all who believe in him. He tells the disciples to be courageous because he has overcome the evil power of the world. The word he uses shows that his victory is abiding, continuous. Jesus is victorious, and the disciples share in Jesus' victory because they are connected to him, so they may have peace and joy even when they experience trouble.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 16:25–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

In the first scene: Jesus tells the disciples that soon he will tell them plainly about the Father. When that time comes, the disciples will ask the Father directly for what they want because they have loved Jesus and have believed that he came from God. He has warned them about what is to come so they will have peace because he has overcome the evil powers of the world.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' 11 disciples (Judas had already left)

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Jesus is still speaking with his 11 disciples in the upper room after Judas left to betray him. The Passover Feast is almost finished.

Jesus tells the disciples he has been speaking to them in figures of speech, but soon he will not use figures of speech, but will tell them plainly, or clearly, about the Father, God. When that time comes, the disciples will ask the Father directly for what they want in Jesus' name, because they are connected to him. Jesus will not ask the Father for them, because he will not need to. The Father himself loves the disciples because they have loved Jesus and believed that he came from the Father. Jesus came from the Father into the world and now he is leaving the world to return to the Father.

The disciples say that because Jesus knew their questions without them even asking him, they now see that he doesn't need people to ask him questions in order to know what they are. Because he knows things without being told, they believe he came from God.

Jesus asks them, "Do you now believe?" He is not really wondering if they believe. He knows they believe, but their belief is weak. He says "a time is coming and is already here" to show that something will happen very soon. Jesus prophesies that soon the disciples will be scattered. He knows that when he is arrested and crucified the next day, the disciples will all run away from him and from each other. Each one will go to his own home because they will be sad and afraid. Jesus will be left alone, but he is never really alone because his Father, God, is always with him.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture talk about what happens when a group of people or animals who are together suddenly run away from each other in different directions, often because something scares them? Pause this audio here.

He has told the disciples all that he has told them so they may have peace and joy. In the world, they will have trouble because the world is cursed by sin. Jesus' disciples can have peace and joy even in the midst of trouble, because they are joined to Jesus who has already defeated the evil powers of the world. Jesus tells the disciples to take heart or be brave. The disciples are joined to Jesus, so they share in his victory.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 16:25–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Jesus' 11 disciples (Judas had already left)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus tells his disciples he has been speaking to them with "figures of speech" but soon he will not use figures of speech but will tell them plainly about the Father, God.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says when that time comes, the disciples will ask the Father directly for what they want because they are joined to Jesus. Jesus will not ask the Father for them, because he will not need to. The Father himself loves the disciples because they have loved Jesus and believed that he came from God.

Pause the drama.

The disciples say now they see that Jesus knows all things and he doesn't need anyone to ask him questions. That is why they believe he came from God.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says, "Do you now believe?"

Pause the drama.

Jesus said a time was coming when the disciples would be scattered. They would run away from each other and from Jesus, and he would be alone. But he is never really alone because God the Father is always with him.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 16:25–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus says that he has been speaking to the disciples using **figures of speech**, which can refer to parables but also to other types of language where the meaning is hidden. It is language that uses similarities, comparisons, or stories to teach something. Some languages call this type of speech "picture words" or "likeness words." Jesus uses this expression again at the end of this section. Use the same word or phrase for "figures of speech" throughout this passage.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "figures of speech." Pause this audio here.

Jesus says the **hour**, or the **time**, is coming when he will tell the disciples **plainly** about the Father. An hour is a measure of time and here it is used to represent a larger amount of time. Jesus is saying that very soon he will speak plainly about the Father. The word used for plainly was used previously in the Gospel of John and can also mean "openly" or "in boldness." In some languages this word is used for how the hearer understands something rather than for how a speaker says it. This word is also used again at the end of this passage. Use the same word or phrase for plainly throughout this passage.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "the hour is coming." Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "plainly." Pause this audio here.

Jesus says he has told the disciples all that he has told them so they will have **peace**. The word he uses for peace here means more than just the absence of trouble but also the presence of joy. Use the same word for peace that you used previously. Peace is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus told the disciples to **take heart**, or to be brave, because he had already overcome the **world**. In this case, the word world does not mean the people of the world. It means the evil powers of the world, including Satan and his demons and sin.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 16:25–33

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3442984 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5779941 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 17:1–19

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 17:1–19 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 17:1–19 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God and Jesus? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 17:1–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Do you recall in the previous passage how Jesus was talking to his disciples? Jesus was telling them that although there will be trouble in the world, Jesus himself has overcome the world.

As Jesus had just finished talking to his disciples, this is where we begin our next passage.

After Jesus had finished talking to his disciples, he looked up at the sky and started praying to God. Looking up to the sky to pray was a Jewish custom at the time.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what posture do you use when you pray? What kind of words do you use? Pause this audio here.

Jesus looks up to the sky to show that he is talking to God the Father, who lives in heaven. Jesus says "Father, the hour has come. Glorify your son, so that he may glorify you," meaning that it will soon be time for Jesus to die on the cross and show the glory of God and Jesus to the world. This means that many people will see the awesome power of God.

God gave Jesus all authority, or a right, over all people so that Jesus could give eternal life to the people God had given him to be his followers. Jesus' followers are the people who had repented, or turned away from their sins and were obeying God.

Jesus goes on to explain about the meaning of "eternal life," that the Jews and Gentiles, or non-Jews, can receive eternal life, or live a life with God that is forever. Jesus says that knowing and worshipping God means that you can enjoy his presence forever. By knowing God, that he is the only true God that exists, and knowing Jesus Christ, whom God sent to save the people from their sins, anyone can receive this eternal life with God.

Jesus goes on to say that he has brought God glory on earth by finishing the work, or tasks that God gave him to do. Jesus asks God to give him glory. Jesus was not asking for this glory to make himself look good. Jesus wanted to show the world how wonderful God was. Jesus was looking forward to God giving glory to Jesus so that everyone who saw Jesus would be amazed and worship God. Jesus asks God to honour him in the same way he did before God made the world.

God created the world, so it makes sense that God existed before the world did. As Jesus is God, then Jesus also existed with God before the world was made.

Jesus then starts praying to God for his disciples. Everything in the world is God's, and God gave Jesus people. Jesus revealed God to these people by giving them God's words or message. Because Jesus revealed God to them, these people trusted God, loved God, and obeyed God.

Jesus revealed God to the people God gave him out of the world. All people are in the world because all people live on this earth. But some people are "of" the world, meaning that they care mostly about the pleasures that the world gives them like money, greed, and power. When people understand who Jesus is and follow God, they still live in the world. However, they do not belong to the world anymore, they belong to God and God's Kingdom. God wants to rescue people who care about the world, and make them his people.

Stop here and try the following activity as a group. See if you can find a flower or plant among some weeds. Look at the flower and you can see that it might be struggling to grow as it is being crowded by other plants with thorns and it is in the shade. Now this plant is "in" a world of thorns and no daylight and it's really unhappy. So if you take out that flower and plant it somewhere with daylight and you protect it from the wind, like how God protects us, then it will heal and get better. Now the happy plant is still "in" the world as it still exists but it is no longer "of" the thorny and dark world it was before. As other flowers look at the happy flower they will want to be a part of this new better world too. Now imagine that the flower is a person. Pause this audio here.

Everything that Jesus had came from God, and the disciples knew this because Jesus shared the word, or message, of God with them and the disciples accepted and believed it. The disciples also know that it was God who sent Jesus.

Jesus continues to pray for the disciples because they belong to God but he does not pray for the "world." The "world" here means those people who refuse to believe in Jesus and instead live in sin and disobey God.

Even though Jesus does not pray for the world, he still cares about the people who don't believe in him. The people in the "world" were hostile to Jesus and his followers. The focus of this prayer, however, is for Jesus' disciples to tell the message of salvation to the people of the world who do not believe in him.

Jesus then says, "All I have is yours, and all you have is mine." Jesus means here that "All those people, *believers and followers of God's message* who belong to me, belong to you, and all who belong to you belong to me." The disciples show how glorious God and Jesus are as they display it to other people. Jesus is saying that his glory has been shown through the disciples.

Stop here and try the following activity as a group. You will need a torch, or flashlight, to represent God's glory and another object that reflects light from the torch, like a mirror or a metal can. Have one person to be God, a second person to be Jesus. Have the person playing Jesus hold the item that reflects light. Have the person playing God point the torch onto the reflective item being held by the person playing Jesus-this is God's glory going onto

Jesus. The person playing Jesus then moves the can so that the light being reflected falls on each person in the group. Pause this audio here.

Hopefully this helps to understand how God's glory works. We reflect his glory when we follow him, and other people see it.

Although Jesus is soon to leave this earthly world and join his Father in heaven, his disciples will stay behind in the world to carry on spreading the message of Jesus. Jesus says to God, "I am coming to you," meaning that he is returning to the Father in heaven, to be by God's side. This will happen after Jesus has finished his time on earth.

Jesus says "My Holy Father." He is still addressing God here and in saying "My Father, who is Holy," Jesus is showing how he respects and honours God. Jesus asks God to protect the disciples so that they will stay bound together in the faith, as God and Jesus are bound together in the faith. Jesus says that he has protected the disciples whilst he has been on earth and that none of them have been lost. Jesus doesn't mean lost in terms of them not knowing the way to somewhere. Jesus means that they will continue to follow him and stay in the community of followers. Jesus then asks God to protect the disciples with the same power that he gave to Jesus to protect them. "Protect them by the power of your name." When Jesus talks about God's name, he is saying that God is so powerful that he can protect anyone from harm. Jesus is also asking that God protect the disciples so that they will obey God's word and encourage and strengthen one another.

The only disciple who will go astray and not follow Jesus anymore is the one who betrays Jesus, Judas Iscariot. Judas was on the path following Jesus, but then Judas decided to take another path. This is so that Scripture would be fulfilled. The Jewish prophets predicted that someone would betray God's promised savior after eating with him. Scripture comes true when Judas Iscariot does this.

We saw in a previous passage that earlier that evening Jesus said, "He who has shared my bread has turned against me." Jesus and his disciples were eating a meal together and probably re-telling the story of the rescue from slavery in Egypt together. They eat the bread by dipping part of it into a bowl and Jesus says, "One of you eating with me will help my enemies capture me." Then, dipping the piece of bread, Jesus gave it to Judas Iscariot, who would be the person betraying Jesus. In Jewish culture, only people who trusted each other ate together. It is the worst betrayal to eat with someone, leave the meal, and then betray that person. Jesus is showing just how deep his betrayer's crime was.

The time is near when Judas Iscariot will betray Jesus. Again Jesus says that he is soon to be with God but that he is saying these prayers now "so that the disciples will be encouraged and have joy in their hearts as I have joy in my heart."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture what is it that makes you have joy in your hearts and makes you happy? Pause this audio here.

Jesus has given the word, or message from God, to the disciples. Because the disciples are now believers in Jesus, the world has started to hate them because they are no longer "of" the world. Jesus doesn't want God to take the disciples from the earth but instead again asks for God's protection for the disciples from the Evil One, or Satan, whilst they stay "in" the world on earth.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, if you are doing something that you feel is true and right but it makes others hate you or get angry, what do you do? Pause this audio here.

Jesus again says that he is not "of" the world and the disciples are also not "of" this world, now that they believe in Jesus and follow him.

Jesus asks God to sanctify or set apart the disciples by using his words or message which are always true. Jesus sanctified or set himself apart for God's purposes by being willing to be the sacrifice for our sins. When he did that, he made us holy, or sanctified.

Jesus says, "As you have sent me into the world I have sent them," meaning that just as God sent Jesus to talk to the unbelievers, now Jesus is sending the disciples out to the unbelievers of this world to spread the message concerning God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Can you tell us of a time when you heard some really exciting happy news? Who was the first person you told it to? Pause this audio here.

If you imagine a candle and you light it but then put it underneath a bowl, you won't be able to see its light. But if you find a clay pot or jar and you made some holes in it, the light would shine through the holes. Believers are like these jars, God's glory is the candle, and his light shines from inside us.

Pause this audio here and discuss a time when you saw God's glory, or power, working within someone, and the people around them saw it too, much like this light shining through the holes in the jars. Pause this audio here.

I hope this helps to show that we can all be made holy because God is holy.

As Jesus will be dying on the cross, he will become a holy sacrifice for the disciples, so that they too can be made holy by God's word, which is always true. Jesus is fully aware of what is about to happen to him. He trusts God and he knows that what happens next is the fulfillment of prophecy from long ago. What Jesus is about to do will mean that everyone who believes in him will become holy. This prayer is a prayer of hope for holiness that is now available to us all.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 17:1–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus has just finished speaking to the disciples. Jesus then looks up to the sky and prays to God. Jesus prays that God would show the majesty of Jesus as Jesus has shown the majesty of God.

In the second scene: Jesus prays for the disciples.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, not speaking but is present and listening
- Jesus
- 11 disciples
- Judas Iscariot, the 12th disciple, only mentioned here as the one who was lost, but not present in the scene
- A few people to represent the world

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Jesus has been talking with his disciples on the night of the Passover. They are either still in the room where they have been eating the festival meal, or they are walking on their way out of town.

As Jesus was going to pray to God, he was probably looking up when he prayed, as was the Jewish custom.

It's not clear whether the disciples are standing or sitting close enough to Jesus to hear him praying or whether they are standing further away. This may have been a private prayer between God and Jesus and that Jesus encouraged the disciples at a different time saying different words.

Jesus begins by praying to God and this prayer is mainly about himself and how Jesus is asking for God to honour him, the honour that Jesus deserves so that both God and Jesus' glory can be seen in the world.

Stop here and try the following activity as a group: Use a torch, or flashlight, for someone to turn on and shine on the character of Jesus while he is praying. During this prayer, people could act out what is happening, bringing the story to life so we can see clearly what's going on.

Find some objects that could represent "eternal life" and have someone hand these out to the disciples as Jesus prays, "that I might give eternal life to all those God has given me." Think about what Jesus said eternal life is-

that believers would know the only true God and Jesus the saviour whom God sent. Jesus asks God to glorify him so that God can be glorified. You could repeat the activity from earlier if you like where you use a reflective item and a torch, or flashlight to show God's glory. Pause this audio here.

Jesus then finishes that prayer and begins praying for the disciples.

The following prayer can be broken down into 4 sections.

The first section talks about how Jesus is glorified in order to further glorify God and how Jesus is soon to complete the work God sent Jesus to do.

Jesus talks of the work he has done so far in telling people about God and how they are now believers in Jesus. These believers know that everything Jesus has, comes from God, and that God sent Jesus. Jesus continues to pray for the glory he has received from God.

The second section talks about how God revealed Jesus to the disciples and that they responded with obedience to God.

"They were yours; you gave them, *the disciples*, to me and they have obeyed your word." The disciples believed that Jesus had been sent by God. Everything that Jesus had, the disciples knew that it all came from God.

The third section explores the relationship between the disciples and the world.

Jesus prays for the disciples as they stay behind in the world, that God will protect the disciples and keep them safe from harm.

Jesus then tells God, "None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction" and that person is Judas Iscariot.

Jesus prays for the disciples to "have joy in their hearts as I have joy in my heart."

Jesus doesn't want God to take the disciples from the earth but instead again asks for God's protection for the disciples from the Evil One, whilst they stay "in" the world on earth.

The fourth section looks at the dedication of the disciples to the father. Jesus asks that the disciples will be sanctified and made holy, as Jesus is holy.

Jesus prays that as he will become a holy sacrifice to serve God, by dying on the cross, the disciples can also be made holy. The disciples can then serve God too by spreading the truth and making him known.

There are a lot of words that are repeated in this passage, such as world, glory, and sanctify (or make holy). Perhaps when you hear or say these words when you re-tell the passage, you could make a special motion with your hands.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 17:1–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, not speaking but is present and listening
- Jesus
- 11 disciples
- Judas Iscariot, the 12th disciple, only mentioned here as the one who was lost, but not present in the scene
- A few people to represent the world

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus is praying throughout most of this section. As he is praying, other people can act out what is being said.

First scene

You could start by having the people playing Jesus and the disciples talking on the night of the Passover. They are either still in the room where they have been eating the festival meal, or they are walking on their way out of town. The setting here is not as important as the words Jesus spoke. Jesus could use his hand as a sign for the disciples to sit. Jesus then walks ahead a little then turns to God and starts praying.

Pause the drama.

Second scene

Jesus then walks on ahead a little from the disciples and turns to look up to the sky and pray to God.

Pause the drama.

Act out the handing out of the objects of eternal life to the disciple as Jesus says "that he might give them eternal life."

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like, "We are so glad that we get to live with Jesus forever," or "I wonder what heaven will be like," and "I wonder what kind of food we will eat-will we even need to eat at all?" [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out the glory of God shining with someone turning on a torch, or flashlight, and shining it on the character of Jesus as he says "And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began" If the torch can be made brighter or you can shine more torches at the same time to show God's glory on Jesus. At that point the disciples could all turn and look at Jesus in amazement.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like, "The glory of God is amazing," or "It's so bright that we can see it on Jesus's face," and "We look forward to telling more people about the glory of God and Jesus." [!end] Continue the drama.

Third scene

Jesus is now praying for his disciples. The person playing Jesus could interact with the disciples in this scene.

Act out Jesus approaching the disciples as he says, "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me," then the person playing God could hand a pile of leaves to Jesus and then Jesus can hand them out to the disciples to show that "I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them."

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like, "We are happy to have heard God's words and glad that Jesus shared the words with them," or "We are looking forward to sharing these words with other people," and "We are excited to tell more people about Jesus." [!end] Continue the drama.

When Jesus says, "I will soon not be in the world but that the disciples will be staying behind," the person playing Jesus could look at his disciples.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like, "We're not exactly sure when Jesus will leave us, or what his departure will look like," or "We will really miss Jesus, he has been such a faithful friend," and "We're wondering about what will happen next and what Jesus will do." [!end] Continue the drama.

As Jesus asks God to protect the disciples, you could have some people form a circle around the disciples and act as a protective barrier. The disciples could all hold onto each other's arms to show that "they are one."

When Jesus says "that the disciples may have the full measure of my joy within them," the disciples could stand up, be smiling and holding their hands up in worship.

Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like, "We have such joy in our hearts," or "We hope to share this joy with other people when we tell them about Jesus," and "There is nothing else that brings us this much joy." [!end] Continue the drama.

Have a few people to represent the world. The character playing Jesus could give some more leaves to the disciples to again represent the word and the people who are representing the world could be angry at the disciples and try to attack them. The other people who made a circle around the disciples before could do so again to form a ring of protection around the disciples. Those same people could then wrestle with the "world" and fight them off to show God's protection over the disciples. The "world" can stop fighting but let them remain in the scene so it's clear that they will always be present.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like, "We are a bit scared of what some people in the world will do to us," or "There will be difficult times ahead," and "But living for Jesus is so worth it." [!end] Continue the drama.

Jesus then says "For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified."

Act out the exercise from earlier with the torch, or flashlight, shining on Jesus, with Jesus holding a mirror or a can and then shining the reflected light onto the disciples. As God is holy, Jesus is holy, and he is making the disciples holy.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 17:1–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus looks up to the sky to **pray** to show that he is talking to God the Father, who lives in heaven. Translate pray as you have in previous passages. Pray is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus says "Father, the hour has come. Glorify your son, so that your son may glorify you," meaning that it will soon be time for Jesus to be taken to die on the cross and the glory of God and Jesus to be revealed to the world.

God gave Jesus all **authority**, or a right, over all people. Translate authority as you have in previous passages, and remember that authority is in the Master Glossary. This was so that Jesus could give **eternal life** to the people God had given him to be his followers. Translate "eternal life" in the same way as you have in previous passages. Eternal life is in the Master Glossary. Eternal life is when people know the only true God, and Jesus **Christ**, whom God has sent. Translate Christ or Messiah as you have in previous passages. Christ or Messiah are both in the Master Glossary.

Jesus goes on to say that he has brought God glory on earth by finishing the **work**, or tasks that God gave him to do. Jesus asks God to give him **glory**. The work here is sharing the message of God with people on earth so that they have the chance to be saved from their sins and be obedient to Jesus. Jesus was not asking for glory to make himself look good but to show the world how wonderful God was. Translate glory as you have done in previous passages. Glory is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus said to God, "You gave them to me and they have obeyed your **word**." Everything that Jesus had, came from God, and the disciples knew this because Jesus shared the words or message of the good news from God with them. Translate Word as you have done in previous passages, and remember that Word is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus continues to pray for the disciples because they belong to God, but he does not pray for the **world**. "The world" here means those people who refuse to believe in Jesus and instead live in sin and disobey God.

Jesus says "My Holy Father" meaning "My Father, who is Holy." Jesus is demonstrating how he respects and honours God. Translate **holy** as you have in previous passages, and remember that holy is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus asks God to protect the disciples so that they will stay bound together in the faith, meaning to **be as one**, as God and Jesus are bound together **as one** in the faith, which means that they were united in their thoughts. They thought in the same way and had the same intentions.

Jesus says that he has protected the disciples whilst he has been on earth and that none of them have been **lost**. Lost meaning that they are no longer following Jesus.

The only person to be lost is the person "doomed to destruction," or the person who betrays Jesus. This person was lost "so that **Scripture** would be fulfilled." Scripture was the Jewish holy books that we now know as the Old Testament. The Jewish Scriptures included the writings of the Jewish prophets. Translate Scripture as you have in previous passages. Scripture is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus again says that he is not "of" the world and the disciples are also not "of" this world, now that they believe in Jesus and follow him.

Jesus prays that God will protect the disciples from the "evil one" which is another name for Satan. Translate **Satan** as you have in previous passages. Satan is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus asks God to **sanctify** the disciples, meaning "to make them holy" by using the words or message of God which are always true.

Stop here and discuss how you will describe sanctify, or make holy. Sanctification and holy are in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says "As you have **sent me** into the world I have **sent them**," meaning that just as God sent Jesus to talk to the unbelievers, now Jesus is sending the disciples out to the unbelievers of this world to spread the message concerning God.

Jesus says that he will sanctify himself for the sake of the disciples. Jesus is saying that he will dedicate himself to God by making himself a holy, or special, sacrifice by dying for his followers. Jesus says, "I give myself as a holy sacrifice for them so your truth can make them holy." Both holy and sacrifice are in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 17:1–19

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4504072 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 17:20–26

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 17:20–26 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 17:20–26 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God and Jesus? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 17:20–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Do you recall in the previous passage that after Jesus had finished talking to his disciples, he looked up at the sky and started praying to God for his disciples who were with him at that time?

Jesus is still looking up to the sky to show that he is talking to God the Father, who lives in heaven. The 11 disciples are still with him but this time Jesus is praying for *all* believers, including those that haven't even heard of him yet.

Jesus is praying for those who believe in him because of the message that Jesus shared with the disciples; the disciples will then share with other people and then those people will come to believe in Jesus.

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: Tell a story about a time when people in your community passed good news around until everyone in the community heard the good news. How did people pass on the news? Was it by radio, by telephone calls, by visiting people's homes? How do you normally share good news in your community? Pause this audio here.

Jesus is praying to God that all the future believers will be one. Jesus is praying that they would act together just as if they were one person.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In what ways in your community do you work together as if you were all one person? Give an example of a time when everyone worked together. What did you do? How did everyone feel as they were working together? Pause this audio here.

Jesus and God are so closely bound together that they are "one."

Jesus asks God to let the future disciples be in union with them, so that the world may believe that God sent Jesus. God and Jesus are bound together in unity and love but they also want the disciples to be bound up with them, experiencing the same unity and love that the Father has given to Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell us about a time when you saw your community leaders working together in unity, and you wanted to join in and work together with them. What did you do? Pause this audio here.

Jesus prays "that they may be in us" and "that they may be united to us." Jesus wants the disciples to work together with them!

Jesus then says "I have given them the glory that you gave me." Jesus is saying that he has given his disciples the glory, or wonderful life, that God the Father gave Jesus. Jesus is probably talking about how life is better when his disciples and God are joined all together in unity. That unity brings glory to God, and therefore Jesus has brought that glory to the disciples!

Do you recall the activity that you did in the previous passage where you had the mirror and the torch? Feel free to repeat the following activity to remind you of God's glory being reflected.

Stop here and try the following activity as a group. You will need a torch, or flashlight, to represent God's glory and another object that reflects light from the torch, like a mirror or a metal can. Have one person to be God, a second person to be Jesus. Have the person playing Jesus hold the item that reflects light. Have the person playing God point the torch onto the reflective item being held by the person playing Jesus-this is God's glory going onto Jesus. The person playing Jesus then moves the can so that the light being reflected falls on each person in the group. Pause this audio here.

The unity of Jesus' disciples with each other and with Jesus is to show the world that the Father sent his son Jesus, and that the Father loves the disciples in the same way that he loves his son.

Jesus then prays for *all* the people that God has given Jesus that will eventually believe in him. Jesus is praying that when he returns to heaven, these future believers would be able to join him one day in heaven.

Jesus also wants the world to see that the Father loves the disciples as much as he loves Jesus. Jesus says that the Father loved him before the world was made. Jesus calls God Father as a sign of affection and respect.

God gave Jesus glory, or fame, even before he made the world, because he loved Jesus before he made the world. Jesus existed even before the world existed.

Now Jesus calls God "righteous father." Jesus wants people to know that the Father God is righteous because he does what is right and judges fairly.

There are people in the world who do not yet know about Jesus and the Father. However, Jesus knows the Father, and Jesus' disciples know that the Father sent Jesus, and that is how more people in the world will learn about Jesus and the Father.

Jesus loves the disciples as much as the Father loves Jesus. The disciples should also love others as much as the Father God loves Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In what ways in your community do you demonstrate love and care for each other?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 17:20–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

In the scene: Jesus continues praying, but now he prays for the people who will believe in him in the future. Jesus asks that the believers act as one person, and that the believers remain in unity with God the Father and Jesus. This will show the world that God sent Jesus. Jesus wants the future believers to be with him someday, and to see Jesus' glory. Jesus says that he will continue to make the Father God known to people.

The characters in this passage are:

- God is present and listening, but not speaking
- Jesus
- 11 disciples

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Jesus is still looking up to the sky to show that he is talking to God the Father, who lives in heaven. The 11 disciples are still with him but this time Jesus is praying for *all* believers, including those that haven't even heard of him yet.

It's not clear what time of day it is but they are either still in the room where they have been eating the festival meal, or they are walking on their way out of town.

When Jesus prays "that all of them may be one," you could get a group of people to do some movements at the same time as each other, to show unity.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you express unity? What kind of things do you do to create a feeling of everyone having one mind or acting in unity, or living in agreement with one another? Pause this audio here.

Jesus prays about how he and the Father are closely bound, or connected together, and that Jesus' desire is for the disciples to be bound with them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what would you do to make someone who is outside the group to feel included? How would you make them feel that they now belong to your community or group? Pause the audio here.

Jesus then prays, "I have given them the glory." Jesus is referring to giving his disciples, both now and in the future, the glory that God gave him.

Do you recall the activity mentioned earlier where you had the mirror and the torch? Feel free to repeat this activity to remind you of God's glory being reflected onto the disciples. Pause the audio here.

Jesus then prays for those the Father has given him, which means everyone that would come to believe in Jesus in the future. Jesus wants these future disciples to also be with him in heaven, and he wants them to see and experience the same glory, or unity with God, that Jesus has.

The purpose of this was for the disciples to be united with each other in the same way that he, Jesus, and his Father were united. Jesus is sharing in the majesty and greatness of God. The disciples will see how Jesus shares God's highest status and greatness because God gave it to Jesus. God gave his glory to Jesus because he loves Jesus so much and has loved him since before the world was made.

Jesus prays to his "Righteous Father," meaning one who judges fairly. Now Jesus makes a contrast. He says that the world, or the people in the world, do not know God. However, Jesus says that he *does* know God. Then Jesus says that his disciples, the people who believe in Jesus, know that God sent Jesus.

Jesus reminds the Father God that he has shown who God is to the disciples. Then Jesus says that he will continue to show who God is to people in the future. Jesus will do this so that people in the future can experience the same love that the Father God has for Jesus. Then the disciples will love people in the same way that God loves Jesus. When the disciples experience this love, then they will be "in Jesus," which means that they will be connected to Jesus and follow and obey him.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 17:20–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, is present and listening, but he is not speaking
- Jesus
- 11 disciples

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus is praying for those that currently believe in him, and he is also praying for future believers. The future believers will hear God's message from the 11 disciples who are with Jesus in this passage.

Jesus prays that there will be unity amongst the disciples, that they will work as a good team.

As Jesus and God are one, Jesus prays that the disciples will also be united with God and Jesus. This is so that the world will believe that God's message is true. Jesus says that he has given the disciples the glory that God gave Jesus, so that they could all be united and brought together as one. This is so the world would see the glory in the disciples and know that it has come from something beyond this world, as it comes from God.

Jesus wants the world to see that the Father loves the disciples just as much as the Father loves Jesus.

Pause the drama.

God gave Jesus glory, or fame, even before he made the world, because he loved Jesus before he made the world. Jesus existed even before the world existed.

Now Jesus calls on God in a respectful and affectionate way, as he knows God's ways are just and fair.

There are people in the world who do not yet know about Jesus and the Father. However, Jesus knows the Father, and Jesus' disciples know that the Father sent Jesus, and that is how more people in the world will learn about Jesus and the Father.

Jesus loves the disciples as much as the Father loves Jesus. The disciples should also love others as much as the Father God loves Jesus.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 17:20–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

In this passage, Jesus continues to say that his **prayer** is not for the disciples only. Use the same word for prayer as you used in previous passages.

Jesus prays for those who will believe in him through the **message** of his **disciples**. Message refers to God's message that the disciples will share with those who don't yet believe in Jesus or know about Jesus. Use the same word for disciples as you have in previous passages. Disciples is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus prays "that all of them may be one, Father." Jesus is praying that the disciples would work in unity together in the same way that God and Jesus work in unity with each other. Jesus calls God Father as a sign of affection and respect.

Jesus continues to say, "May they also be in us so that the **world** may believe that you have **sent me**." Jesus talks about "the world," which means the people in the world. He prays that everyone in the world will believe in him. He also prays for those who would believe in Jesus in the future.

Jesus says, "I have given them the **glory** that you gave me." Use the same word or phrase for glory as you used in previous passages. For more information on glory, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus calls God the "**righteous** Father." The Father is righteous because he does what is right and judges fairly. Use the same word or phrase for righteous as you used in previous passages. For more information on righteousness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 17:20–26

Audio Content

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John 18:1–14

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 18:1–14 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 18:1–14 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 18:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Do you recall in the previous passage how Jesus was praying to God whilst his disciples were with him? Jesus has just finished praying to God and he and the disciples leave the city of Jerusalem to cross over the Kidron Valley. The Kidron Valley would sometimes have a river running through it, but at this time it was dry and had no water in it, so Jesus and the disciples could easily cross through it.

On the other side of the Kidron Valley there was a garden full of trees; this is also known as a grove. People planted groves of trees in order to harvest the fruit from the trees. The grove was probably near the bottom of the hill called the Mount of Olives just outside of Jerusalem.

Stop here and look at a picture of a grove of trees as a group. Also look at a picture of a map of Jerusalem, the Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives. Pause this audio here.

Jesus and his disciples entered the grove of trees.

Jesus had often or regularly gone to gather with Judas and the other disciples at the grove of trees. That meant that Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus, knew where the place was and how to get there. If you recall from previous passages that although Judas was one of Jesus' disciples, he began to oppose Jesus, he agreed to help Jesus' enemies. Judas received money as a reward for promising to lead the Roman soldiers and Jewish officials to Jesus so that they could arrest him.

The chief priests and Pharisees, or religious leaders, gave Judas some temple guards who acted as police to keep the Jewish temple safe. They also gave Judas a small number of Roman soldiers, perhaps around 20 or fewer. Judas came to the grove with this group of men to arrest Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, who helps keep your places of worship safe? Who arrests people when they have done illegal things? Pause this audio here.

The Chief Priests were usually not Pharisees but members of a different religious group, called the Sadducees. They carried out sacrifices and were in charge of the religious rituals in the temple. They were the most important amongst the Jewish Priests. The Pharisees were a Jewish religious group. It was very important to the Pharisees that the Jewish people obey all the Jewish religious laws very carefully.

As it was nighttime and it was dark, the soldiers and temple officials were carrying torches and lanterns. The lanterns could have been made of burnt clay or metal with a place for oil and a wick. The wick was a string made of a plant called flax. People lit the wick like a candle to give light. People made torches from sticks, tying a rag to the end of the stick and dipping it in oil. People would then light that oil.

Stop here and look at some pictures of a lantern and a torch as a group. Pause this audio here.

The soldiers and officials also carried weapons with them. They were prepared to fight in case Jesus resisted. The weapons they carried were most likely a mixture of swords, spears, and knives.

Stop here and look at some pictures of swords, spears, and knives as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus was willing to give himself up calmly because he knew everything that would happen to him, all the things that they would do to torture him and the suffering that he would endure. He stepped forward to greet the soldiers and officials.

Jesus also wanted to protect the disciples from harm by offering himself to the officials and soldiers. He wanted to let them arrest him without resisting or fighting.

After Jesus stepped forward toward these men, he asked, "Who is it you want?" This may seem an odd question, as Jesus knows that they are looking for him. He is probably saying this so that the soldiers and officials have to say it out loud so that it is clear that they are looking for Jesus. When the soldiers and officials say "Jesus of Nazareth" they are making it clear that they are looking for a man named Jesus who was from the village called Nazareth. Jesus was a common name among Jews at that time. Nazareth helps these men to make sure they have found the right Jesus. Jesus can then step forward and go with them and his disciples will remain safe because the soldiers and officials have now found the man they are looking for.

Nazareth was a small town in the province of Galilee.

Stop here and look at a picture of a map showing the place of Nazareth where Jesus was from. Pause this audio here.

Then, Jesus tells them "I am he" or "I am." In this passage, Jesus may have been saying "I am" in the same way God said his own name in the Old Testament. Jesus may have been referring to himself as divine. Jesus is also confirming that he is the one they are looking for.

Judas the betrayer was standing with the soldiers and officials. The soldiers and officials stepped backwards and fell to the ground when they heard Jesus say "I am he." This may have been due to fear or awe as they had most likely heard all the things that Jesus had done and the miracles he had performed. They may have realised that Jesus was identifying himself with God. Judas, the betrayer, who was standing with the soldiers and officials, most likely also fell to the ground.

Again Jesus asks who it is they want, and they give the same answer of "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus wants to protect his disciples so he says to the soldiers and officials that as he has told them that he is Jesus of Nazareth, the man they really want, then they should let the disciples go freely. Jesus wants the disciples to be able to leave and go to a place of safety.

Do you recall in a previous passage that Jesus says, "I shall lose none of all those he has given me"? Now we see that Jesus will protect the disciples, who had been given to him by God. The author John reminds us that Jesus has said before that he will not lose any of the people God has given him.

Simon Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, also had a sword, or long knife with him. He most likely panicked in the situation and didn't want Jesus to be taken away. So Simon Peter then drew out his sword, which means that he pulled it out of its case. The case was probably attached to a belt that was most likely tied around his waist.

Stop here and look at a picture of a sword in a sheath that someone is wearing around their waist with a belt. Pause this audio here.

Simon Peter then used the sword and struck, or hit, the servant or slave of the high priest, a man named Malchus, and cut off his right ear.

Jesus commands, or tells, Simon Peter to put his sword away into its case. Jesus says, "Shall I not drink the cup the father has given me?" Jesus is reminding his disciples that this current situation was supposed to happen. Jesus is supposed to be arrested, mocked, tortured, and then would die on the cross. Jesus wanted to obey and carry out what God had planned for him to do. Simon Peter may have forgotten this in his panic to protect Jesus.

The soldiers and their captain and officials then arrest Jesus. They bind him up, which most likely means they tie up his hands with rope, probably so that his hands were tied either behind him or in front of him.

They took Jesus to Annas, who used to be the high priest and was still very much respected as a leader, or ruler. Annas was also the father-in-law of Caiaphas.

Caiaphas was the high priest at that time. You will remember that Caiaphas had earlier told the other Jewish leaders that it would be good if one man died for the people. Meaning at the time, Caiaphas thought that Jesus should die to save all the Jewish people. Caiaphas was afraid that if Jesus continued teaching God's message, his followers might rebel against the Romans. Then that may mean the Romans would come and destroy the Jewish nation.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 18:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus and his disciples depart from where they are and start to cross the Kidron Valley. On the other side of the valley was a grove of trees, and Jesus and his disciples entered into it.

In the second scene: Judas Iscariot, the betrayer, already knew that Jesus and his disciples would be heading toward the grove of trees. So Judas leads a group of Roman soldiers and Jewish officials to the garden. After they confirm that Jesus is the man they want, they arrest Jesus. Simon Peter attacks a slave of the high priest. Then they arrest Jesus.

In the third scene: The Roman soldiers and Jewish officials then tie Jesus up and take him to Annas, the high priest, so that they could question him.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- 11 disciples, including Simon Peter
- Judas Iscariot, the betrayer
- Roman soldiers
- Jewish officials, or temple guards
- Someone called Malchus who gets his ear cut off
- Annas, father-in-law of Caiaphas, doesn't say anything but Jesus is brought to him at the end of the passage.

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In this passage it doesn't say what time of day it is but as some of the characters arrive with lanterns and flame torches, it is most likely after dark as they are using them to light the way so that they can see.

Jesus finishes praying to God and he and the disciples leave the city of Jerusalem to cross over the Kidron Valley. It is most likely evening but the Kidron Valley at this time was dry and had no water in it so Jesus and the disciples could cross easily through it. This was approximately a distance of 1 kilometre, or 3/4 of a mile.

Once they crossed the Kidron Valley, Jesus and his disciples arrived at a garden full of trees called a grove. This was probably at the bottom of the hill called the "Mount of Olives."

Stop here and look again at a picture of a grove of trees and a map showing Jerusalem, the Kidron Valley, and the Mount of Olives. Pause this audio here.

Judas, the man who betrayed Jesus, knew where the grove of trees was and how to get there. The author John identifies Judas twice as "the betrayer." John wants us to remember what Judas did.

Judas received money as a reward for promising to guide the Roman soldiers and Jewish officials to Jesus in the olive grove so that they could arrest him. We don't know how many men came to arrest Jesus. The Jewish officials were possibly also guards of the temple that the chief priests and the Pharisees had sent.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story from your culture about someone who betrayed someone else. How do you talk about them? How do people feel about them? Pause this audio here.

As the soldiers and officials were carrying lanterns and flaming torches, it was most likely nighttime. Both the lanterns and the torches provided light for the soldiers and officials to be able to see their way in the dark.

These soldiers and officials were prepared to fight in case Jesus resisted. The weapons they carried were most likely a mixture of swords, spears, and knives.

Jesus was willing to go with these men peacefully. Jesus also wanted to protect the disciples from harm by offering himself to officials and soldiers. Jesus didn't want to resist or have a fight.

Nazareth was a small town in the province of Galilee and Jesus was from there. When the soldiers and officials ask for "Jesus of Nazareth," they are making it clear that they are looking for a man named Jesus. Jesus then confirms that he is the man they are looking for.

Because Jesus said "I am," the soldiers and officials probably fell to the ground in fear. Something in the way that Jesus said "I am" showed his authority and made the officials be in awe of him.

The soldiers and officials step backwards and fall to the ground as they have most likely heard all the things that Jesus had done and the miracles he had performed. Judas also falls onto the ground.

Jesus asked them a second time who they were looking for. For a second time they say Jesus of Nazareth. And, for a second time, Jesus confirms that it is he.

Jesus wants to protect his disciples so he says to the soldiers and officials that as he has told them that he is Jesus of Nazareth, and they should let the disciples go freely. Jesus wants the disciples to be able to leave and go to a place of safety.

This fulfilled, or completed what Jesus had said, that he had not lost any of those God had given to him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about someone who protected his friends. What kinds of things did he do? Pause this audio here.

Simon Peter also had a sword with him, which he pulls out of its case and strikes one of the servants of the high priest, a man named Malchus. When Simon Peter strikes the servant, he cuts off his right ear.

Jesus tells Simon Peter to put his sword away. He reminds the disciples that this current situation was supposed to happen and that Jesus wanted to obey and carry out what God had planned for him to do. Jesus asks a question that he does not expect an answer to. He asks, "Shall I not drink this cup the Father has given me?" Jesus uses special language here-in that culture a "cup" symbolized suffering. Jesus is saying that he is supposed to suffer, because his Father God has asked him to.

The soldiers and their captain and officials then tie up and arrest Jesus and take him to Annas, a respected leader. Annas was also the father-in-law of Caiaphas. We do not know where Annas was, but most likely they took Jesus back across the Kidron Valley into Jerusalem.

Caiaphas was the high priest at that time. The author John identifies Caiaphas as the one who had earlier told the other Jewish leaders that it would be good if one man died for the people. He thought that Jesus should die to save all the Jewish people. Caiaphas was afraid that if Jesus continued teaching God's message, his followers might rebel against the Romans. Then that may mean the Romans would come and destroy the Jewish nation.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 18:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- 11 disciples, including Simon Peter
- Judas Iscariot, the betrayer
- Roman soldiers
- Jewish officials, or temple guards
- Someone called Malchus who gets his ear cut off
- Annas, father-in-law of Caiaphas, doesn't say anything but Jesus is brought to him at the end of the passage.

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

First scene

Jesus finishes praying to God and he and the disciples leave the city of Jerusalem to cross over the Kidron Valley. Once they crossed the Kidron Valley, Jesus and his disciples arrived at a garden full of trees.

Pause the drama.

Second scene

Judas, the man who betrayed Jesus, knew where the garden or grove was and how to get there. He had also brought with him a group of Roman soldiers and Jewish officials, who were carrying weapons.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer with things like, "I know these men are here to arrest me," or "I will go peacefully," and "I don't want to fight them." [!end] Continue the drama.

Jesus asks the men who they want. The soldiers and officials say that they want "Jesus of Nazareth." They are making it clear that they are looking for a man named Jesus. Jesus then confirms that he is the man they are looking for. Jesus says "I am." The soldiers and officials step backwards and fall backwards to the ground in fear and awe. They have most likely heard all the things that Jesus had done and the miracles he had performed. Judas also falls onto the ground.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the soldiers and officials, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like, "He is the one we have heard about, he is powerful!" or "We know we must arrest him but we must be careful," and "We must be prepared to attack if he does not come with us."

Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer with things like, "I must keep my disciples safe," or "Once they know that I am the man they are looking for, the disciples can go to a place of safety," and "We must all be calm and obey instructions." [!end] Continue the drama.

Jesus wants to protect his disciples, so he says to the soldiers and officials that as he has told them that he is Jesus of Nazareth, and they should let the disciples go freely. This fulfilled, or completed what Jesus had said, that he had not lost any of those God had given to him.

Simon Peter also had a sword with him, which he pulls out of its case and strikes one of the servants of the high priest, a man named Malchus, and cuts off his right ear.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Malchus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer with things like, "Jesus was willing to come peacefully," or "I didn't expect the disciples to attack," and "Should I fight back or do we just leave in peace taking Jesus with us?"

Ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like, "We can't believe Simon Peter did that," or "We must be careful, what if they fight back, do we need to attack?" and "Should we let them take Jesus?" [!end] Continue the drama.

Jesus tells Simon Peter to put his sword away and reminds the disciples that this current situation was supposed to happen and that Jesus wanted to obey and carry out what God had planned for him to do.

Third scene

The soldiers and their captain and officials then tie up and arrest Jesus and take him to Annas, a respected leader. Annas was also the father-in-law of Caiaphas.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer with things like "I'm sad to be leaving my disciples," or "I am glad though, that they are safe," and "In time they will understand the reason for why these events need to take place." [!end] Continue the drama.

Caiaphas was the high priest at that time. He was the one who had earlier told the other Jewish leaders that it would be good if one man, meaning Jesus, died for the people.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer with things like, "I do not fear this man," or "I will answer their questions," and "I will be calm and peaceful, I know what needs to happen in order to follow God's plan for the world."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 18:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus left with his disciples when he had finished praying. Use the same word for **disciples** and **pray** as you used in previous passages. For more information on disciples and pray, refer to the Master Glossary.

On the other side of the Kidron Valley there was a garden, or **grove** full of trees. Use the term that you would use for an area that is created for growing a specific fruit, or tree, or plant.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for grove of trees. Pause this audio here.

Judas received money as a reward for promising to lead a detachment of soldiers and officials to Jesus so that they could arrest him. The **detachment** of soldiers were a smaller group of Roman soldiers, probably around 20. The **officials** were probably Jewish temple guards who helped guard the Jewish temple.

The chief priests and Pharisees sent the Jewish officials. The **chief priests** carried out sacrifices and were in charge of the religious rituals in the temple. They were the most important amongst the Jewish priests. The **Pharisees** were a Jewish religious group. It was very important to them to obey all of the Jewish religious laws very carefully. See the Master Glossary for priest and Pharisees, and use the same words as you have in previous passages.

As it was nighttime and it was dark, the soldiers and officials were carrying lanterns. **Lanterns** are a flame that are encased in something. This is so that the light can escape to show them the way in the dark but also protects the flame so that it doesn't blow out. The lanterns could have been made of burnt clay or metal with a place for oil and a wick. The wick was a string made of a plant called flax. People lit the wick like a candle to give light. People made **torches** from sticks, tying a rag to the end of the stick and dipping it in oil. People would then light that oil.

The soldiers and officials also carried **weapons** with them. They were prepared to fight in case Jesus resisted. The weapons they carried were most likely a mixture of swords, spears, and knives.

When the soldiers and officials say "**Jesus of Nazareth**" they are making it clear that they are looking for a man named Jesus who was from the village called Nazareth, a small town in the province of Galilee. Jesus was a common name among Jews at that time. Nazareth helps these men to make sure they have found the right Jesus.

Then, Jesus tells them that he is the one they are looking for. Jesus replies "I am," or "I am he." God revealed himself to Moses on the mountain by saying "I am that I am." In the New Testament, and especially in the book of John, Jesus said "I am" many times. Sometimes Jesus said "I am" to identify himself with the One true God. In this passage, Jesus may have been saying "I am" in the same way God said his own name in the Old Testament. Say "I am" in the same way you have in previous passages in John and see the Master Glossary for more information about I am.

Simon Peter also had a sword with him, **drew** it and **struck** the high priest's **slave**, who was called Malchus. Drew or to draw something out means here to take it out of its case. The sword would have had a case to protect the blade, so that it could be carried around the waist. Struck means to hit or smack something or someone. Slave is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word as you have in previous passages.

The detachment of soldiers with its commander: A **commander** is a person who is in charge of a large group of soldiers. The commander would be the one giving the orders and instructing the soldiers on what to do.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 18:1–14

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4001863 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (7401215 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 18:15–27

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 18:15–27 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 18:15–27 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 18:15–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Do you recall in the previous passage how Jesus had just been arrested by the Roman soldiers and Jewish officials? These Roman soldiers and Jewish officials take Jesus to see Annas, the high priest, at his house. Annas was a well respected leader and he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas the high priest. Annas used to be the high

priest, and the Romans then appointed Caiaphas as the high priest. However, the people still highly respected Annas and probably called both him and Caiaphas by the title high priest. Annas' home was surrounded by a courtyard that was surrounded by a wall. There would have been a door in the wall which was how people entered and exited the courtyard. There would have been a servant, or a doorkeeper whose job it was to check who people were before they let them in through the door or made sure to keep them out if they were not welcome. There was no roof or ceiling in the courtyard, which meant you could see the sky.

Stop here and look at a picture of a courtyard. Pause this audio here.

Two of Jesus' disciples followed the crowd of Roman soldiers and Jewish officials that had arrested Jesus as they went to Annas' house. The first disciple was Simon Peter. We do not know who the second disciple was. As they have followed Jesus just after he had been arrested, it's most likely that it will have been someone who was with Jesus in the garden when he was arrested. In these explanations we will simply call the "other" disciple the "second disciple."

Because the second disciple was well known to Annas the high priest and also the servant girl, who was the doorkeeper, she let the second disciple enter with Jesus into the courtyard of Annas' home. It is not clear how they knew each other. What is clear is that Annas and the servant girl were familiar enough with the second disciple to allow him to enter into Annas' courtyard.

Simon Peter was not allowed to enter through the door because he did not know Annas, the high priest, and was not known by the servant girl at the door. Simon Peter had to wait outside of the walled courtyard area, near the door.

The second disciple then came back and spoke to the servant girl at the door, most likely asking permission for her to let Simon Peter in. The servant girl then lets Simon Peter in through the door and into the courtyard area. The same servant girl then asks Simon Peter if he is one of the disciples of that man, Jesus. Simon Peter says to the servant girl, "No, I am not a disciple of that man, Jesus."

Because it was cold, the servants who worked for Annas, along with the officials, or guards, built a charcoal fire. The fire was made by burning coals, and they stood around the fire to keep warm. Remember that the courtyard is outside and as evening approaches it would be colder. It is probably also dark and not easy to see each other. Simon Peter also stood with them to try and keep warm by the fire. It is not clear where the second disciple is at this point, but he was most likely somewhere in the courtyard.

Stop here and look at a picture of a fire of burning coals. Pause this audio here.

At the same time this was happening, Annas, the high priest, was in his house and asking Jesus lots of questions. He was trying to find a reason for sentencing Jesus to death.

Annas asked questions about Jesus' followers and about his teaching. Annas was concerned about the amount of people that were following Jesus and he may have wanted to know how many followers Jesus had.

Annas also wanted to know what Jesus had been teaching his disciples. Annas may be suggesting that Jesus was secretly teaching false and dangerous ideas. If Annas could prove this, he would have reason to have Jesus killed.

Jesus says to Annas, "I have spoken openly to the world," meaning that he has been speaking in public places, preaching to those he has come into contact with. The message that Jesus taught was always the same, whether he was with a few of his disciples or teaching a large crowd. "I have always taught in synagogues or in the temple courtyard, where all the Jews gather."

Jesus says, "I said nothing in secret." He says this so that it is clear that he has spoken freely and not kept himself or his actions hidden away. Jesus was not trying to cause any trouble. Jesus says, "Why question me? Ask those who heard me, surely they know what I said." Jesus was trying to tell Annas, the high priest, that they should talk to other people, witnesses, so that they could back Jesus up and confirm what he is saying is true.

Jewish law states that it is the witnesses who they should be questioning and not the person on trial. Jesus is asking that the trial he is facing be done in a legal way, with witnesses.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you treat people you suspect of committing a crime? How do you discover what they did? Who do you ask what they did? Do you get a fair trial if you are suspected of a crime? What protection is there for these suspects? Pause this audio here.

One of the temple guards who was standing near to Jesus, slapped Jesus in the face, probably on his cheek. The temple guard then says to Jesus, "You should not answer the high priest in that disrespectful way." Jesus replies to the temple guard by saying, "If I said anything wrong, you must prove it. Tell everyone here what it was I said that was wrong or disrespectful"

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you treat people who are seen to be disrespectful to those in authority? What is the punishment? Pause this audio here.

As Jesus did not say anything wrong or disrespectful, the temple guard most likely has no response. Jesus asks the temple guard why he slapped him as Jesus was telling the truth, and again the temple guard most likely had no reply. Annas then asks the temple guard to take Jesus, who still has his hands tied up, to Caiaphas, the main high priest. Jesus will be on trial before Caiaphas, the main high priest, in front of the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin were the chief council of the Jews. Caiaphas, the main high priest, was the only one who could call a meeting of the Sanhedrin.

Meanwhile, Simon Peter, the servants of Annas, and the officials were all still standing by the fire of coals to keep warm in the courtyard. The servants and officials asked Simon Peter if he is one of the disciples of that man, Jesus. Simon Peter says to the servants and officials, "No, I am not a disciple of that man, Jesus."

Do you recall earlier in the evening in the olive grove when Peter had cut off the ear of Malchus who was a servant of the high priest? One of Malchus' relatives, another servant of the high priest, was standing near Simon Peter in the courtyard. This servant insisted and asked Peter, "I saw you in the garden with Jesus, didn't I?" This time, the servant asks the question in a more threatening way-he feels sure that he has seen Simon Peter, and he expects Simon Peter to say "yes." Again Simon Peter denies it. At that moment a rooster crowed. A rooster is a bird similar to a chicken. Roosters crow in the early hours of the morning.

Stop here and look at a picture of a rooster. Pause this audio here.

In Jerusalem the roosters crow between three and five o'clock in the morning. This would mean that the interrogation of Jesus probably went on until three o'clock in the morning.

This fulfills what Jesus said earlier to Simon Peter "Very truly I tell you, before the rooster crows you will disown me three times!"

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 18:15–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus is now being taken to the house of Annas, the high priest. Two of the disciples, Simon Peter and a second disciple, follow Jesus into the courtyard. The servant girl then asks Simon Peter if he is a disciple of Jesus. Peter says he isn't a disciple of Jesus, and he goes to stand by the fire in the courtyard with the servants.

In the second scene: Annas the high priest interrogates Jesus, trying to find a reason to sentence Jesus to death. Jesus challenges them and asks for a fair trial, a temple guard slaps Jesus, and Annas sends Jesus to Caiaphas for a trial.

In the third scene: In the meantime, Simon Peter, who is still out in the courtyard is asked two more times if he is a disciple of Jesus. Both times he says he is not a follower of Jesus. After this a rooster crows.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Simon Peter
- A second disciple
- Servant girl at the door
- Servant related to Malchus
- Servants of Annas' house
- Officials of Annas' house
- Annas (father-in-law of Caiaphas)
- temple guard who slaps Jesus
- Caiaphas (doesn't say anything but Jesus is brought to him at the end of the passage)

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Do you recall in the previous passage how Jesus had just been arrested by the Roman soldiers and Jewish officials? These Roman soldiers and Jewish officials take Jesus to see Annas, the high priest, at his house. As during the previous passage it was nighttime, it is now very late into the evening.

Annas' home was surrounded by a courtyard that was surrounded by a wall with a door to enter and exit.

Stop here and look at the picture again of a courtyard as a group. Pause this audio here.

Two of the disciples follow Jesus to Annas' courtyard. One of the disciples is Simon Peter, and we do not know the name of the other disciple. The unnamed disciple goes through the gate and into the courtyard because he knows the high priest, but the gatekeeper stops Simon Peter. Simon Peter waits outside the gate.

The second disciple then comes back and speaks to the servant girl at the door, most likely asking permission for her to let Simon Peter in. We don't know what the second disciple said, but it was enough to convince the servant girl to let Simon Peter in!

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: We do not know who the second disciple is, but we do know that he somehow knew the high priest. How will you talk about the unnamed disciple in your translation? What will you call him? Pause this audio here.

The same servant girl then asks Simon Peter if he is one of the disciples of that man, Jesus. The servant girl was asking the question in a casual and non accusing way and may have been expecting Simon Peter to respond with a "no." Simon Peter says to the servant girl, "No, I am not a disciple of that man, Jesus." Simon Peter may have been surprised at the question and answered quickly without thinking.

As it was cold and dark, the servants who worked for Annas, along with the officials, or guards, built a charcoal fire and they stood around the fire to keep warm. Simon Peter also stood with them to try and keep warm by the fire. It is not clear where the second disciple is at this point, but he was most likely somewhere in the courtyard.

While this was happening, Annas, the high priest, was in his house and asking Jesus lots of questions about his followers and his teachings. When Annas questioned Jesus, he probably spoke harshly like soldiers or police would question someone that they suspected of doing something illegal. He was trying to find a reason for sentencing Jesus to death. We don't know how many people were in the house but there were probably at least two temple guards who had brought in Jesus.

Jesus ignores Annas' questions about his disciples, and instead addresses the matter of teaching secretly. Jesus tells Annas to ask the people that heard him in the synagogues and temple to explain what he taught. Jesus knows that the Jewish law says that in a trial, witnesses must state their case against the person on trial. The person on trial does not speak on his own behalf, so Annas' questioning is not a legitimate trial. Jesus says, "I said nothing in secret." He says this so that it is clear that he has spoken freely and not kept himself or his

actions hidden away. Jesus asks the question, "Why are you asking me this question? Ask those who heard me." Jesus is really saying, "You should not be asking me this question." Jesus knows that only witnesses to his teaching should be the ones answering the high priest, according to Jewish law.

One of the temple guards, who was standing near Jesus, slapped Jesus in the face, probably on his cheek, because he thinks he is being disrespectful to Annas, the high priest.

Jesus replies to the temple guard by saying, "If I said anything wrong, you must prove it, tell everyone here what it was I said that was wrong or disrespectful."

As Jesus did not say anything wrong or disrespectful, the temple guard most likely has no response to say as to why he slapped Jesus. Annas then asks the temple guard to take Jesus, who still has his hands tied up, to Caiaphas, the main high priest, where Jesus will be put on trial. We are not sure where Caiaphas is, but he may be in the same house as Annas is, or he may be in a different building in Jerusalem.

Meanwhile, at the same time that Annas is questioning Jesus, Simon Peter is standing by the fire of coals with the servants of Annas and the temple guards.

The servants and officials asked Simon Peter if he is one of the disciples of that man, Jesus. They were probably expecting Simon Peter to say "no." Simon Peter again denies that he is a follower of Jesus. We do not know how long afterwards, but one of the servants of the high priest who was also a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, was standing near Simon Peter in the courtyard. This servant was insistent that it was Simon Peter that he saw in the garden as he says to Simon Peter, "I saw you in the garden with Jesus, didn't I?" This servant is so sure that he expects Simon Peter to reply with a "Yes."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How would you ask a question that you expect to have a positive response from? Or do you have to make a statement instead of asking a question? For example, the servant could have said to Simon Peter "I saw you in the garden." Pause this audio here.

Both times Simon Peter denies that he is a follower of Jesus.

At that moment a rooster crowed.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 18:15–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Simon Peter
- A second disciple
- Servant girl at the door
- Servant related to Malchus
- Servants of Annas' house
- Officials of Annas' house
- Annas (father-in-law of Caiaphas)
- temple guard who slaps Jesus
- Caiaphas (doesn't say anything but Jesus is brought to him at the end of the passage)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Two of the disciples, Simon Peter and a second disciple, follow Jesus after he has been arrested. Because the second disciple was well known to Annas, the high priest, and also the servant girl, who was the doorkeeper, she let the second disciple enter with Jesus into the courtyard of Annas' home.

Simon Peter was not allowed to enter and had to wait outside the door because he did not know Annas, the high priest, and was not known by the servant girl at the door.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the second disciple, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer with things like "I feel sorry for Simon Peter not being allowed in," or "I worry that he may not be safe if someone finds out he is one of Jesus' disciples," and "I will speak to the servant girl and see if she will let Simon Peter in." [!end] Continue the drama.

The second disciple then comes back and speaks to the servant girl at the door and she lets Simon Peter in. The same servant girl then asks Simon Peter if he is one of the disciples of that man, Jesus. Simon Peter says to the servant girl, "No, I am not a disciple of that man, Jesus."

As it was cold and dark, the servants who worked for Annas, along with the officials, or guards, built a charcoal fire and they stood around the fire to keep warm. Simon Peter also stood with them to try and keep warm by the fire.

Pause the drama.

While this was happening, Annas, the high priest, was in his house and asking Jesus lots of questions. He was trying to find a reason for sentencing Jesus to death.

Annas interrogates Jesus, concerned about how many followers Jesus has and what Jesus has been teaching. If Annas could prove that what Jesus is teaching is against the law, he would have a reason to have Jesus killed.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says to Annas, the high priest, "I have spoken openly to the world," meaning that he has been speaking in public places preaching to those he has come into contact with. The message that Jesus taught was always the same, wherever he was teaching.

Jesus says, "I said nothing in secret. Why question me?" He says this so that it is clear that he has spoken freely and not kept himself or his actions hidden away. Jesus was not trying to cause any trouble. Jesus asks for a fair trial and asks them to talk to witnesses who will know what Jesus has said.

One of the temple guards, who was standing near Jesus, slapped Jesus in the face, probably his cheek, as he thinks he is being disrespectful to Annas, the high priest.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer with things like, "I'm shocked by the slap to my face," or "I will not respond in anger but with curiosity as to what I have said or done that is wrong," and "The temple guard doesn't understand what I am saying." [!end] Continue the drama.

Jesus replies to the temple guard by saying, "If I said anything wrong, you must prove it. Tell everyone here what it was I said that was wrong or disrespectful."

As Jesus did not say anything wrong or disrespectful, the temple guard most likely has no response to say as to why he slapped Jesus.

Pause the drama.

Annas then asks the temple guard to take Jesus, who still has his hands tied up, to Caiaphas, the main high priest, where Jesus will be put on trial.

Pause the drama.

Meanwhile, Simon Peter, the servants of Annas, and the officials were all still standing by the fire of coals to keep warm in the courtyard. The servants and officials asked Simon Peter if he is one of the disciples of that man, Jesus.

Simon Peter says to the servants and officials, "No, I am not a disciple of that man, Jesus."

One of Malchus' relatives, another servant of the high priest, was standing near Simon Peter in the courtyard. This servant spoke insistently and asked Simon Peter, "I saw you in the garden with Jesus, didn't I?"

Pause the drama.

Both times Simon Peter denies that he is a follower of Jesus.

At that moment a rooster crowed.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 18:15–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Two of Jesus' **disciples**, Simon Peter and another disciple, followed Jesus to Annas' courtyard. It is not known who the second disciple was. Use the same word for disciples as you used in previous passages. For more information on disciples, refer to the Master Glossary.

They took Jesus to **Annas' courtyard**. Annas used to be a high priest and was still very much respected as a leader, or ruler. Although Annas' name is not used until the end of the story, we know this is who is questioning Jesus because he sends Jesus to Caiaphas at the end of the story. **Courtyard** is an outside area of a house, usually surrounded by a wall with a door. **Annas** was also the father-in-law of **Caiaphas**. Caiaphas was the high priest at that time. Translate priest in the same way you have done in previous passages. Priest is in the Master Glossary.

There was a **servant-girl** on duty there. This would have been a servant in the house of Annas. It was her job to stand near the door, like a security guard. Translate servant in the same way you have done in previous passages. Servant is in the Master Glossary.

The servants and officials **warmed themselves**. This means that they stood near the fire to keep warm. The fire was made of coals that they burnt.

Jesus says, "I have spoken openly to the world," which means that Jesus spoke to everyone in public. Jesus then says "I always taught in synagogues and the temple area." Jesus was teaching in places where Jews would meet. Translate **Jews** and **synagogue** in the same way as you have done in previous passages. Jews and synagogue is in the Master Glossary.

Jesus says, "If I have said something wrong, **testify** as to what is wrong." Testify means to give evidence as a witness in a law court. Translate testimony in the same way as you have done in previous passages. Testimony is in the Master Glossary.

Then Annas sent Jesus **bound** to Caiaphas. Throughout this scene Jesus still has his hands bound, or tied together.

As Annas was questioning Jesus, a servant asked Peter, "I saw you in the **garden** with Jesus, didn't I?" The garden is a garden full of trees, and in this case it was full of olive trees. People planted groves of olive trees in order to harvest the fruit from the trees. This garden is where Jesus and the disciples were when the soldiers and officials came to arrest Jesus.

After Peter denied Jesus, the **rooster** began to crow. A rooster is a bird similar to a chicken. They crow in the early hours of the morning. It is reported that in Jerusalem the time that roosters crow is between three and five o'clock in the morning.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 18:15–27

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4100695 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 18:28–40

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 18:28–40 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 18:28–40 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 18:28–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this narrative, remember that the Roman soldiers and Jewish officials had arrested Jesus and had taken him before Annas so that he may question Jesus. Annas had been the chief priest before Caiaphas, and was still well respected in the community. After that, Jesus was taken to Caiaphas. Caiaphas was the one appointed as the high priest at that time. During that time, Peter denied Jesus three times and a rooster crowed, which fulfilled Jesus' words that before the cock crows, Peter would have denied Jesus three times.

Now in the early hours, Jesus is being led by the same Roman soldiers and the Jewish guards and religious leaders from Caiaphas, the high priest's house, to the governor's house or headquarters, called the Praetorium. In some versions, this narrative starts by saying that Jesus' trial at Caiaphas' house ended in the early morning.

This was mostly likely somewhere between 3 and 6 in the morning. This was unusual and possibly illegal for Jews to hold trials in the middle of the night.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture when and where do people traditionally hold trials and judgments? Pause this audio here.

When the group arrived at the governor's house, the Jewish leaders did not go inside because Pilate, the governor, was a Roman, not a Jew. The Jews did not want to become ritually unclean by entering the headquarters or house of a Gentile, or Roman. If the Jews had done so, they would have been defiled and they would not have been able to eat the Passover meal.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What types of activities or places do people in your culture think make them unclean or unworthy of religious activities? Pause this audio here.

Pontius Pilate was the governor over the province of Judea. That means Pilate was given a territory to control and rule over by the Roman higher authorities. Pilate usually lived in another city. However, Pilate was in Jerusalem at this time, in order to keep down any disturbances or uprisings during the Passover, or Jewish holiday.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are the government structures that exist that regulate religious groups in your area? What would be the attitude of appointed government officials who do not belong to or share the same beliefs as those of the religious groups? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of a time when government officials came into a group to exercise their authority over a religious issue. Pause this audio here.

Pilate went outside to meet the group and question the Jewish leaders as to what they accuse Jesus of. The Jewish leaders did not answer Pilate's question about charges or accusations. Instead they told Pilate that Jesus is doing evil things, or is a criminal, and if he weren't they would not have brought Jesus to Pilate. For Pilate to judge Jesus, Jesus would have had to break a Roman law, not a Jewish law. Since the Jewish leaders did not tell Pilate that Jesus broke a Roman law, Pilate tells them to try Jesus under their own laws.

At the time, since Judea was under Roman law, the Roman government did not allow the Jews to execute anyone. This was the Jewish leaders' main reason for bringing Jesus to Pilate-so that Jesus would be executed. Jesus' own words were that He would be executed by crucifixion, so it was necessary for the Jews to hand Jesus to the Romans to fulfill what Jesus said about His death. Only the Romans would carry out crucifixion.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are the differences between government and religious authorities and laws in your culture and community? What are the certain punishments that religious authorities can or cannot execute? What would happen if religious authorities executed a punishment that they were not allowed to by law? Pause this audio here.

Pilate goes back into the headquarters or Praetorium. Pilate then asks Jesus to follow and talk with him. Pilate asks Jesus, "Are you the King of the Jews?" This indicates that the Jewish leaders were trying to make it sound like Jesus was committing treason against the Emperor of Rome. The Roman Emperor would not allow another king to exist within his ruling area. Jesus responds to Pilate with a question of His own. It is possible that Jesus is trying to remind Pilate that Pilate should make a decision based on truth, not on what has been told to him by the Jews. Jesus asks Pilate, "Are you asking this on your own, or because others have told you this about Me?"

Pilate responds that he is not a Jew. This is a way to distance himself from whatever the Jewish leaders have against Jesus. Jesus goes on to make it clear that He is not a political king but a spiritual king, and that His Kingdom is not an earthly Kingdom. Jesus' followers would be fighting for Jesus if Jesus' kingdom were a kingdom on earth. Pilate says, "Then you are a king!" Jesus' response is neither to confirm nor deny, but more than likely to say to Pilate something like, "You are the one using the word king, not Me." Jesus says His purpose for coming into the world is to testify to the truth of who God is, and how to live in God's Kingdom. Those who recognize truth will listen to Jesus, or hear Jesus' voice.

Pilate asks Jesus a question that Pilate doesn't want an answer to. He asks, "What is truth?" Then Pilate leaves the Praetorium and goes back to the Jewish leaders who have been waiting for Pilate's answer. Pilate tells them that Jesus has not done anything wrong. At that time Pilate had a custom of releasing one Jewish prisoner during

the Passover festival to keep the Jews happy and to help them celebrate their holy day. So Pilate asks if the Jewish leaders want him to release Jesus, the King of the Jews. However, the Jewish leaders insist on Pilate releasing Barabbas who was a thief or robber. Some versions say that Barabbas had taken part in an uprising, which would have made him guilty of treason, the very thing the Jews were trying to accuse Jesus of. This would have made Barabbas popular among the Jews because they did not like the Romans.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of someone in your culture who was guilty but got to go free, or someone who was innocent who was wrongly accused. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some of the favors that people in your culture expect to receive during feasts celebrated in the community?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 18:28–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Early in the morning, the Jewish authorities and Roman guards lead Jesus from Caiaphas' house to the Roman governor's palace or headquarters in Jerusalem. The Jews did not enter the governor's palace in order to keep themselves ritually clean and be able to take part in the Passover meal.

In the second scene: Governor Pilate comes outside to meet the group and ask what they are accusing Jesus of. The Jews tell Pilate that Jesus is a criminal; otherwise they would not have brought Jesus to Pilate. Pilate tells the Jewish leaders to take and judge Jesus by the Jewish laws. The Jewish leaders tell Pilate that they cannot put anyone to death. This was spoken to fulfill what Jesus said about the kind of death He would die.

In the third scene: Pilate goes back into the palace and asks Jesus to come with him to question Him. Pilate asks Jesus if Jesus is the King of the Jews. Jesus asks Pilate why Pilate is asking—because Pilate wants to know or because someone told Pilate about Jesus. Pilate responds by saying he is not a Jew and it is Jesus' own people who have turned Jesus over to Pilate. So Pilate asks what Jesus has done. Jesus tells Pilate that Jesus' Kingdom is not of the earthly world, otherwise Jesus' servants would be fighting for Him now. Pilate states that Jesus is a king then. Jesus answers that Pilate is the one who is using the word king. Jesus says His purpose for being born and coming into the world is to testify to the truth and that all who recognize the truth listen to Jesus' voice. Pilate asks, "What is truth?"

In the fourth scene: Pilate goes back outside to the Jewish leaders and tells them that he believes Jesus is innocent. But Pilate offers to give up one Jew during the Passover, as is the custom. Pilate asks the Jewish leaders if they want it to be the King of the Jews. But the Jewish leaders cried out for Pilate to release Barabbas who was a thief.

The characters in this passage are:

- The Jewish leaders
- Roman guards
- Jesus
- Caiaphas
- Pilate
- Barabbas

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: This passage takes place in Jerusalem during the time of the feast of Passover, in the very early hours of the morning. In most Bible versions, the passage starts with a word that indicates different action from what was before it. The group of guards start out at the house of the high priest and then walk or lead Jesus to the palace of the governor, called the Praetorium. This

was where the governor stayed while he was in Jerusalem. It included the offices for the Romans and a courtroom to judge criminals. The Jewish leaders did not want to defile themselves by going inside of a Gentile home. If they had become ritually unclean they would not have been able to eat the Passover meal during the holiday celebration.

In the second scene, the action happens outside of the governor's palace. Since the Jewish leaders would not go into the governor's palace, the governor came outside to talk with them. This is when the name Pilate is mentioned as the name of the governor.

The third scene happens inside the governor's palace with just Pilate and Jesus. Pilate asks Jesus, "Are *you* the king of the Jews?" When Pilate asks Jesus this question, he emphasizes "you" in a scornful way, as if he does not think that someone like Jesus could be a king. Jesus says that Jesus testifies to the truth of who God is and how to be a part of God's kingdom. Pilate's question, "What is truth?" is referring directly back to how Jesus explained that He testified to the truth. Pilate's question should reflect what Jesus said about truth. Pilate does not require an answer to this question. In fact, this is a way of dismissing the situation and finishing the conversation.

Stop here and take time for this activity: Sitting in a place of judgment, accuse one of you with a made-up accusation and interrogate him/her, trying to prove they are guilty, with a judge successfully pointing holes/gaps into such accusations. Pause this audio here.

The fourth scene happens back outside of the governor's palace. Pilate walks back outside to the group of Jewish leaders and gives his verdict on Jesus. Pilate offers to keep the custom of releasing one of the Jewish prisoners to the Jews. It seems that Pilate is hoping the Jews will ask for Jesus to be released. However, the Jews cry out for Barabbas to be released. Crying out is another way to say that they shouted loudly or screamed. John's audience has not heard Barabbas' name before, so John ends this story with an explanation of who Barabbas is—a thief who was part of an uprising.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 18:28–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- The Jewish leaders
- Roman guards
- Jesus
- Caiaphas
- Pilate
- Barabbas

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Early in the morning, the Jewish authorities and Roman guards lead Jesus from Caiaphas' house to the Roman governor's palace or headquarters in Jerusalem. The Jews did not enter the governor's palace so they could keep themselves ritually clean and take part in the Passover meal.

Pause the drama.

Governor Pilate comes outside to meet the group and ask what they are accusing Jesus of. The Jews tell Pilate that he is a criminal, otherwise they would not have brought Jesus to Pilate.

Pause the drama.

Pilate tells the Jewish leaders to take and judge Jesus by the Jewish laws. The Jewish leaders tell Pilate that they cannot put anyone to death. This was spoken to fulfill what Jesus said about the kind of death He would die. Pilate goes back into the palace and asks Jesus to come with him to question Jesus. Pilate asks Jesus if Jesus is the King of the Jews. Jesus asks Pilate why Pilate is asking—because Pilate wants to know or because someone told Pilate about Jesus. Pilate responds by saying he is not a Jew and it is Jesus' own people who have turned Jesus over to Pilate. So Pilate asks what Jesus has done.

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells Pilate that Jesus' Kingdom is not of the earthly world, otherwise Jesus' servants would be fighting for Him now. Pilate states that Jesus is a king then. Jesus answers that Pilate is the one who is using the word king. Jesus says His purpose for being born and coming into the world is to testify to the truth and that all who recognize the truth listen to Jesus' voice. Pilate asks, "What is truth?"

Pause the drama.

Pilate goes back outside to the Jewish leaders and tells them that he believes Jesus is innocent. But Pilate offers to give up one Jew during the Passover, as is the custom. Pilate asks the Jewish leaders if they want it to be the King of the Jews. But the Jewish leaders cried out for Pilate to release Barabbas who was a thief.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Jesus, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "My time has come. Father, give me strength," or "These leaders really have no idea what they are doing. But this must happen for the salvation of the whole world."

Ask the person playing Pilate, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I feel sorry for Jesus. He didn't do anything wrong but He sure got on the Jewish leaders' bad side somehow," or "I cannot be to blame for this. This is the Jewish leaders' doing. I can't believe they are choosing Barabbas."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 18:28–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Early in the morning, the Jewish authorities and Roman guards lead Jesus from Caiaphas, the high priest's house to the Roman governor's palace or headquarters in Jerusalem called the **Praetorium**. The Jews did not enter the governor's palace so they could keep themselves from being defiled, or ritually **unclean**, and take part in the Passover meal. Unclean meant that someone or something was unfit for God's service.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **unclean**. Look up unclean in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The **Passover** was an important Jewish festival reminding the Israelites of when God brought them out of Egypt. Use the same word for Passover that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Passover refer to the Master Glossary.

Governor Pilate comes outside to meet the group and ask what they are accusing Jesus of. The Jews tell Pilate that he is a criminal, otherwise they would not have brought Jesus to Pilate. Pilate tells the Jewish leaders to take and judge Jesus by the Jewish **law**. The law was the set of instructions given to the Israelites by God through Moses. Use the same word for law that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the law, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Jewish leaders tell Pilate that they cannot put anyone to death. Pilate goes back into the palace and asks Jesus if Jesus is the **King of the Jews**. A **king** is someone who ruled over a city, country, or territory. The **Jews** are the descendants of Abraham who are also referred to as the Israelites. Use the same words for king and Jews that you have used in previous passages. For more information on king and Jews, refer to the Master Glossary.

Pilate asks what Jesus has done, and Pilate says that the people and the chief, or leading, **priests** have handed Jesus over to him. Jesus tells Pilate that Jesus' **Kingdom** is not of the earthly world, otherwise Jesus' servants would be fighting for Him now. A kingdom is a territory where a king rules. Use the same word for kingdom that you have used in previous passages. For more information on kingdom and priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

Pilate states that Jesus is a king then. Jesus answers that Pilate is the one who is using the word king. Jesus says His purpose for being born and coming into the world is to testify to the truth of who God is, and that all who recognize the truth listen to Jesus' voice. Pilate asks, "What is truth?"

Pilate goes back outside to the Jewish leaders and tells them that he believes Jesus is innocent. But Pilate offers to give up one Jew who is in prison, during the Passover, as is the custom. Pilate asks the Jewish leaders if they want it to be the King of the Jews. But the Jewish leaders cried out for Pilate to release Barabbas who was a violent man.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 18:28–40

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3694709 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 19:1–16

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 19:1–16 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 19:1–16 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God and Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 19:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus was arrested and brought to Caiaphas, the Jewish high priest and Annas, Caiaphas' father-in-law. Then, the Jews took Jesus to the palace of the Roman governor, Pilate. Pilate spoke with the Jews outside, and then with Jesus inside the palace. Pilate went back outside and told the Jews that he found no guilt in Jesus. Pilate wanted to release Jesus, but the Jews asked to release Barabbas, a robber, instead. The Jews wanted Jesus to die. Now, Pilate has the soldiers beat Jesus and again talks with both the Jews and with Jesus about why Jesus should be released. The Jewish leaders keep shouting "Crucify him!" Finally, Pilate hands over Jesus to be crucified.

This passage begins with Pilate's order for the soldiers to beat Jesus. In the original language, it says that Pilate beat Jesus. However, it is clear that because Pilate was the governor, Pilate ordered his Roman soldiers to beat Jesus. The soldiers used a whip to beat Jesus severely. That whip had long strips of leather, sometimes with

spikes, bones, or lead added into the leather to injure the criminal more. This kind of beating usually happened before the execution of a criminal, but in this case, they beat Jesus before they decided his guilt. The beating was sometimes so severe that it killed a person.

Stop here and look at a picture of a whip as a group. Pause this audio here.

The soldiers also made a crown out of thorny branches. During Jesus' time, the Roman Emperor or other leaders wore crowns to represent honor. A crown usually had points that pointed up. The thorns on the crown also pointed up. The soldiers put the crown on Jesus' head in order to mock Jesus. The soldiers also put a purple robe on Jesus. A robe is a long coat or cloak. Kings wore clothing made with purple dye because it was more expensive and considered honorable. The soldiers wanted Jesus to look like a king so they could laugh at him.

Stop here and look at pictures of a crown of thorns and a purple robe as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Roman soldiers also said to Jesus, "Greetings, King of the Jews" as another way to mock him. Saying "greetings, King," was a common way Romans greeted the Roman Emperor. The soldiers were not actually honoring Jesus when they said, "King of the Jews." The soldiers also hit him on the face over and over while they mocked him. All these things-the crown of thorns, the purple robe, calling him King of the Jews, and hitting him-were to humiliate him. The Romans were in power over the Jews, so that's why they thought it was funny to pretend Jesus was a king of the powerless Jewish people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you greet a chief, king, or another leader in your culture? What do you say or do in order to honor him? Pause this audio here.

Pilate went back outside to the Jews and told them he found no guilt in Jesus. The Jewish leaders stayed outside of Pilate's home so they wouldn't become unclean and be unable to eat the Passover meal. Pilate orders the soldiers to bring Jesus out to the Jews. When Jesus comes out, he is still wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Jesus is also probably bleeding from the severe beating he had. Pilate tells the people, "Here is the man!" Pilate probably wanted the people to see that Jesus was no threat to the Roman government, and there was no reason to kill Jesus. It is likely Pilate hoped the Jews would take Jesus to finish the execution themselves.

The chief priests and officials saw Jesus, and they immediately shouted "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Chief priests were the leading Jewish religious leaders. Their officials were the temple guards that reported to the chief priests. The chief priests and officials wanted Jesus to die by crucifixion, which was the most severe punishment Romans used for executing criminals. Two wooden logs were tied together in a cross, and then soldiers nailed or tied the criminal to the cross. They raised up the cross, and the criminal died a long and painful death hanging on the cross. The chief priests and officials said "crucify him" twice to show how intensely they wanted Jesus to die. Jews were not able to kill someone by crucifixion because of their religious laws. They wanted the Romans to take Jesus and crucify him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you punish criminals? What is the worst punishment for a criminal? If it involves execution, punishment with death, describe what kind of execution is permitted or common in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Pilate did not want to crucify Jesus, so he told the chief priests and officials that they should crucify Jesus themselves, meaning they should be the ones responsible for Jesus' death. Pilate knew that Jewish law said Jews cannot crucify anyone. Pilate also says for the third time that he finds no guilt in Jesus. But the Jews tell Pilate they have a Jewish religious law that anyone who misuses the name of God must die. They say Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, and this misuses the name of God because it makes himself equal to God. The Jewish leaders show how inconsistent they are. Earlier, they told Pilate they cannot kill Jesus because of their Jewish laws, but now they say Jesus must die because of their Jewish laws. They also show the true reason for wanting Jesus to die-not because he is a threat to Rome, but because he claims to be the Son of God. In the past, they tried twice to kill Jesus, but not by crucifixion.

Pilate went back inside the palace to talk with Jesus. This is the headquarters of the Roman government for that region. Pilate also lives in the palace. Pilate spoke with the Jews outside, and with Jesus inside the palace.

Stop here and look at a picture of a palace as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the original language, it says Pilate was "even more afraid," meaning it was likely Pilate was already afraid of condemning Jesus. Pilate asks Jesus, "Where are you from?" This question probably shows Pilate wants to

know if Jesus is from somewhere else in Israel so that someone else can be responsible for Jesus' trial. It's also possible Pilate wants to know if Jesus is from earth or heaven. Jesus doesn't answer Pilate. Pilate expected Jesus to defend himself, and Pilate asks Jesus two questions, "Why won't you talk with me?" and "Don't you know I have the power to release you or to crucify you?" Pilate does not expect an answer to these questions. Pilate is offended that Jesus refuses to talk. Pilate wants to show that he has the authority to let Jesus go or order the soldiers to kill Jesus.

Jesus responds to Pilate by saying God gave Pilate power. "From above" is a way to refer to God giving power to people. It is possible Pilate understood "from above" to mean the Roman military chain of command. Jesus emphasizes that Pilate would not have any power over Jesus if God did not give it to Pilate. This is talking about a situation that is not true. Pilate does have power over Jesus, but only because God gave Pilate this power as a governor. Only God truly has the power and authority over situations.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss the political or military chain of command in your culture. Who is in charge, and who are the people under their authority? Pause this audio here.

Jesus also says that "the one who handed me over to you" has sinned more than Pilate. Pilate is guilty of sin by condemning Jesus, but someone else has sinned more. The chief priests and officials handed Jesus over to Pilate, but in the original language, "the one" is singular. Some people think this refers to Judas, who betrayed Jesus. It is also possible this refers to the devil since he is the one who tempts Judas. However, this person is probably Caiaphas, the high priest. Caiaphas chose to send Jesus to Pilate, so Caiaphas sinned more than Pilate.

Because of what Jesus says, Pilate goes back to the Jews and tries again to set Jesus free. The Jewish leaders tell Pilate that if Pilate sets Jesus free, Pilate is not a loyal friend of Caesar, the emperor of Rome. Caesar was the name of the Roman Emperor, or leader of all of Rome. Caesar later became the title for the emperor. "A friend of Caesar" meant someone that the Emperor gave special honor to and treated well. The Jews imply that the emperor would be angry with Pilate and even punish Pilate if Pilate does not punish this supposed king, Jesus. The Jews are threatening Pilate with the political consequences of Jesus being a king, and not talking about Jesus' claims to be the Son of God. The Jews show that Jesus' claims to be king of the Jews will be a threat to Caesar, and Pilate needs to take care of this threat now.

Finally, Pilate brings Jesus outside in front of the palace and Pilate sits down on the judge's seat in the courtyard. The judge's seat was a raised platform with a seat. It is where Pilate would announce decisions. This shows that Pilate sits down on his judgment seat because he is about to give his decision to the people. This seat was at a place paved with large stones. The exact location of this seat is unknown. The name of this place is Gabbatha in one of the original languages that the Jews spoke.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, describe where a judge or ruler sits or stands when they give their decisions for major trials. Pause this audio here.

The author John also gives some background information that it was the day of Preparation for the Passover. This probably means it was Friday, which is the day before the Sabbath on Saturday. The Passover was a Jewish religious holiday. Passover could be on any day of the week, and this year it was on the Sabbath.

John also says it was the sixth hour, which was about 12 p.m. according to the Roman way of counting the hours of the day starting at 6 a.m. Some people see this timing as problematic since other gospel writers say Jesus was crucified at the third hour, 9 a.m. However, it is likely the sixth hour refers to both the timing when Jesus is presented as king, and his crucifixion.

Pilate tells the people, "Here is your king!" This is Pilate's response to the threat from the people, "you're no friend of Caesar if you don't punish Jesus." Pilate emphasizes that Jesus is their king and that Pilate is not responsible. Pilate doesn't believe Jesus is a king. Pilate is mocking the Jews. But the people rejected Jesus and shouted, "Take him away!" two times. This is repeated for emphasis. Some languages may use a similar word like "Destroy him!" or "Remove him!" instead of saying "Take him away!" twice. They shout again for Jesus to die. They want Pilate to take Jesus away and crucify him. This is the fourth time they've shouted to crucify Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your language, how do you emphasize something? Would you repeat the same words again, or would you use two similar words? Pause this audio here.

Pilate again asks if the crowd truly wants to crucify Jesus. The chief priests reply they have no king but Caesar. The Jewish leaders are denying their Jewishness and identifying with Rome instead of God. Pilate finally decides to let Jesus be crucified. Pilate hands Jesus over to them. In this sentence, "them" is probably the Roman soldiers because the chief priests could not crucify Jesus. Crucifixion was a Roman form of punishment. It is possible the author John left it unclear who "them" is because he wanted to show the chief priests were responsible for the death of Jesus. However, it is most likely that "them" refers to the Roman soldiers.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 19:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Pilate tells the Roman soldiers to beat Jesus. They also put a crown of thorns and a purple robe on him and mock him for being the "King of the Jews."

In the second scene: Pilate brings Jesus out to the Jewish leaders and the crowd. Pilate wants to release Jesus. The Jewish leaders and the crowd shout "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

In the third scene: Pilate asks Jesus where he is from, and Jesus refuses to answer. Pilate rebukes Jesus for not answering, and Jesus responds that Pilate only has authority over Jesus because God gave Pilate this authority.

In the fourth scene: Pilate sits down on the judge's seat and presents Jesus to the crowd as their king. They reject Jesus and shout "Crucify him!" Finally, Pilate hands over Jesus to be crucified by the Roman soldiers.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Pilate, the Roman governor
- The Roman soldiers
- The Jewish chief priests
- The Jewish officials (temple guards)
- And the Jewish crowd

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, Pilate orders the Roman soldiers to beat Jesus severely. Remember that Pilate is not the one who beats Jesus. The soldiers beat Jesus. It is likely this kind of severe beating happened as the first step in an execution. Remember that the Roman soldiers also put a crown of thorns and a purple robe on Jesus. They mock him and say "Greetings, King of the Jews!" They also hit him on the face. Remember they don't actually think he is a king. They are laughing at him because it seems ridiculous that a powerless Jewish man could be a king.

Stop here and look at pictures of a whip, a crown of thorns and a purple robe again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Remember that this first scene probably happens inside of Pilate's palace. It is important to remember that the action in this passage goes back and forth between inside the palace and outside of the palace. The Jewish leaders stay outside the palace because Pilate is Roman, and the Jewish leaders do not want to become unclean by going inside a Gentile home. It was especially important to them to remain religiously clean before the Jewish religious holiday of Passover.

In the second scene, Pilate comes back outside and talks with the Jewish chief priests and officials. Remember this is the second time Pilate tells the Jewish leaders that he finds no guilt in Jesus. Also, remember that Pilate is Roman, but he's the one saying Jesus is not guilty. Then Pilate orders Jesus to come outside so the Jewish leaders can see him. Remember that Jesus is still wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate wants

the Jews to see Jesus as a humiliated person and as no threat to anyone. Remember that Pilate probably wants the Jewish leaders to take Jesus and punish him themselves.

Remember that the chief priests and officials reject Jesus when they see him. Jesus is not their king. Instead, they shout two times "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Remember they say it twice to emphasize how intensely they want him to die. It is important to remember that Jews cannot crucify anyone, so that's why they were shouting for Pilate, a Roman, to crucify Jesus.

Pilate says again he finds no guilt in Jesus—remember this is the third time Pilate says this. Pilate suggests the Jewish leaders crucify Jesus themselves. This means Pilate wants them to take responsibility for Jesus' death. Remember also that the Jewish leaders say Jesus must die because Jesus broke the law: "Do not misuse the name of God." They say Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, so they think Jesus needs to die.

In the third scene, Pilate goes back inside to talk with Jesus privately. Remember that Pilate is "even more afraid" after hearing that Jesus calls himself the Son of God. Remember Pilate was probably afraid of condemning Jesus. Pilate asks Jesus "Where are you from?" Remember this may have been a question about what region Jesus grew up in. Or, it may have shown Pilate's concern about Jesus claiming to be the Son of God. Remember that Jesus doesn't say anything.

Pilate asks Jesus two questions, "Why won't you talk with me?" and "Don't you know I have the power to release you or to crucify you?" Pilate does not expect an answer to these questions. Pilate uses these questions to talk strongly and rebuke Jesus for not answering his questions.

Stop and discuss this question as a group. Would you use questions here, or some other form of statement to show Pilate's surprise and offense at Jesus refusing to answer him? Pause this audio here.

Remember that Jesus responds to Pilate by saying God gave Pilate the power and authority over Jesus. It is important to remember that Jesus still doesn't answer Pilate's question "Where are you from?" Jesus has already told Pilate "My kingdom is not from this world." Jesus makes it clear that only God has complete power and authority.

It is important to remember that Jesus also says "the one who handed you over to me" sinned more than Pilate. Remember this probably refers to Caiaphas, the high priest.

Remember that the third scene ends with Pilate still trying to set Jesus free. The Jewish leaders continue to shout for Jesus to die. Remember they tell Pilate that the emperor will be angry with Pilate if Pilate lets Jesus go free. The Jewish leaders now are talking about Jesus being a threat to Rome again, and not about Jesus claiming to be the Son of God.

In the fourth scene, Pilate brings Jesus outside and sits down on the judge's seat. Remember Pilate is ready to make a decision about Jesus. Remember this is a place with large paving stones, and it was called Gabbatha. Remember it is also the day before Sabbath, and also the day before the Passover. The time was about 12 p.m., which probably refers both to the time Pilate makes the presentation of Jesus as the king, and to the timing of Jesus' crucifixion. It is important to remember the author John is very specific about the time and place for this decision. This shows this is an important moment in the passage.

Pilate says, "Here is your king!" The Jews respond by saying "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" Remember this is the fourth time they shout, "Crucify him!" Pilate asks them again if they want to crucify their king. The chief priests say, "We have no king but Caesar." Remember that the Jewish people typically say that God is their king. Here, they say that Caesar, the emperor, is their only king.

Finally, Pilate hands Jesus over to them to be crucified. Remember that this probably means Pilate gives Jesus to the Roman soldiers to be crucified. Remember the chief priests cannot crucify Jesus according to Roman law. Remember the Jewish leaders are the ones who called "Crucify him!" many times, and Pilate, the Roman governor, was trying to free Jesus.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 19:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Pilate, the Roman governor
- The Roman soldiers
- The Jewish chief priests
- The Jewish officials (temple guards)
- And the Jewish crowd

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Pilate orders his soldiers to beat Jesus severely. They beat Jesus, and also give him a crown of thorns and a purple robe to wear. They say, "Greetings, King of the Jews!" The soldiers also hit Jesus in the face. They mock Jesus and laugh at him.

Pause the drama.

Pilate goes back outside and talks with the Jewish leaders. Pilate says he finds no guilt in Jesus. He orders Jesus to come outside. Jesus is still wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate says, "Here is the man!" The chief priests and officials shout "Crucify him! Crucify him!" They want Jesus to die. Pilate tells the Jewish leaders to crucify Jesus themselves, and that he finds no guilt in Jesus. The Jewish leaders respond by saying they have a law that Jesus must die because Jesus claimed to be the Son of God.

Pause the drama.

Also, ask the person playing Pilate, "What are you feeling?" The person might answer things like, "Shocked that the Jewish leaders are so upset about this one pathetic looking man," or "Afraid of this man and wondering if he really could be the Son of God," or "Scared of the people that they might mob me if I set Jesus free," or "Worried how to decide the case when Jesus seems so clearly innocent." [!end] Continue the drama.

Pilate goes back inside the palace again. He asks Jesus, "Where are you from?" but Jesus doesn't say anything. Pilate is offended that Jesus doesn't say anything. Pilate says, "Why won't you talk with me?" and "Don't you know I have the power to release you or to crucify you?" Jesus tells Pilate that only God has power and authority. Pilate only has power over Jesus because God gave Pilate that power.

Pause the drama.

Pilate tries to set Jesus free, but the Jewish leaders resist him. They say Pilate isn't a friend of Caesar if Pilate sets Jesus free. They mean that Caesar, the emperor, would want Jesus to be punished since Jesus claims to be a king.

Pause the drama.

Pilate brings Jesus outside and sits down on the judge's seat in the courtyard. Pilate prepares himself to give the decision about Jesus. He tells the Jews, "Here is your king!" and they reply, "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" Pilate says one more time, "Should I crucify your king?" The chief priests say, "We have no King but Caesar." Then, finally, Pilate hands Jesus over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 19:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Pilate was the Roman governor of the whole region of Judea. He reported to the Roman Emperor. Pilate was not Jewish, so the Jews did not want to enter his palace. Use the same name for Pilate as you did in previous passages.

Pilate lived in a palace. This is also the headquarters of the Roman government for that region. When Pilate was in Jerusalem, he lived in this palace. Use the same word for palace as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of a palace again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Pilate ordered the Roman soldiers to beat Jesus severely. The word "beat" in the original language means to beat severely, whip, flog, or scourge. It means to beat someone with a whip.

Roman soldiers served the Roman governor, Pilate. The soldiers were paid for their military service. Roman soldiers were not allowed to be beaten with a whip without a trial for their crimes.

The Roman soldiers put a **crown of thorns** on Jesus' head and dressed him in a **purple robe**.

Stop here and look at pictures of a whip, a crown of thorns and a purple robe again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

The Roman soldiers also called Jesus "**King** of the Jews." They were laughing at Jesus because it was clear to the Romans that the Jews had no king and were powerless people ruled by the Romans. A king usually wore a crown, held a scepter, had royal clothing, and sat on a throne. Use the same word for king as you used in previous passages. For more information on king, refer to the Master Glossary.

Pilate had the Roman soldiers bring Jesus out of the palace. Pilate wanted the **chief priests** and **officials** to see Jesus dressed in the crown of thorns and purple robe.

Chief priests were the Jewish religious leaders. Chief priests were part of the Jewish ruling council. The priests were God's representatives to Israel. Use the same word for chief priests as you used in previous passages. For more information on priests, refer to the Master Glossary.

The **officials** were the guards for the temple of the Jewish people. The officials worked for the chief priests. The officials arrested Jesus with some Roman soldiers, and they also brought Jesus to Annas, Caiaphas, and now to Pilate.

When the chief priests and officials saw Jesus, they shouted "Crucify him! Crucify him!" **Crucifixion** was the most severe form of executing criminals used by the Romans. Roman soldiers beat the criminal with a whip, and then nailed or tied the criminal to a cross of wood. It was a very painful way to die. Use the same word for crucifixion as you used in previous passages. For more information on crucifixion, refer to the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **crucifixion**. Look up crucifixion in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

The **Jews** tell Pilate they have a **law** that Jesus must die. The law is in the law of Moses. It says that anyone who misuses the name of God must die. Use the same words for Jews and law as you used in previous passages. For more information on Jews and law, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Jews speaking with Pilate included the chief priests and officials. There were probably also other Jews there in the crowd who opposed Jesus.

The Jews said Jesus claimed to be the **Son of God**. Jesus' claim meant he was the Messiah from God, was God himself, and enjoyed a special relationship with God. The Jews wanted to kill Jesus because he claimed to be the Son of God. Use the same word for Son of God as you used in previous passages. For more information on Son of God, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus tells Pilate that "the one who handed me over to you" sinned more. **Sin** means disobeying God. Use the same word for sin as you used in previous passages. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Jews told Pilate that Pilate was no friend of Caesar if Pilate released Jesus. **Caesar** was the title for the Roman Emperor, who was the leader of all of Rome.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Caesar**. Look up Caesar in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

Pilate sat on the judge's seat in his courtyard. There were large stones there, and the name of the place was Gabbatha in one of the original languages.

It was the day of preparation for the Jewish Passover holiday. **Passover** was an important Jewish religious festival that lasted for eight days. It also included the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Both festivals celebrate God rescuing the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. Use the same word for Passover as you used in previous passages. For more information on Passover, refer to the Master Glossary.

When Pilate told the Jews, "This is your king" and sent Jesus to be crucified, it was about the sixth hour. The Jews started counting the hours of the day at 6:00 in the morning, so the sixth hour is 12 p.m.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 19:1–16

Audio Content

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John 19:17–30

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 19:17–30 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 19:17–30 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 19:17–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus was brought to the Jewish leaders Caiaphas and Annas. Then Jesus was brought to Pilate, the Roman governor. After talking with the Jews and with Jesus, Pilate had the soldiers beat Jesus. The Jewish leaders shouted, "Crucify him!" Pilate handed over Jesus to be crucified. Now, Jesus carries his own cross to the place of crucifixion outside of the city. The Roman soldiers crucify Jesus. The soldiers divide up Jesus' clothing, and Jesus says his final words before he dies.

Pilate handed Jesus over to "them" to be crucified. It is possible that "them" refers to the chief priests to show they are the ones truly responsible for the death of Jesus. Jews were not allowed to crucify anyone, however, so the Roman soldiers were the ones who actually nailed Jesus to the cross. The Roman soldiers took Jesus. Jesus carried his own cross out of the city to the place of crucifixion. This was a normal thing for Romans to require the criminal to carry their own cross. Romans also crucified people outside of the city, or sometimes on

busy roadways so that many people could see. The other gospels say that Simon of Cyrene carried the cross for Jesus part of the way, but here the author John says only that Jesus did carry the cross part of the way. Jesus was probably carrying one of the two beams of wood on his shoulder, and the other beam of wood was already standing in the ground at the place of crucifixion. The place was called the "Place of the Skull," probably because the hill looked like a rounded human head. The word for "skull" in the language that the Jews speak is "Golgotha."

When they arrived at Golgotha, the Roman soldiers crucified Jesus and two criminals on each side of him. Jesus and the two criminals each had their own cross of wood. They nailed his hands to the cross beam with his hands spread out, and then lifted up the beam to nail it to the vertical wood beam. This vertical beam was probably about 10 feet, or 3 meters, tall. Sometimes people also nailed the criminal's feet to the wood. Sometimes there was a footrest or a seat for the criminal to support his body on. Usually, it took two or three days for the criminal to die if there was a place for the criminal to support his body. The criminal could rest on the support and death would happen slower because he would be able to breathe easier and his blood would still be able to move around his body more freely. Crucifixion was a form of execution used only for slaves or other criminals.

Stop here and look at a picture of a cross and a picture of a man carrying a cross-beam as a group. Pause this audio here.

It was common to write the crime of the criminal on a sign and hang it around the neck of the criminal. Sometimes the Romans also nailed the sign to the cross for everyone to read the crime. Pilate ordered the soldiers to write "Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews" and hang it on Jesus' cross. Pilate had them write the sign three times in three languages-Hebrew, Latin, and Greek-so that everyone could read about the crime of Jesus. Jews read it in the Hebrew Jewish language. Many non-Jews read it in the Latin language for the Romans or in the Greek language for the Greeks. The Jews read it because many of them lived near or in the city of Jerusalem, or they came to Jerusalem for the Passover festival. People crucified criminals in a public place to warn others against committing similar crimes.

"The Nazarene" means that Jesus was from Nazareth, which was a town in the region of Galilee. The trials and crucifixion of Jesus happen in Jerusalem. The sign also said, "King of the Jews," which probably didn't mean Pilate believed Jesus was the King of the Jews. Pilate was probably mocking the Jews, or he had the soldiers write it because this is why the Jews wanted to kill Jesus.

Stop here and look at a map that includes Nazareth and Jerusalem as a group. Pause this audio here.

The chief priests were not happy that Pilate had the Roman soldiers write "The King of the Jews" on Jesus' sign. Chief priests were the leading Jewish religious leaders. The chief priests wanted Pilate to change the sign. The chief priests knew they could not tell Pilate to remove the sign completely. They wanted Pilate to put up a new sign that said, "This man claimed to be the King of the Jews." The chief priests referred to Jesus as "this man" because they did not respect him or believe him. Jesus never said that he was King of the Jews, but this is what the chief priests accused Jesus of saying he was. Pilate replied to the chief priests, "What I have written, I have written." Pilate refused to change the sign.

Before the soldiers crucified Jesus, they removed his clothing. After they crucified him, they divided up his clothing. It was normal for the soldiers to take the clothing from the criminal. The clothing became the property of the soldiers who killed the criminal. The clothing probably included a belt and sandals. The soldiers divided Jesus' clothing into four parts, one part for each of the four soldiers. They were probably all four in the same military group together. After they divided up the four pieces of clothing among themselves, there was also a tunic. A tunic was probably a long shirt worn under other clothing. Both men and women wore tunics. Jesus' tunic was woven out of the same piece of cloth. A tunic made from one piece of cloth was more valuable than a tunic made from separate pieces of cloth.

Stop here and look at a picture of a tunic as a group. Pause this audio here.

The soldiers decided they should cast lots for Jesus' tunic because it was worth more as one piece than if they tore it into four pieces, one for each of them. Casting lots means throwing or using lots to decide something. The soldiers may have used small stones to decide who should have the tunic. People cast lots because they believed the lots would reveal their gods' will. There was a prophecy in the Old Testament that people divided Jesus' garments, and they cast lots for his clothing. The actions of the soldiers fulfilled this Old Testament

prophecy of dividing up Jesus' clothing and casting lots for it. Jesus now was naked and stripped of all of his material possessions, even his clothing.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of gambling or casting lots exist in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Next, Jesus talks to his mother and the disciple whom he loved while he is hanging on the cross. Some people believe this was a part of the process of dying: first Jesus lost his clothing, then Jesus lost his closest relationships, and then finally life itself. There were four women standing near the cross of Jesus: Jesus' mother, his mother's sister, a woman named Mary who was the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. Some people believe the woman named Mary, the wife of Clopas, was the same person as Jesus' aunt. This is unlikely, however, since Jesus' mother was also named Mary. Two sisters would not normally have the same name. Mary Magdalene was from the village of Magdala. Jesus speaks to both his mother and "the disciple whom he loved." This disciple was most likely John, who was writing this book. Jesus is not disrespectful when he says "woman" to his mother. He is showing respect, and he is caring for his mother because he is the eldest son. He wants Mary to care for John like her own son. In the same way, Jesus wants John to care for his mother after his death and to be like a son to Jesus' mother. "From that hour" means from that time, John welcomed Jesus' mother into his home and took care of her. John obeys and cares for Jesus' mother Mary.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe who cares for older mothers and fathers in your culture. What happens if the son/daughter dies before the parents? Who cares for the parents then? Pause this audio here.

The last step of dying happens next. Jesus knew that all things were accomplished, meaning Jesus had completed everything that God had sent him into the world to do. Then Jesus said, "I'm thirsty." Some people believe Jesus was thirsty for actual water because he was bleeding and dying in the hot sun. Others believe Jesus meant he was thirsty for God because Jesus was separated from God while he died on the cross. Others believe Jesus was talking about the prophecy in the Psalms that says, "When I was thirsty, they offered me vinegar." These people believe that Jesus said, "I'm thirsty" to make this prophecy come true. There was a jar of sour wine near the cross. Sour wine was cheap wine mixed with water or vinegar that soldiers or poor people drank. The wine was probably for the Roman soldiers to drink.

Stop here and look at a picture of a jar of sour wine as a group. Pause this audio here.

Someone, probably one of the soldiers, thought Jesus was thirsty for water. The soldier put a sponge on a branch of a hyssop bush and dipped it into the jar of sour wine. The sponge absorbed the sour wine. The soldier lifted it up to Jesus' mouth so Jesus could drink some of it.

Stop here and look at pictures of a sponge and a branch of a hyssop tree as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus sucked some of the wine from the sponge. Then, Jesus said, "It is finished!" This means Jesus was finished doing everything God had sent him to do. Jesus bowed his head forward, which could mean Jesus was finally at rest and at home. Earlier, Jesus had said, "The Son of Man has nowhere to bow his head." Then, Jesus gave up his spirit. This means Jesus died and allowed his spirit to return to God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you talk about death in your language and culture? What are common ways to describe the death of someone or what happens to them after they die?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 19:17–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: The Roman soldiers crucify Jesus. Pilate has them write "Jesus the Nazarene. King of the Jews" on a sign on the cross.

In the second scene: The Roman soldiers divide up Jesus' clothing.

In the third scene: Jesus talks to the disciple he loves and to his mother.

In the fourth scene: Jesus takes his last drink and then he dies.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Pilate, the Roman governor
- Four Roman soldiers
- The two other men who were crucified
- The Jews and non-Jews who see the crosses
- The Jewish chief priests
- The mother of Jesus
- Jesus' mother's sister
- Mary, the wife of Clopas
- Mary Magdalene
- And John, the disciple whom Jesus loved

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, Pilate hands Jesus over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified. Remember the soldiers and Jesus left the city because crucifixion could only happen outside of the city. They went to a place called Golgotha that probably looked like a rounded hill. Remember also that Jesus was carrying his own cross, and it is likely Jesus was only carrying the cross beam of the cross.

Stop here and look at a picture of a man carrying a cross-beam again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

At Golgotha, the soldiers crucified Jesus and two criminals. Remember that this was probably a busy area with many people passing by. The Romans crucified people in a public place to warn others about what happens when they commit serious crimes. They nailed Jesus to his cross, and they nailed the two criminals to their own crosses. The soldiers stood up all three crosses, and Jesus was in between the two criminals. Remember that people who were crucified could take days to die, and it was very painful. There may have been a footrest or seat for Jesus and the criminals to support their bodies on, and this would have kept them alive longer.

It is important to remember that Pilate told the Roman soldiers to write a sign and to hang it on Jesus' cross. The sign said, "Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews." Remember that John gives us the extra information that many Jews and non-Jews read the sign because the soldiers crucified Jesus in a public place. The sign was written in three different languages, so many different people could read it going into the city and coming out of the city. Remember that writing the criminals' crime on a sign like this was normal in a crucifixion.

Remember the chief priests were upset with the words on the sign on Jesus' cross. The chief priests wanted Pilate to change the sign to say, "This man claimed to be the King of the Jews." Remember the chief priests did not respect Jesus, and they were the ones who wanted Jesus to die. Pilate refused to change the sign.

In the second scene, the Roman soldiers divide up Jesus' clothing. Before they nailed Jesus and the other criminals to their crosses, they removed their clothing. Criminals were normally crucified naked. Remember that the four soldiers now owned the clothing of Jesus and the two criminals because they crucified them. The soldiers each took one part of Jesus' clothing, and Jesus' tunic remained. The soldiers did not want to tear the tunic because it was one piece of cloth, so they cast lots for the tunic. The tunic was more valuable in one piece than if they tore it into four separate pieces. The passage does not say which soldier won the tunic. Remember also that the actions of the soldiers fulfilled the Old Testament prophecy.

Stop here and look at a picture of a tunic again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Jesus speaks to his mother and to the disciple he loved. Remember there were probably four women near the cross: Jesus' mother, Jesus' mother's sister, a woman named Mary who was the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. Remember that Jesus is the eldest son, and it is his responsibility to care for his mother after he dies. The disciple Jesus loved is most likely John, who is writing this book. Jesus tells John to take care of his mother. Jesus calls his mother "woman," which was a respectful way to speak to a woman during Jesus' time.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about what you call your mother or an older woman you know. What is a term of respect for them? Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells his mother to be like a mother for John. John takes Jesus' mother into his own home and cares for her like his own mother.

In the fourth scene, Jesus has finished all the things God gave him to do. Jesus says two final things. First, he says, "I'm thirsty." The soldiers think Jesus is thirsty for physical water, so they give him some sour wine to drink. They put a sponge on the end of a hyssop branch and dip it in a jar of sour wine that is near the cross. Then the soldiers held up the branch with the sponge on it for Jesus to drink. Remember that sour wine was cheap wine that poor people or soldiers usually drank.

Stop here and look at pictures of a jar of sour wine, a sponge, and a hyssop branch again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

After Jesus drinks the sour wine from the sponge, Jesus says his final words. He says, "It is finished!" Jesus had completed everything God gave him to do. Remember that Jesus' actions caused Scripture to be fulfilled. Jesus bowed his head and gave up his spirit. "Give up his spirit" means Jesus died, and his spirit returned to God. It is not usual to talk about dying like this. This may show that Jesus had a choice about when he died.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 19:17-30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Pilate, the Roman governor
- Four Roman soldiers
- The two other men who were crucified
- The Jews and non-Jews who see the crosses
- The Jewish chief priests
- The mother of Jesus
- Jesus' mother's sister
- Mary, the wife of Clopas
- Mary Magdalene
- And John, the disciple whom Jesus loved

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The Roman soldiers take Jesus away to crucify him. Jesus carries his own cross. They go outside of the city to a place called Golgotha.

Pause the drama.

The soldiers nail Jesus to the cross and stand up the cross. There are two criminals with their own crosses, one crucified on each side of Jesus. Pilate commands the soldiers to make a sign and put it on Jesus' cross. The sign says, "Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews." The sign is translated into three different languages so that everyone can read it and understand it. The three crosses are at a public place near the city of Jerusalem, so both Jews and non-Jews see the crosses and the sign on Jesus' cross.

Pause the drama.

The chief priests are not happy with what is written on Jesus' sign. The chief priests try to make Pilate change the sign to say, "This man claimed to be the King of the Jews." Pilate refuses to change the sign.

Pause the drama.

The Roman soldiers divide up Jesus' clothing. There are four soldiers, so they each take one piece of Jesus' clothing. They decide to cast lots for Jesus' tunic because it is one piece of cloth and is more valuable in one piece.

Pause the drama.

Jesus' mother, his mother's sister, a woman named Mary who was the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene are all four standing near the cross. John, the disciple Jesus loves, is also standing near the cross. Jesus speaks to his mother and to John. Jesus tells his mother to consider John as her son. Jesus also tells John to consider his mother as his own mother. John obeys Jesus and welcomes Jesus' mother into his own home to care for her.

Pause the drama.

Also, ask the person playing John, "What are you feeling?" The person might answer things like, "Confused about why Jesus needs to die," or "Glad to have a role to care for Jesus' mother," or "Shocked that Jesus is letting these soldiers kill him." [!end] Continue the drama.

Jesus knows that he had completed everything God had given him to do. Jesus says, "I'm thirsty." One of the Roman soldiers puts a sponge at the end of a hyssop branch and dips the sponge into a jar of sour wine. The soldier holds it up for Jesus to drink the sour wine from the sponge. After Jesus drinks, he says, "It is finished." Then Jesus bows his head and gives up his spirit, meaning he dies.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 19:17–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus carried his own **cross** or **cross-beam** on the way to be **crucified** by the Roman soldiers. **Crucifixion** was the worst form of execution that Roman soldiers used for criminals. Use the same word for crucifixion as you used in previous passages. For more information on crucifixion, refer to the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and look at a picture of a cross used for crucifixion again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here. Also, stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **cross**. Look up cross in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

The Roman soldiers took Jesus to the Place of the Skull. This was the place of crucifixion outside of the city of Jerusalem. It was probably called the Place of the Skull because it was on a hill that looked like a rounded head. In **Hebrew**, this place was called Golgotha. Hebrew was the language the Jews spoke.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Hebrew**. Look up Hebrew in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

The Roman soldiers crucified Jesus and two criminals, and then hung a sign on Jesus' cross. Pilate told the Roman soldiers what to write on the sign. Pilate was the Roman governor of the whole region of Judea. Use the same word for Pilate as you used in previous passages.

The sign said, "Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews."

"The Nazarene" means Jesus was from **Nazareth**. Nazareth was a small town in the region of Galilee. Use the same word for Nazareth as you used in previous passages. For more information on Nazareth, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a map that shows Nazareth and Jerusalem again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

The sign also said, "**King** of the Jews." A king was someone who ruled over a city or territory. Use the same word for king as you used in previous passages. For more information on king, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Roman soldiers wrote the sign three times: once each in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. Latin was the language the Romans spoke. Greek was the language the Greeks spoke. All the people passing by the crosses could read the sign in their own language.

The **chief priests** were not happy with what Pilate had written on the sign. Chief priests were the Jewish religious leaders, and they were God's representatives to Israel. Use the same word for chief priests as you used in previous passages. For more information on priests, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Roman soldiers divided up Jesus' clothing. They served the Roman governor, Pilate. The soldiers were paid for their military service. They cast lots for Jesus' **tunic** because it was made of one piece of cloth and was more valuable as a single piece of clothing. A tunic was a long shirt worn under other clothing. Use the same word for tunic as you used in previous passages. For more information on tunic, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a picture of a tunic again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Casting lots means to use lots to decide something. The soldiers may have used small stones or broken pieces of pottery as their lots. Depending on how the stones landed or which stone was picked, that person would win the tunic.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for casting lots. Pause this audio here.

The soldiers cast lots for Jesus' clothing to **fulfill** the Old Testament prophecy. Fulfill means to finish, complete, or make a promise come true.

Jesus' mother was standing near the cross. We know her name is Mary from the other gospels. Jesus' mother's sister was also near the cross. We do not know her name. Another woman there was also named Mary, and she was the wife of a man named Clopas. Mary Magdalene was the fourth woman standing near the cross. She was from a village called Magdala.

The disciple Jesus loved was also near the cross. His name was John, and he wrote this book. He was a close friend of Jesus. Jesus told John to take Jesus' mother into his own **household**. Use the same word for household as you used in previous passages. For more information on household, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus said, "I'm thirsty." One of the Roman soldiers put a sponge at the end of a hyssop branch and dipped the sponge into a jar of sour wine. The soldier held it up for Jesus to drink the sour wine from the sponge. The sour wine was a cheap wine. It was in a jar, probably made of clay.

Stop here and look at a picture of a jar of sour wine again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

The sponge was a plant-like creature with holes in it. The sponge absorbed the sour wine. The hyssop branch was from a common plant called a hyssop bush.

Stop here and look at pictures of a sponge and a branch of a hyssop tree again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Jesus said, "It is finished!" Finished means that Jesus completed everything God sent him to do. The last thing Jesus needed to do was to die. Jesus gave up his **spirit**, which means he died. The word spirit may be similar to a soul. Spirit can also refer to God's spiritual nature. Use the same word for spirit as you used in previous passages. For more information on spirit, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 19:17-30

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5144887 KB)

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John 19:31–42

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 19:31–42 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 19:31–42 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 19:31–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus is arrested and eventually the Roman governor, Pilate, sends Jesus to be crucified by Roman soldiers. The soldiers also crucify two other men on either side of Jesus. The soldiers divide up Jesus' clothing, and Jesus speaks to his mother and the disciple he loves. Jesus also says, "It is finished," and then he dies. Now, the Jews ask Pilate to have the soldiers break the legs of the three men on the crosses so the men will die sooner. The soldiers find Jesus is already dead, so they don't break Jesus' legs. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus take Jesus' body from the cross and bury Jesus in a new tomb in a nearby garden.

The Jews did not want the three bodies of the crucified men to stay on the crosses for the Sabbath day of rest the next day. There are a few reasons for this. First, Jewish law said no dead body should stay on a tree overnight, or it will mean a curse for that person. Second, the Sabbath was a holy day of rest, and it was the day after the crucifixion of Jesus. Friday was the day of preparation for the Sabbath, and the Sabbath started at sundown on Friday night. Finally, this Sabbath was an important one because it was during Passover week. Passover was an important Jewish religious celebration.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are common practices for death and burial in your culture? What happens if a body is left outside overnight? Pause this audio here.

Because of all these reasons, the Jews, meaning the Jewish leaders, asked Pilate, the Roman governor, to break the legs of Jesus and the other two men. The Jews wanted the three men to die faster so their bodies could be taken down from the crosses before sundown on Friday. Normally, if a person could push up on the nails on the cross, they could stay alive for a few more days. With a support like the nails or a seat attached to the cross, the person's blood could continue to flow more freely and they would live longer. Breaking their legs with a large hammer or club would end the agony of the dying person sooner, so some people saw this as merciful. It

is not clear, however, that the Jews were thinking of being merciful. People who were crucified were often left on the crosses while their bodies rotted, and then put into a common grave with other dead bodies.

The Roman soldiers obeyed what Pilate told them to do. They broke the legs of the other two men on the crosses next to Jesus. The soldiers see that Jesus is already dead, so they do not break his legs. One of the soldiers pierces Jesus' side with a spear. A spear is a long weapon with a sharp metal point. It was a common weapon for a Roman soldier to have. Blood and water come out of Jesus. The soldier probably expected to see blood, but water is surprising. There could have been both blood and water that came out of Jesus when the soldier pierced Jesus' side. It is also possible that the blood and water were symbols to show Jesus' life, or that he is the living water. We do not know why John adds this detail of both blood and water coming out of Jesus.

Stop here and look at a picture of a spear as a group. Pause this audio here.

The next statement is probably said by John, the author of this book. Some people believe it could have been one of the Roman soldiers who testified to seeing Jesus die and the spear being put into Jesus' side. This is possible since there is a Roman centurion in Mark who says Jesus is the "Son of God." However, it is best to leave the testimony as anonymous. A testimony is telling what someone saw. The reason for the testimony is so the readers of John's book would believe in Jesus. In the original language, it is unclear if this testimony is meant to help current believers strengthen their faith in Jesus, or if the testimony is to help other people believe and trust in Jesus for the first time. Either way, the person giving the testimony wants readers to know that Jesus really did die, and this is an accurate report of what happened.

"These things"-Jesus dying and the Roman soldier putting the spear in Jesus' side-happened to fulfill the Scriptures, or to make these Old Testament scriptures come true. The first Scripture reference is likely from Exodus, which says not to break the bones of any Passover lambs. Jesus died the day before Passover, so it is possible Jesus is like the Passover lamb in this verse. The soldiers didn't break any of Jesus' bones, which fulfills the Scripture. It is also possible the Scripture is from the Psalms, which says none of the bones of the righteous man will be broken.

The second verse is, "They will look on the one they have pierced." The Scripture was written down in the book of the prophet Zechariah, and people could read this verse. "Pierce" means to stab something by putting a sharp object into it. People could see the soldiers stab Jesus' side with the spear, so this Old Testament scripture also came true.

After this, Joseph asked Pilate if he could come and take Jesus' body from the cross so he could bury Jesus' body. Joseph was from the town of Arimathea, and he was a follower of Jesus. Arimathea was probably a town in Judea, but people don't know exactly where it was. Joseph was one of the Jewish officials, but he did not tell the Jews publicly that he followed Jesus. Joseph was probably afraid that if the Jews knew Joseph was Jesus' disciple, the religious leaders would make Joseph lose his position as a religious official. Pilate gave Joseph permission, which was unusual. Pilate would not normally have given someone permission for a special burial like this. Joseph came to take Jesus' body so he could bury him. Joseph probably carried the body of Jesus on a mat or something else that could be used to carry a body.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about burial customs in your culture. How do people bury their dead? What do they use to prevent bad smells? Where do people bury their dead? Pause this audio here.

Nicodemus also came to help take down Jesus' body and bury him. Nicodemus was the same man who came to Jesus at night to talk to Jesus. Nicodemus was also one of the Jewish religious officials. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes to put on Jesus' body. Myrrh was a sticky substance from a bush, and it was made into a powder. It was very expensive. Aloes was probably a powder made from a sandalwood tree. Myrrh and aloes were both good-smelling spices used to hide the bad smells of a dead body. It is possible these spices were mixed with oil.

Stop here and look at pictures of a sandalwood tree and a myrrh bush as a group. Pause this audio here.

Nicodemus had 75 pounds, or about 30 kilograms, of the spices, which was enough spices to bury a wealthy person. Nicodemus was wealthy and probably had servants to help carry the spices. Nicodemus and Joseph wrapped the body of Jesus in linen cloths with spices around the body. Linen cloth was white and valuable. This was the normal way the Jews buried their dead, but the amount of spices was more than usual.

Stop here and look at a picture of linen cloths as a group. Pause this audio here.

Joseph and Nicodemus laid the body of Jesus in a tomb near where Jesus was crucified. The tomb was in a garden. They chose this tomb because it was nearby and they didn't have a lot of time before sundown and the start of the Sabbath. The tomb was probably like a cave dug in the hillside. There was a large stone in front of the tomb to protect the body in the tomb. No one else had ever been buried in that tomb. Usually, Jews put a dead body in a tomb, and after the body rotted, they put the bones in a box in the tomb. Then they put another dead body in the tomb. In Jesus' tomb, there were no other bodies in the tomb, and it had never been used before.

Stop here and look at a picture of a tomb with a large stone in front of it as a group.

The soldiers broke the legs of the two criminals crucified on each side of Jesus, and then those criminals died at some point. We do not know exactly what happened to their bodies after that, but it is likely that someone came and took their bodies away. This is what the Jews asked Pilate for in the beginning of this passage. It is possible they were buried in a common grave with other criminals.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 19:31-42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: The soldiers break the legs of the two criminals crucified next to Jesus. The soldiers pierce Jesus' side with a spear instead of breaking his legs.

In the second scene: Joseph comes to Pilate to ask permission to bury Jesus' body. Pilate grants Joseph permission.

In the third scene: Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus come to take the body of Jesus to bury him. They prepare the body for burial and then bury Jesus in a new tomb in a nearby garden.

The characters in this passage are:

- The Jews, or Jewish leaders
- Jesus
- Pilate, the Roman governor
- The Roman soldiers
- The two other men who were crucified
- The one who testified to these things
- Joseph of Arimathea
- And Nicodemus

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, the Jews ask Pilate to break the legs of the three men on the crosses. Remember that breaking their legs would make them die faster, and then their bodies could be taken down from the crosses. Remember also that the Jews were probably not thinking of ending the agony of the men on the crosses. The Jews wanted to avoid breaking their laws about leaving a body on a tree overnight. They also wanted to have the bodies taken down before the Sabbath, which started at sundown. The Sabbath was a special Sabbath because it was also Passover week. Remember, Jesus died on a Friday, and it was probably afternoon now on Friday.

Remember that the soldiers came and broke the legs of the two men on either side of Jesus. It is not clear why the soldiers chose to start with the other two men and then come to Jesus last to break his legs. They probably

used a large hammer or club. The passage does not say specifically that Pilate told the soldiers to do this, but it is clear the soldiers obeyed Pilate's orders to break the men's legs. Remember that when the soldiers came to Jesus, they saw Jesus was already dead. They did not break his legs because there was no need to hurry the death of Jesus. Instead of breaking Jesus' legs, one soldier put a spear into Jesus' side. It is possible the soldier did this to make sure Jesus was truly dead. Remember that blood and water came out of Jesus' side. The water could be physical water, or the water could represent the living water Jesus talked about. Remember that Jesus was definitely dead.

Stop here and look at a picture of a spear as a group again if needed. Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that the next statement is not a part of the action of the scene. It is a statement that says the person who saw these things happen is telling a true and accurate testimony of what happened. It is also important that the reason for this testimony is so that people who hear this will believe in Jesus. Remember it is likely that John, the writer of this book, is the one giving this testimony. It is best to not say who is giving the testimony, however.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you introduce this statement in your language? What is the most natural way to talk about a testimony of events that happened? Pause this audio here.

The last two statements in this scene are also comments on what happened when the soldiers broke the legs of the two men and pierced Jesus' side with a spear. Remember there are two prophecies from the Old Testament. The actions that happened after Jesus' death fulfill these two prophecies. The first one is "Not one of his bones will be broken." Remember this is possibly from the prophecy that says not to break the bones of the Passover lambs. Jesus is like the Passover lamb when he dies on the cross during Passover week. It is also possible this prophecy is from the Psalms which says none of the bones of the righteous man will be broken.

Remember that the second statement is another commandment from the Old Testament. It says, "They will look on the one they have pierced." Remember this is from the book of the prophet Zechariah in the Old Testament. When the soldier pierced Jesus' side with the spear, this made this prophecy in Zechariah come true.

In the second scene, Joseph comes to Pilate to ask permission to bury Jesus' body. Remember it was unusual for Pilate to give someone permission to bury someone like this. Remember that Joseph is from the town of Arimathea, and he is a Jewish religious official. Joseph is a follower of Jesus, but he does not tell people about this because he is afraid of the Jews. Remember he might be afraid of losing his position with the religious leaders. Joseph wanted to care for Jesus' body, and that's why he asked Pilate for permission.

In the third scene, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus come to take the body of Jesus to bury him. Remember that the passage does not say what happens to the bodies of the other two men on the crosses next to Jesus. When the Jews asked Pilate to break the legs of Jesus and the two men next to Jesus, the Jews were most likely only thinking about the coming Sabbath and needing to keep the religious laws.

Nicodemus was also with Joseph. Remember, this was the same Nicodemus who came to talk to Jesus at night. Nicodemus was also a Jewish religious official, and he was probably wealthy. He brought about 75 pounds, or about 30 kilograms, of spices to prepare Jesus' body for burial. The spices were myrrh and aloes, and they smelled good. Remember that the amount of spices was much more than usual for a normal burial. Nicodemus was preparing Jesus for burial like he was a king. Remember that Nicodemus and Joseph wrapped the body of Jesus with linen cloths and the spices. This was the way Jews prepared a body for burial.

Stop here and look at a picture of linen cloths again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

After Nicodemus and Joseph finished wrapping Jesus' body, they laid him in a new tomb. The tomb was probably a cave dug in a hillside. It was in a garden near where Jesus was crucified. Remember they probably buried Jesus in this tomb because it was nearby and there was not a lot of time before sundown. Remember also it was a new tomb, and no one had been buried there before.

Stop here and look at a picture of a tomb with a large stone in front of it again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 19:31-42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- The Jews
- Jesus
- Pilate, the Roman governor
- The Roman soldiers
- The two other men who were crucified
- The one who testified to these things
- Joseph of Arimathea
- And Nicodemus

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The Jews ask Pilate to break the legs of the men on the crosses. The Jews want the men to die before the Sabbath starts at sundown that day. It is also a special Sabbath, so the Jews want to make sure there are no bodies on the crosses after the Sabbath begins at sundown. Pilate accepts the Jews' request.

Pause the drama.

The Roman soldiers break the legs of the two criminals on either side of Jesus. The soldiers come to Jesus, and they see Jesus is already dead. The soldiers do not break Jesus' legs since Jesus is already dead. Instead, one of the soldiers puts a spear in Jesus' side, and blood and water come out of Jesus' side.

Pause the drama.

Also, ask the person playing the soldier who puts the spear in Jesus' side, "What are you feeling?" The person might answer things like, "Surprised this man is already dead this soon," or "Wanting to make sure he's really dead," or "Surprised that blood and water come out of Jesus' side." [!end] Continue the drama.

The one who saw this all happen testifies that it is true. He is telling about how Jesus died on the cross and about the spear the soldier put in Jesus' side. He's telling this so the people hearing this story will believe in Jesus and put their trust in him. The soldiers did not break any of Jesus' bones, which fulfills an Old Testament Scripture. This Scripture says, "Not one of his bones was broken." A soldier also put his spear in Jesus' side, which fulfills another Old Testament Scripture that says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."

Pause the drama.

Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate if he could take down Jesus' body and bury him. Joseph was a Jewish religious official, and he was a secret follower of Jesus. He didn't want the Jews to know he was a follower of Jesus because he was afraid of them. Pilate agreed to Joseph's request, so Joseph came to take down Jesus' body from the cross.

Pause the drama.

Nicodemus also came to help Joseph of Arimathea bury Jesus. Nicodemus was the same man who came to visit Jesus at night. Nicodemus was a Jewish religious official. He brought 30 kilograms of myrrh and aloes. These spices smelled good, and people used them when they buried a body. Nicodemus and Joseph took Jesus' body and wrapped him in linen cloths with the spices in between the cloths. This was the normal way Jews buried their dead. Nicodemus and Joseph laid the body of Jesus in a new tomb in a nearby garden.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 19:31-42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **Jews** ask Pilate to break the legs of the men on the crosses. In the book of John, John often says "Jews" to mean the Jewish leaders. Jesus was crucified on a **cross**, and there was a criminal crucified on a cross on each side of Jesus, too. Use the same words for Jews and cross as you used in previous passages. For more information on Jews and cross, refer to the Master Glossary.

Pilate was the Roman governor of the whole region of Judea. Use the same word for Pilate as you used in previous passages.

The day Jesus died was a Friday, which was the day of preparation for the **Sabbath**. Jews rested on the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, which was on Saturday. Jews did no work on the Sabbath, and the Sabbath started at sundown on Friday night. Friday was a day to prepare for Saturday when there would be no work at all. Also, this particular Sabbath was a special day because it was the Passover feast week. Use the same words for Sabbath as you used in previous passages. For more information on Sabbath refer to the Master Glossary.

The Jews wanted the bodies of the men to be taken away from the crosses. According to Jewish religious law, a dead body could not be left on a cross overnight, especially before an important religious holiday.

The Roman soldiers went to each of the criminals **crucified** next to Jesus. The soldiers broke the legs of the two men to make them die sooner. The soldiers served the Roman governor, Pilate. The soldiers were paid for their military service. Use the same word for **crucifixion** as you used in previous passages. For more information on crucifixion, refer to the Master Glossary.

The soldiers saw Jesus was already dead, so they did not break his legs. One soldier pierced Jesus' side with a spear. A **spear** is a long weapon with a sharp metal point. It was a common weapon for a Roman soldier to have.

Stop here and look at a picture of a spear again as a group if needed.

Blood and water came out of Jesus when the soldier pierced Jesus' side with the spear. Use the same word for blood as you used in previous passages. For more information on blood, refer to the Master Glossary.

The person speaking **testifies** to seeing Jesus die on the cross. The **testimony** includes the facts about the soldiers breaking the legs of the two criminals next to Jesus, but not breaking Jesus' legs. It also includes the fact that the soldier pierced Jesus' side and blood and water came out. Testify means to tell what happened. Use the same word for testify as you used in previous passages. For more information on testify, refer to the Master Glossary.

There are two **Scriptures** in this passage. The things that happened on the day Jesus died fulfilled these Scriptures. The Scriptures during Jesus' time were the Old Testament books of the Bible. Fulfill means to make something come true. Use the same word for Scriptures as you used in previous passages. For more information on Scriptures, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joseph of Arimathea came to take down Jesus' body from the cross and to bury him. Joseph was from the town of Arimathea and he was a secret **disciple** of Jesus. He was wealthy and also a Jewish religious official. He owned the new tomb where they buried the body of Jesus. Use the same word for disciple as you used in previous passages. For more information on disciple, refer to the Master Glossary.

Nicodemus also came to help bury the body of Jesus. Nicodemus was the same Jewish religious official who came to visit Jesus at night. Use the same word for Nicodemus as you used in previous passages.

Nicodemus had a mixture of **aloes** and **myrrh**. These were both dry spices that Jews used to make a dead body smell better. They sometimes put the dry spices in oil or they used the powdered spices without oil. Nicodemus had about 75 pounds of the spices. In the original language, this was about 100 pounds, but the Roman measurement system was different from today's system. In kilograms, it was about 30 kilograms. This was more spices than someone would normally put on a dead body for burial.

Stop here and look at pictures of a sandalwood tree and a myrrh bush again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Nicodemus and Joseph wrapped Jesus' body in **linen cloths** and put the spices on his body. Linen cloth was white in color and it was valuable.

Stop here and look at a picture of linen cloths again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Joseph and Nicodemus took the body of Jesus and laid him in a new **tomb** in a nearby garden. A garden was a place where people planted herbs, flowers, vegetables, or fruit. During Jesus' time, a tomb was often a cave dug into the side of a hill. This tomb was a new tomb, meaning no other bodies were buried there. There was probably a large stone in front of the tomb to protect the body. Joseph and Nicodemus did not put Jesus in the ground or cover Jesus' body with dirt.

*Stop here and look at a picture of a tomb with a large stone in front of it again as a group if needed. Also, stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **tomb**. Look up tomb in the Master Glossary for more information.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 19:31–42

Audio Content

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John 20:1–18

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 20:1–18 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 20:1–18 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 20:1–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus is arrested and eventually Pilate sends Jesus to be crucified by Roman soldiers. After Jesus dies on the cross, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus take Jesus' body down from the cross and they bury Jesus in a new tomb in a nearby garden.

Now, Mary Magdalene, Peter, and another disciple all come to see the empty tomb. They all see that Jesus isn't in the tomb. After Peter and the other disciple leave, Mary sees Jesus, but she doesn't recognize him at first. Jesus speaks with Mary, and then she knows it's Jesus. Mary goes back to tell the disciples she saw Jesus.

This passage begins with Mary Magdalene walking to Jesus' tomb. It is early in the morning, and it is still dark. It is the first day of the week, which is Sunday in Jewish culture. This is the same Mary Magdalene who was next to Jesus' cross with several other women while Jesus died on Friday. She is from the town of Magdala, but right now she is staying in Jerusalem. The passage doesn't say anyone else comes with her to the tomb. It also doesn't say why she comes to the tomb-Joseph and Nicodemus already prepared Jesus' body with spices. The most important part of John's writings is what happens at the empty tomb.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what kinds of visits do people make to a tomb or grave, if any? Why do they visit a tomb or grave? Pause this audio here.

Mary arrives at Jesus' tomb in the garden, and she sees the large stone that normally covers the entrance of the tomb is not in front of the entrance of the tomb. In Jewish culture, tombs were often caves cut into the side of the hill. Inside the tomb was a stone shelf for a body. It is clear someone moved the large stone. The hole of the entrance is open. The entrance for many tombs was a hole on ground level. The entrance was usually only about one meter high. Adults needed to bend down to go inside.

Stop here and look at pictures of a tomb, a large stone, and a stone shelf in a tomb as a group. Pause the audio here.

Mary does not go inside the tomb. Instead, she thinks someone stole Jesus' body. She knows the stone was moved, and she thinks someone moved Jesus' body. She runs to find Simon Peter and the disciple Jesus loved, meaning that this disciple was probably a close friend. This is probably John, the author of this book. It is possible they were staying in the same home together in Jerusalem, or they may have been in different homes. She tells them someone took the Lord's body out of the tomb. "The Lord" is a term of respect for Jesus. She says, "We do not know where they have put him!" Some people think this means other women were also with Mary when she saw the empty tomb. Others believe she says "we don't know" because she is including all of the disciples in the group of people who don't know where Jesus' body is.

Peter and the other disciple run to the tomb. They go quickly because they are anxious to see what happened. The other disciple runs faster than Peter and arrives at the tomb first. The other disciple bends down at the entrance of the tomb and looks inside the tomb, but he does not go inside. He sees linen cloths lying in the tomb, and no body. Jews wrapped linen cloths around a dead body. Linen was white, good quality cloth. The linen cloths were probably on the shelf in the tomb where Jesus' body had been. The sun is at least partially risen now because this disciple can see the linen cloths in the tomb. It would have been unlikely for someone to steal a body but leave behind the linen cloths wrapped around the body.

Stop here and look at a picture of linen cloths as a group. Pause the audio here.

It is not clear why the disciple does not enter the tomb immediately-maybe he waited for Peter because he respected Peter. Peter arrives at the tomb after the other disciple, and Peter goes inside the tomb. Peter also needed to bend down to go inside the tomb. Peter sees the linen cloths lying in the tomb, a cloth for the head, and no body. In those days, people probably wrapped a head cloth around the head of a dead person to keep the mouth from falling open. The head cloth was lying separate from the other linen cloths for the body. This may mean the head cloth was left in the same shape as when it was wrapped around Jesus' head, but this is not clear.

The other disciple now goes inside the tomb. It is likely this disciple also saw the linen cloths and the head cloth on the shelf in the tomb. This disciple sees, and he believes. This does not mean that Peter did not believe, but nothing in this passage tells us Peter's reaction. It is likely this disciple believes Jesus is alive and not dead anymore because of seeing the empty tomb with only linen cloths and no body. The disciple does not think someone stole Jesus' body.

John, the author of the book, includes some background information now. He says that Peter and the other disciple still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus must rise from the dead. The other disciple believed Jesus was alive from seeing the empty tomb, and not because of the Scriptures. Scriptures refers to the Old Testament. "Must rise from the dead" means that God decided Jesus would come back to life after he died.

In Jewish law, it is necessary for two men to witness something. Peter and the other disciple both witnessed the empty tomb, which verifies the truth of the empty tomb. Many Jews did not consider the testimony of a woman reliable, so it is possible some people would not believe Mary if she was the only one who saw the empty tomb. Peter and the other disciple now go back to where they were staying in Jerusalem.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kind of person in your culture is considered a "good witness" when something important happens? Pause this audio here.

Now, Mary is back at the tomb again. She followed the two disciples back to the tomb and stayed there after they left. She is crying next to the tomb. While she is crying, she bends over and looks inside of the tomb. She sees two angels in white clothes inside the tomb. An angel is a messenger of God, and the white clothes show the angels are from heaven. The angels are sitting on either end of the shelf in the tomb. One angel is where Jesus' head had been, and one angel is where Jesus' feet had been. We don't know whether or not Mary sees any linen cloths in the tomb. The most important part is that Jesus' body is not in the tomb.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss what color of clothes people wear when someone has died. What kinds of customs do you have in your culture about colors of clothing to wear at certain times? Pause this audio here.

The angels ask Mary why she is crying. The angels call her "woman," which was a polite way to talk to a woman during Jesus' time. The angels already know why Mary is crying. They also know that Jesus is alive, and that Mary does not need to cry. Mary replies to the angels that she is crying because she still believes someone took Jesus' body away from the tomb. Mary still believes Jesus is dead. Mary calls Jesus "my Lord," which is a polite way to speak about someone in authority. Mary turns away from the angels and the tomb. She sees Jesus standing there, but she does not know it is Jesus at first. It is possible he looks a little different.

Jesus asks Mary two questions: why she is crying and who she is looking for. Again, the word "woman" is a polite way to talk to a woman. Jesus already knows the answers to his questions—Mary is crying because she thinks Jesus is still dead. Mary thought Jesus was the gardener, or someone who works in a garden. The tomb was in a garden. Mary tells the man that if he is the one who moved Jesus' body, then tell her where Jesus' body is now. Mary still does not know that she is speaking with Jesus himself, and she calls him "sir" as a respectful way to talk to a person. In the original language, this word is the same word translated as "lord." She wants to find Jesus' body so she can rebury him.

Jesus calls Mary by name, and then Mary turns toward Jesus. Mary finally recognizes Jesus when she hears Jesus call her name. She calls Jesus "Rabbouni." This is a word in the Hebrew language the Jews speak. Rabbouni means "my teacher." A teacher is someone who has authority to teach about God, not only a schoolteacher. Jesus replies to Mary and tells her not to hold onto him. This could mean Mary is already holding onto Jesus, and Jesus wants her to stop. Jesus tells Mary he did not ascend, or go up, to the Father yet. The Father means God in heaven. Some people think Jesus means he will see Mary again before he returns to God in heaven. Other people think Jesus wants Mary to hurry and give the message to the disciples. Jesus wants them to know that soon he will go to God in heaven. Jesus will not stay on earth permanently.

Jesus tells Mary to go to his brothers, meaning the 11 disciples. In this case, "brothers" does not mean Jesus' family members. Jesus wants Mary to give the disciples an important message. The message is that "I am returning to the one who is my Father and your Father." This is the same one who is the God that Jesus worships and the God the disciples worship. The phrases "my Father," "your Father," "my God," and "your God" all refer to the same God. Mary did what Jesus said and went to the disciples. She told them, "I have seen the Lord!" meaning she saw Jesus alive. Mary also told the disciples everything Jesus told her to say.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 20:1–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Mary Magdalene goes to Jesus' tomb early on Sunday morning. She sees the stone is gone from the entrance of the tomb, and she thinks someone stole Jesus' body.

In the second scene: Mary goes to tell Peter and the other disciple the news about the empty tomb.

In the third scene: Peter and the other disciple run to the tomb. They see the linen wrappings in the tomb. The other disciple sees and believes.

In the fourth scene: Mary Magdalene sees two angels in the tomb. She also sees Jesus himself, but at first, she doesn't recognize him. She knows it's Jesus when he says her name. Jesus tells Mary to give the disciples a message.

In the fifth scene: Mary goes to the disciples and gives them the message from Jesus. She also says, "I have seen the Lord!"

The characters in this passage are:

- Mary Magdalene
- Peter
- The other disciple, the one Jesus loved
- Two angels
- Jesus
- And the other disciples

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, remember that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus placed Jesus' body in a new tomb on Friday before the start of the Sabbath. Remember, the tomb is in a garden. When the first scene starts in this passage, it is now Sunday morning, the first day of the week. It is very early in the morning, and Mary Magdalene is coming to visit the tomb of Jesus. Remember she is staying in Jerusalem, so it was not a long walk to the tomb. Remember also she was at the crucifixion on Friday when Jesus died. We don't know exactly why she comes to the tomb, but when she arrives, she sees the stone is moved from in front of the entrance of the tomb. Mary believes someone stole Jesus' body because the stone is not in front of the tomb's entrance. Remember, Mary does not look inside or go inside of the tomb at this time. Remember, the tomb was a cave cut into rock, and the entrance was probably only one meter high.

Stop here and look at pictures of a tomb, a large stone, and a stone shelf in a tomb as a group again if needed. Pause the audio here.

In the second scene, Mary runs back to the disciples in Jerusalem. She finds Peter and the disciple Jesus loved. Remember that this is most likely John, the author of this book. She tells them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him." Remember that she still thinks someone stole Jesus' body and that Jesus is still dead.

In the third scene, Peter and the other disciple run to the tomb. They want to see for themselves what Mary is talking about. The other disciple runs ahead and arrives at the tomb first. Remember that even though this disciple arrives first at the tomb, he does not go inside. He bends down and looks inside, though. He sees the linen cloths lying in the tomb. Remember, it was probably light outside so that the disciple could see the cloths.

Stop here and look at a picture of linen cloths again as a group if needed. Pause the audio here.

Next, Peter arrives at the tomb. Peter goes inside the tomb and sees the linen cloths, and also a face cloth lying separately. All the cloths were probably lying on the shelf in the tomb. Remember, the other disciple then goes inside the tomb. Remember that he probably sees the same thing as Peter—the linen cloths and the face cloth on the shelf of the tomb. This disciple sees and believes. Remember that this disciple believes that Jesus is alive based on what he sees in the tomb, and not based on the Scriptures that say Jesus will rise from the dead. Peter and the other disciple leave the tomb and go back to where they're staying in Jerusalem.

In the fourth scene, Mary has returned to the tomb again. She is standing next to the tomb, and she is crying. Remember that Mary still believes that someone stole Jesus' body. Mary stoops down and looks inside, and she sees two angels. The angels are dressed in white. Remember that one angel is at each end of the shelf where Jesus' body was before. The angels ask Mary, "Woman, why are you crying?" Remember, they already know that Mary is crying because she thinks Jesus is still dead. The word, "woman," is a polite way to talk to a woman.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about what word you use as a term of respect when you speak to a woman in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Mary tells the two angels that she is crying because someone has stolen Jesus' body. Remember that Mary calls Jesus "my Lord." She is facing the angels inside the tomb while they talk together. Then, she turns away from the angels. Mary sees someone standing there, but she does not recognize him. It is Jesus. Jesus and Mary now have a conversation. Jesus asks her two questions: why she is crying and who she is looking for. Jesus already knows the answer to these two questions. Jesus knows Mary is crying because she thinks Jesus is still dead and someone moved his body. Jesus also knows that Mary is looking for Jesus, and for the people who may have moved Jesus' body.

Mary replies to Jesus, and she thinks Jesus is the gardener. Remember that she calls him "sir" and she asks him politely if he can tell her where Jesus' body is.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about whether it would be more natural in your language to use a question or a statement here when Mary makes her request of Jesus. Some examples could be: "Please tell me where you put him," or "Could you let me know where you placed his body?" Pause this audio here.

Next, Jesus says Mary's name. Hearing her name finally helps Mary recognize who Jesus is. Mary turns toward Jesus now and she calls Jesus "Rabbouni," which means "my teacher."

Jesus gives Mary a message to tell the disciples. Remember that Mary is probably already holding onto Jesus—he was saying to stop what she was already doing. Jesus does not want Mary to hold on to him because he did not go up to his Father in heaven yet. Jesus wants Mary to tell the disciples, "I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." Remember, this all refers to the same God.

In the fifth scene, Mary obeys what Jesus tells her to do. Mary leaves the tomb and returns to the disciples in Jerusalem. She tells them, "I have seen the Lord!" She also tells them everything Jesus tells her to say.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 20:1–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 5 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Mary Magdalene
- Peter
- The other disciple, the one Jesus loved
- Two angels
- Jesus
- And the other disciples

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb early on Sunday morning. It is still dark outside. She arrives at the tomb, and she sees that someone rolled the stone away from the tomb's entrance.

Pause the drama.

Mary runs back to Jerusalem. She tells Peter and the disciple Jesus loved that someone took Jesus' body from the tomb.

Pause the drama.

Peter and the other disciple run to the tomb. The other disciple runs faster than Peter. The other disciple arrives at the tomb first and looks inside the tomb. He sees linen cloths in the tomb and no body.

Pause the drama.

Peter arrives at the tomb now. He goes inside the tomb and sees the linen cloths, and also a face cloth lying separately, too. Now the other disciple goes inside the tomb. The other disciple sees and believes. They still don't understand that the Scriptures say Jesus must rise from the dead. They go back to where they're staying in Jerusalem.

Pause the drama.

Also, ask the person playing the other disciple, "What are you feeling?" The person might answer things like, "Believing that Jesus is alive again," or "Wondering when we'll see him," or "Trying to understand how this happened." [!end] Continue the drama.

Mary comes back to the tomb again. She is standing next to the tomb and she's crying. She bends over to look inside the tomb, and she sees two angels in white sitting on either end of the shelf. The angels ask her, "Why are you crying?"

Mary replies that she's crying because someone took away her lord's body and she doesn't know where he is.

Pause the drama.

Mary turns around and sees a man in the garden. It is Jesus, but she does not recognize him at first. Jesus asks Mary, "Why are you crying? Who are you looking for?"

Mary thinks Jesus is the gardener, so she asks Jesus if he knows where Jesus' body is now. Jesus calls Mary by name, and Mary turns toward Jesus. She recognizes him and calls him "Rabbouni," which means "my teacher."

Pause the drama.

Also, ask the person playing Mary, "What are you feeling?" The person might answer things like, "Shocked that Jesus is alive!" or "Confused about how Jesus could be alive when I saw him die on the cross on Friday," or "Wanting to hold on to Jesus." [!end] Continue the drama.

Mary probably reaches out and holds on to Jesus. Jesus tells Mary not to hold onto him because he didn't go up to his Father in heaven yet. Jesus tells her to go back to the disciples to give them a message. The message is, "I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."

Mary leaves the tomb and goes to the disciples. She tells them, "I have seen the Lord!" She also tells them the message Jesus said to give to them.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 20:1–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early in the morning on the first day of the week. Mary is from the village of Magdala, and she was at the cross while Jesus died. In Jewish culture, the first day of the week is Sunday.

A **tomb** during Jesus' time was often a cave dug into the side of a hill. There was normally a large stone in front of the tomb to protect the body. Use the same word for tomb as you used in previous passages. For more information on tomb, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at pictures of a tomb, a large stone, and a stone shelf in a tomb again as a group if needed. Pause the audio here.

Simon Peter and the disciple Jesus loved are two of the 12 disciples of Jesus. The **disciples** followed Jesus and learned from him. Use the same word for disciple as you used in previous passages. For more information on disciple, refer to the Master Glossary.

Mary told Simon Peter and the other disciple, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb." **Lord** was a term of respect for Jesus that could be translated "sir." It was also a way for Jesus' followers to refer to Jesus as God and master. Use the same word for Lord as you used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

The other disciple arrives at the tomb first. He stoops down to look inside the tomb because the tomb's entrance was only one meter high. He sees linen cloths in the tomb.

Stop here and look at a picture of linen cloths again as a group if needed. Pause the audio here.

Peter arrives at the tomb and goes inside the tomb. He sees the linen cloths and also a face cloth lying separately in the tomb. The other disciple then looks inside the tomb too. He sees and **believes**. **Belief** means the other disciple believes Jesus is alive and not dead anymore. Use the same word for belief as you used in previous passages. For more information on belief, refer to the Master Glossary.

Peter and the other disciple did not yet understand what the **Scriptures** said about Jesus coming back from the dead. The Scriptures during Jesus' time was the Old Testament books of the Bible. Use the same word for Scriptures as you used in previous passages. For more information on Scriptures, refer to the Master Glossary.

Mary saw two angels inside the tomb. An **angel** is a messenger of God. Use the same word for angels as you used in previous passages. For more information on angels, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus talks to Mary, but she thinks at first that he is the **gardener**, the person who takes care of the garden. The tomb is in a garden.

Mary recognizes Jesus when he says her name. Then Mary says "Rabbouni." This means "my teacher" in **Hebrew**. Rabbouni is from the same word as **Rabbi**, meaning "teacher." Hebrew is the language the Jews speak. Use the same words for Hebrew and Rabbi as you used in previous passages. For more information on Hebrew and Rabbi, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus tells Mary not to hold onto him because he did not go up to his Father yet. Father means Jesus' Father God in heaven. Jesus tells Mary to give his brothers a message. **Brothers** means his disciples, and not his brothers related by blood.

The message is, "I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." **Father** means Jesus' Father God in heaven, and this is the same person as the God they all worship.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 20:1–18

Audio Content

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John 20:19–31

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 20:19–31 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 20:19–31 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 20:19–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus is arrested and then crucified by Roman soldiers. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus bury Jesus' body in a new tomb in a nearby garden. On Sunday, Mary Magdalene, Peter, and another disciple all come and see the empty tomb. Jesus also speaks with Mary, and Mary goes back to tell the disciples that she saw Jesus. Now, Jesus appears to all of the disciples and speaks with them. He also comes back a second time eight days later. This time Thomas, one of the disciples, is also there and sees Jesus.

This passage begins on the same day that Mary, Peter, and the other disciple go to the empty tomb. It is now Sunday evening, the first day of the week. The disciples are together, and the doors of the house are locked. This probably means the disciples pushed a bar of wood or iron against the door of the room or the house so people could not enter. It is also possible the gate to the house was locked. A gate was a door outside of the house that people opened and shut to come into the land in front of the house. The disciples locked the house because they were afraid of the Jews, meaning the Jewish religious leaders. The Jewish leaders gave Jesus to the Romans to be crucified, so the disciples were probably afraid the Jewish leaders might also arrest them.

Stop here and look at a picture of a wood or iron bar lock as a group. Pause the audio here.

Jesus comes into the room and stands there with the disciples. It is likely this was a miracle because the doors were locked, but nothing in the passage says how Jesus comes into the room. Jesus says, "Peace be with you!" This was a common Jewish greeting. Jesus knows they are afraid, and he wants to comfort them. Peace means an absence of conflict and a fullness or completeness of life.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you greet someone in your language? What do you say? What other kinds of things do you do when you greet someone, like kisses, hugs, handshakes, or something else? Pause this audio here.

Then, Jesus shows the disciples the wounds-marks or scars-in his hands and his side. When Jesus was crucified, the Roman soldiers nailed through his wrists and put a spear in his side. The word for "hand" in the original language includes both the hand and the wrist. Roman soldiers put nails in a criminal's wrist to hold him to a cross because a nail through a person's hand would tear the hand and not hold the body to a cross. It's likely that the people who saw the crucifixion told the other disciples about the nails in Jesus' hands and the spear in his side. Jesus probably shows the disciples these marks or scars so they would know it's really him, the one who was crucified. He wants them to know he is alive again and that he is a real person.

The disciples are very, very happy to see the Lord, meaning Jesus. "Lord" means a master, a person in authority, or God. Here, it means the disciples know Jesus is God because Jesus came back from the dead and is alive. Their reaction is similar to what Mary says to the disciples after she talks with Jesus at the tomb. She says, "I have seen the Lord!"

Jesus continues to speak with them, and he says a second time, "Peace be with you!" Then, Jesus tells the disciples a few important things. First, he says that in the same way that the Father, God in heaven, sent Jesus to all the people of the world, Jesus is now sending his disciples to all the people of the world. Jesus breathes on the disciples, meaning he blows air in their direction. Jesus says, "Receive the Holy Spirit." The breathing shows that Jesus is alive. This is the same word used in Genesis when God creates man and breathes life into him. This shows he is giving them the Holy Spirit. "Receive" probably means accepting the Holy Spirit in their lives. Some people think this is hard to understand since the Holy Spirit comes to the disciples in Luke's book

at a different time. However, this passage does not say the disciples receive the Holy Spirit immediately when Jesus breathes on them. Other people say that Luke's description of the Holy Spirit coming is a different interpretation of this event in John's book. Either way, it is important to remember that the Holy Spirit fills people in different times and in different ways.

Next, Jesus tells the disciples that if they forgive other people's sins, God will forgive those people their sins. Forgive means not punishing someone for their sin, or wrong action, against them. Some people think Jesus is talking about forgiveness in general, and others believe Jesus is giving disciples the authority to forgive others. In the original language, it says Jesus gives his people authority to declare when God has forgiven people. When people accept the message the disciples bring them, the disciples declare God forgives those people. When people reject the message the disciples bring them, the disciples declare that God does not forgive them. God is the one who forgives people.

Thomas was not with the disciples when Jesus came to them in the locked house. He is one of the twelve disciples, and his other name is "Twin." Later, the other disciples told Thomas, "We have seen the Lord," meaning Jesus. This is the same thing Mary said after she saw Jesus. Thomas said he needed to see Jesus himself and touch his wounds himself in order to believe that Jesus is alive. Thomas wanted to see the marks in Jesus' hands and put his finger in the nail marks and his hand into Jesus' side where the spear went.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about a time you or someone you know were injured. What kind of scar did you have after your wound healed? Pause this audio here.

Eight days later, the disciples are again in a room with locked doors. It was the next Sunday after the Sunday Jesus rose from the dead. The disciples are probably still afraid of the Jewish leaders, even though they saw Jesus alive eight days earlier. The disciples probably gathered in this same house every evening. This time, Thomas is also with the disciples in the locked room. Jesus comes and stands with them again. Again, he greets them by saying, "Peace be with you!" It is probably another miracle that Jesus comes into the room even though the doors are locked.

Jesus tells Thomas to put his finger on Jesus' hands, and to see the nail marks in his hands. Jesus also tells Thomas to put his hand in Jesus' side to feel the wound the spear made. Jesus knows Thomas wanted proof that Jesus was alive. Jesus wants Thomas to stop doubting and start believing that Jesus is alive. The passage does not say that Thomas put his finger on the nail marks, or that he put his hand in Jesus' side. Instead, Thomas calls Jesus "my Lord and my God." This means Thomas believes Jesus is the one who rules over him, and Jesus is the God who he worships. Jesus replies that Thomas believes Jesus is alive because Thomas saw Jesus. Jesus says that people who believe without seeing Jesus for themselves are blessed, or favored by God. This includes all people who trust Jesus after Jesus goes back to heaven. The saying begins with "blessed," which was a common way to start a wise saying during Jesus' time.

Finally, the writer John gives some background information. John tells the audience that Jesus did many other miracles in front of his disciples. These other miracles of Jesus are not in this book. Most people think this is about all of Jesus' life and work, meaning Jesus did other miracles throughout his time of serving people. They believe this statement is a summary of the entire book and that this was the original ending to John's book. Other people think this means Jesus did other miracles after rising from the dead.

John says there are two reasons that he recorded these signs of Jesus. First, he recorded them so people will believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. "Christ" and "Messiah" have the same meaning in the original languages. "Christ" and "Messiah" mean the one God anoints, or the one God chooses to be their leader and savior. "Son of God" means Jesus has the same nature as God, and that God the Father has a close relationship with Jesus as his Son. Most people believe John's audience were not believers yet, so he wrote this book for them to start believing in Jesus. Others believe readers were already believers and needed to be strengthened in their faith.

John also wrote these signs so people who believe in Jesus will have life in Jesus' name. This life is a spiritual life with God. "In Jesus' name" means it is through Jesus we have life. During Jesus' time, a person's "name" represented everything important about a person.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about names in your culture. What does your name mean? In your culture, why do people choose certain names for people? Who chooses the name and why?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 20:19–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus appears suddenly to the disciples while the doors of the house are locked. Jesus speaks with them.

In the second scene: Thomas, one of the disciples, hears about Jesus coming to see all of the other disciples. Thomas wasn't there when Jesus came, and he wants to see Jesus for himself.

In the third scene: Eight days later, Jesus comes to the disciples a second time while they're in a locked house. Jesus tells Thomas to put his fingers on Jesus' nail marks and his hand in Jesus' side. Jesus says people are blessed who believe without seeing him.

In the fourth scene: The author John gives background information about why he recorded these stories and miracles of Jesus.

The characters in this passage are:

- The disciples
- The Jewish leaders
- Jesus
- Thomas
- And John, the author of this book

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, remember that it is the same day that Jesus rose from the dead. In the early morning, Mary went to the tomb and found the stone rolled away. She told Peter and the other disciple, and they also saw the empty tomb. Mary came back and spoke with Jesus at the tomb, and she took a message back to the disciples that same morning. All of these events happened on Sunday, the first day of the week. Now, it is the evening of that same day. The disciples are all together in a locked house because they're afraid of the Jewish leaders.

Suddenly, Jesus appears! Jesus is standing with the disciples in the locked room. Remember that it was probably a miracle that he came inside even though the doors were locked. The first thing he says to the disciples is, "Peace be with you!" Remember, this is a common Jewish greeting, but it was also to comfort them and give them peace. Remember that Jesus also showed the disciples his hands and side, meaning the wounds on his hands and side. Remember, the wounds from the nails were probably on his wrists because that's where the Roman soldiers put the nails. Jesus was showing the disciples that it is him, the same Jesus that was crucified.

The reaction of the disciples is joy. They are very, very happy. Remember that Jesus says, "Peace be with you!" again. Then, he tells them that he's sending the disciples into the world in the same way that God sent Jesus into the world. Remember also that Jesus breathes on them and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit." Finally, Jesus says if the disciples forgive other people's sins, God will forgive those people for their sins. In the same way, if the disciples don't forgive other people's sins, God will not forgive those people. If God forgives people, they remain forgiven, and God will not punish them. Also, if God does not forgive people, they remain unforgiven. Jesus wants the disciples to know they will act under Jesus' authority when they talk with people in the world.

In the second scene, Thomas talks with the other disciples. Thomas is a disciple of Jesus, and his other name is "Twin." Remember that Thomas wasn't there when Jesus appeared in the locked room and talked with the disciples. The other disciples tell Thomas about seeing the Lord, meaning Jesus. Thomas says he won't believe that Jesus is alive unless he sees Jesus for himself. Thomas even wants to put his fingers in the nail marks on Jesus' hands and his hand in Jesus' side. Remember that Thomas did not trust the word of the other disciples, even though the other disciples told Thomas they saw Jesus.

The third scene happens eight days after the Sunday when Jesus rose from the dead. Remember that this scene is very similar to the first scene—the disciples are together in a locked house again. The main difference is that this time, Thomas is with the disciples. Jesus suddenly appears to them, just like the first time. It is probably another miracle that Jesus came into the room even though the door was locked.

The first thing Jesus says is also the same: "Peace be with you!" This time, Jesus talks directly to Thomas. Jesus tells Thomas to put his finger on Jesus' hands, see the nail marks in his hands, and put his hand in Jesus' side. Jesus tells Thomas to stop being unbelieving and to start believing! Remember that Jesus knows Thomas wants this kind of proof that Jesus is alive. Also, remember that the passage does not say if Thomas actually puts his finger on Jesus' hands or in Jesus' side. Instead, Thomas says, "My Lord and my God." Remember that Jesus tells Thomas he believes because he sees Jesus. Jesus says people are blessed, or favored by God, when they believe without seeing him.

In the fourth scene, remember this is probably a summary statement of the entire book of John. Remember John, the author of this book, is giving background information. John says Jesus did many other miracles in front of his disciples, and those other miracles aren't recorded in this book. John also gives the two purposes for writing this book. The first purpose is so people will believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. The second purpose is so people who believe will have life in Jesus' name. "Life in Jesus' name" means living forever with God because of what Jesus did. It also means having a full, new life now on earth.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 20:19–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- The disciples
- The Jewish leaders
- Jesus
- Thomas
- And John, the author of this book

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The disciples are in a locked house on Sunday evening. The disciples are in the locked room because they are afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus comes into the room while the doors are locked. Jesus says, "Peace be with you!"

Pause the drama.

Jesus shows the disciples his wounds in his hands and his side. The disciples are very, very happy to see their Lord, Jesus, alive.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says again, "Peace be with you!" Then, he tells the disciples that in the same way their Father God in heaven sent Jesus to the world, now Jesus is sending the disciples to the world. Then, Jesus breathes on the disciples and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells the disciples if they forgive other people's sins, God will forgive those people their sins. If the disciples do not forgive someone, God will not forgive those people.

Pause the drama.

Thomas is not with the disciples when Jesus comes to them. The disciples tell Thomas, "We have seen the Lord!" Thomas does not believe them. Thomas tells them he wants to see Jesus for himself. Thomas wants to put his own finger on the nail marks on Jesus' hand, and his own hand in Jesus' side.

Pause the drama.

Eight days later, the disciples are in a locked room again. This time, Thomas is with them. Suddenly, Jesus appears in the room with them again, even though the doors are locked! Jesus says to them, "Peace be with you!" Then Jesus tells Thomas to put his finger in the nail marks on Jesus' hands and in Jesus' side. Thomas tells Jesus, "My Lord and my God!"

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells Thomas that Thomas believes because he sees Jesus. Jesus says that people who believe without seeing Jesus are blessed or favored by God.

Pause the drama.

John, the author of the book, gives background information. He says that Jesus did many other miracles in front of his disciples. John did not record these other miracles in his book. John wrote the book so that people will believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. John also wrote this book so people who believe in Jesus will have life in Jesus' name.

*Pause the drama.**Filling the Gaps*

Listen to an audio version of John 20:19–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **disciples** are together in the evening on the first day of the week. In Jewish culture, the first day of the week is Sunday. The disciples followed Jesus and learned from him. It is likely all ten of the 12 disciples were there that evening, and possibly other disciples as well. Use the same word for disciples as you used in previous passages. For more information on disciples, refer to the Master Glossary.

The disciples are in a locked house. They locked the doors of the room or house because they were afraid of the **Jews**, meaning the Jewish leaders. Use the same word for Jews as you used in previous passages. For more information on Jews, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus appears suddenly in the locked room and says, "Peace be with you!" **Peace** means more than only no conflict or war. Jesus wanted his disciples to be calm and live together in unity and love. Use the same word for peace as you used in previous passages. For more information on peace, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus shows the disciples the marks in his hands and side. The disciples are very, very happy to see the **Lord**. "The Lord" was a term of respect for Jesus that could be translated "sir." It was also a way for Jesus' followers to refer to Jesus as God and master. Use the same word for Lord as you used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus says he's sending the disciples to the world in the same way the Father sent Jesus to the world. Jesus wants the disciples to be his representatives on the earth in the same way Jesus was God the Father's representative on earth. **Father** means God in heaven.

Jesus breathes on the disciples and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit." The **Holy Spirit** is God's spirit. Use the same word for Holy Spirit as you used in previous passages. For more information on Holy Spirit, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus tells the disciples if they **forgive** other people's sins, God will forgive those people their sins. If the disciples do not forgive someone, God will not forgive that person. **Forgiveness** means not punishing someone as they deserve, or wiping out or erasing their sins.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **forgive**. Look up forgive in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

Sin is any act of disobedience to God. Use the same word for **sin** as you used in previous passages. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

Thomas is one of the twelve disciples of Jesus. Thomas' other name is Twin. The other disciples tell Thomas about seeing Jesus, but Thomas says he won't **believe** Jesus is alive until he sees Jesus for himself. **Belief** means trusting that what Jesus says about himself is true. Use the same word for believe as you used in previous passages. For more information on belief, refer to the Master Glossary.

Eight days later, the disciples are in a locked house again. This means it was the following Sunday. It was evening again.

Jesus appears again and talks with Thomas. Jesus says people who believe without ever seeing Jesus are **blessed**. Blessing means God helps, does good to, or favors someone or something. Try to avoid using a word related to luck or games of chance. When people bless a thing, it usually means that they are giving thanks for it and making it set apart for something special. Use the same word for bless as you used in previous passages. For more information on bless, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus did many other miraculous **signs**. These are signs that only God can do. Use the same word for signs as you used in previous passages. For more information on signs, refer to the Master Glossary.

The author of this book, John, said he wrote down these signs of Jesus so people will believe Jesus is the Christ. **Christ** and **Messiah** both mean the one God anoints and chooses to be the leader. Jesus is the Messiah, meaning he is the one God promised to send to save his people. Use the same word for Messiah as you used in previous passages. For more information on Messiah, refer to the Master Glossary.

John also wanted people to believe Jesus is the **Son of God**. This means Jesus was the Messiah from God, was God himself, and enjoyed a special relationship with God. Use the same word for Son of God as you used in previous passages. For more information on Son of God, refer to the Master Glossary.

John wanted people to have life in Jesus' name. **Life** here means more than a physical life. It is a spiritual life with God. "In Jesus' name" means that people have this life with God because of Jesus himself.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 20:19–31

Audio Content

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- FIA Step 2 (no URL)
- FIA Step 4 (no URL)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- FIA Step 6 (no URL)

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John 21:1–14

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 21:1–14 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 21:1–14 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 21:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus is crucified on Friday. On Sunday, Mary Magdalene, Peter, and another disciple all see Jesus' empty tomb. That night, Jesus appears to the disciples in a locked room. Then, Jesus comes back a second time eight days later. This time Thomas, one of the disciples, is also there and sees Jesus. This all happens in Jerusalem. Now, Jesus appears to his disciples another time while they are fishing on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus miraculously provides fish for them to catch, and then they all eat breakfast together on the shore of the lake.

This passage is some additional information after the end of the book of John. It gives more information about another time Jesus appears to his disciples. The author probably added this passage and the passage after it to give more information about Jesus that might be lost. The author probably also added the passage after this one because he wanted to help his readers understand some things about a rumor about the disciple Jesus loved.

This story happens sometime after Jesus appears to Thomas and the other disciples in the locked room in Jerusalem, which was in the region of Judea. We do not know exactly how much time has passed, but it was probably a few days or a few weeks later. The disciples are back in the region of Galilee at the Sea of Tiberias, which is the Roman name for the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee is a freshwater lake, and this is the region where the disciples are from. This story tells how Jesus shows himself to the disciples.

Stop here and look at a picture of the Sea of Galilee and a map showing Jerusalem, the Sea of Galilee, and the regions of Judea and Galilee as a group. Pause the audio here.

Seven of Jesus' disciples are there. Simon Peter is the first disciple named, and he is the most important disciple in this story. Other disciples with Simon Peter are Thomas who is also called the Twin, Nathanael who is from a town called Cana in the region of Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee. The sons of Zebedee are two disciples named James and John, and their father's name is Zebedee. There are also two other disciples. It is likely that John, the author of this book, is one of the disciples there. Most people think "the disciple Jesus loved" refers to John.

The seven disciples are probably meeting together in someone's house by the lake. Simon Peter tells the other six disciples that he is planning to go fishing on the lake very soon. Before becoming a disciple of Jesus, Simon Peter was a fisherman. Several of the other disciples were also fishermen before they followed Jesus. The other disciples told Simon Peter they would come fishing with Peter. The disciples all left the place where they were and went to the Sea of Galilee. They got into a fishing boat with their fishing nets. They tried to catch fish all night in their nets, but they didn't catch any fish in their nets. During Jesus' time, fishermen used nets to trap or catch fish. The net was probably a circle with small weights around the edge. It was also common for fishermen to work at night.

Stop here and look at pictures of a fishing net and a boat as a group. Pause this audio here.

Also, stop here and discuss this question as a group: If people fish in your community, talk about when and where they fish. What do they use to catch the fish? Do they use nets, spears, lines, or some other way to catch the fish? Pause this audio here.

In the early morning, the disciples see someone standing on the shore, the land at the edge of the Sea of Galilee. The person standing on the shore is Jesus, but the disciples do not recognize him. It is not clear why the disciples do not recognize Jesus. Maybe the disciples do not recognize Jesus because he looks different, because they are too far from the shore to see a person clearly, or because it is early in the morning and there is not enough sunlight yet to see clearly.

Jesus says to the disciples, "Friends, you didn't catch any fish yet, did you?" The word for "friends" in the original language was a friendly way to talk with young men, and the disciples were all young men. Sometimes people translate this word "children," but this word does not mean young children, and it was not disrespectful. Jesus asks this question in a way to show he expects them to say "No, we didn't catch any fish."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is a common way to refer to young men in your language? Pause this audio here.

The disciples reply to Jesus, "No." The disciples did not catch any fish yet. Now, Jesus tells the disciples to throw their net into the water on the right side of the boat, and they will catch some fish. This means the fishermen should throw one side of the net out into the water and hold onto the other side of the net. The disciples do

what Jesus says—they throw their net into the water on the right side of the boat. The disciples catch so many fish in their net that the disciples are not strong enough to pull the net back into the boat. The net is very heavy with all of the fish they caught. This is a miracle, and it is one of the most important parts of the story.

Stop here and look at a picture of a fish as a group. Pause this audio here.

The disciple that Jesus loved—Jesus' close friend, probably John—sees this miracle of all the fish in the net, and he says, "It is the Lord!" This disciple knows the person on the shore is the Lord. Lord means master or the person with authority, and it was a common way the disciples talked about Jesus.

Simon Peter hears the other disciple say, "It is the Lord," and he immediately gets ready to go see Jesus. Simon Peter tucks in or secures his outer clothing. It is possible Peter wants to have more clothes on so he isn't naked when he talks with Jesus on the shore in order to show respect for Jesus. Or perhaps Peter has his outer garment on and tucks it in so he can move easier. Peter is probably not completely naked under his outer clothing. He probably is wearing the normal fisherman's clothing underneath: a long shirt or something around his waist. Peter jumps in the water and swims to the shore to see Jesus.

The other disciples row the boat to the shore. They leave the net full of fish in the water because it is too heavy to bring into the boat. They can pull the net behind the boat because they are close to the shore. The shore is only about 100 meters away.

The disciples arrive at the shore next to the lake in their boat. They step out of the boat onto the shore, and they see a charcoal fire with some fish cooking on it. A charcoal fire is a fire made with hot, burning coals. There is also some bread, which is probably already cooked. Jesus is cooking this food to eat for breakfast.

Stop here and look at a picture of a charcoal fire as a group. Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells the disciples to bring some of the fish they caught a few minutes ago. Jesus probably wants to cook some more fish, this time from the fish the disciples caught. Simon Peter goes back into the boat to help drag the net full of fish onto the shore. The disciples count the fish, and there are 153 large fish. Some people think the number has a special meaning, but it probably only shows that the author saw this happen and remembers the exact number of fish in the net. Normally, a fishing net would break with this many large fish in it. It is surprising that the net is not broken or torn, even with this many large fish in it!

Jesus tells the disciples, "Come and eat breakfast with me." Breakfast is the first meal of the day. It is morning, and Jesus wants to share this meal of cooked fish and bread with his disciples. None of the disciples ask Jesus, "Who are you?" The disciples are afraid to ask Jesus who he is. The reason the disciples do not ask Jesus "who are you?" is because they know it is the Lord. They know he is their master Jesus, even if he might look different.

Jesus comes and gives the disciples the bread. Then Jesus gives the disciples the cooked fish. Jesus is serving the food to the disciples for their meal together. We do not know if Jesus eats any of the fish. It is possible the disciples remember other miracles Jesus did, like when Jesus provided bread and fish for the five thousand people on the hillside.

Now, the author John gives some background information about this story of the miracle of the fish and Jesus eating breakfast with his disciples. This is the third time Jesus shows himself to the disciples after Jesus comes back from the dead. Most people count the first time as when Jesus shows himself to the disciples in the locked room. The second time is when Jesus comes again to the locked room and Thomas is also there with the other disciples. This is the third time the disciples see Jesus, and it is in Galilee by the Sea of Galilee. Mary Magdalene did also see Jesus in the garden, but most people do not count this as one of the times. It could be possible to count the two times in the locked room as a single time Jesus showed himself to the disciples because they were very similar experiences for the disciples. However, most people do not count it this way.

John probably shares this information to give more evidence or proof that Jesus really did come back from the dead. Jesus shows himself to his disciples more than one time, and in more than one place.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 21:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Simon Peter and six other disciples go fishing all night on the Sea of Galilee. They don't catch any fish.

In the second scene: Jesus talks to the disciples from the shore of the lake. He tells them how to catch more fish, and they do what Jesus says to do. They catch a lot of fish.

In the third scene: The disciple Jesus loved recognizes Jesus. Simon Peter jumps out of the boat and comes to the shore to see Jesus. The other disciples drag the net full of fish.

In the fourth scene: Jesus prepares a breakfast of fish and bread for the disciples on the beach. They eat the meal together.

The characters in this passage are:

- Simon Peter
- Thomas
- Nathanael
- The two sons of Zebedee
- Two other disciples
- And Jesus

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, remember that this happens a few days or a few weeks after Jesus comes to the locked room the second time to see Thomas and the other disciples. Remember also that now the disciples are back in their home region of Galilee. Jesus died and rose from the dead in Jerusalem, in the region of Judea in the south. Now they are in Galilee in the north, near the Sea of Galilee. Remember, the lake is called the Sea of Tiberias in the Roman language.

Stop here and look at a picture of the Sea of Galilee and a map showing Jerusalem, the Sea of Galilee, and the regions of Judea and Galilee again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Remember also that seven disciples are together near the Sea of Galilee. The disciples are Simon Peter, Thomas the Twin, Nathanael from a town called Cana in Galilee, the two sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples. Remember that Simon Peter tells the other disciples, "I'm going fishing." Remember Simon Peter, and many of the other disciples, used to be fishermen before they started to follow Jesus. The other disciples go with Simon Peter to help him fish on the Sea of Galilee. They all got into their fishing boat and went out onto the lake to fish with nets. Remember that they fished all night, and they didn't catch any fish.

Stop here and look at pictures of a fishing net and a boat again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, remember that it is now early morning. The sun is starting to rise, so it is not as dark now. The disciples see someone standing on the shore, the land next to the water. Remember, they do not know it is Jesus yet. Jesus asks them, "Friends, you didn't catch any fish yet, did you?" Remember that Jesus talks to them in a friendly way. Also, he is asking this question in a way to show he expects them to say, "no."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How would you ask this question in your language to show Jesus expects the answer "no"? Some examples could be: "Did you not catch any fish?" or "No fish today?" Pause this audio here.

Remember, the disciples answer Jesus "no," meaning they did not catch any fish yet. Remember, they still do not recognize Jesus. Then, Jesus tells them how to catch some fish. Jesus tells them to throw their net on the right side of the boat to catch some fish. Remember, the disciples are using a large net to catch fish. The disciples do what Jesus says, and they throw their net out into the water on the right side of the boat. Remember, they

hold onto one side of the net. They catch a whole net full of fish. Remember, the net is so full, the disciples cannot pull it back into the boat. The boat would probably sink if they tried to put the net full of fish in the boat. Remember that this is a miracle that the disciples catch this many fish.

Stop here and look at a picture of a fish again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, one of the disciples finally recognizes Jesus. Remember this is the disciple Jesus loved. After this disciple sees the miracle of the net full of fish, he knows Jesus is the one standing on the shore. Remember he says, "It is the Lord!" Lord was a common way the disciples talked to Jesus. It means master, or the one in authority.

Remember that Simon Peter hears the words, "It is the Lord," and he immediately acts. Simon Peter wants to get to the shore as soon as possible to see Jesus. Simon Peter tucks in his outer clothing, probably so he is covered with more clothing when he sees Jesus. He jumps in the water and swims to the shore to see Jesus. In the original language, the word is "threw himself in" the water. This means Peter jumped in quickly and enthusiastically.

Remember that the other disciples stay in the fishing boat. They drag the net full of fish behind the boat while they row the boat to the shore. Remember, they are not far from the shore, only about 100 meters away.

In the fourth scene, the disciples all arrive at the beach and get out of the boat. They see a fire of burning coals with some fish cooking on it. There is also bread. Remember Jesus is the one who is cooking this food for them.

Stop here and look at a picture of a charcoal fire again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Jesus tells the disciples to bring some of the fish they caught. Remember, Jesus is already cooking fish, and Jesus asks them to bring more fish. Simon Peter goes to the boat and helps drag in the net full of fish. He probably did not do this on his own because the net was so full and heavy. Remember, there are 153 large fish. Remember, it is surprising that the net does not break or tear even though there are many large fish in it.

Next, Jesus says, "Come and eat breakfast with me." Remember, it is early morning and breakfast is the first meal of the day. Jesus wants to eat the cooked fish and the bread with his disciples. Remember, none of the disciples ask Jesus, "Who are you?" There was probably some reason they wanted to ask Jesus this-maybe because Jesus looked different-but none of them say anything. Remember, they know he is the Lord, but they probably still had some questions.

Jesus comes and gives the disciples the bread and the fish. Remember the author John gives background information here. John says this miracle-Jesus providing fish for the disciples and Jesus eating a meal with the disciples on the shore-is the third time Jesus shows himself to the disciples after God raises Jesus from the dead. Remember most people count the first two times Jesus comes as the two times Jesus is in the locked room in Jerusalem with his disciples. Now this is the third time the disciples see Jesus, and it takes place next to the Sea of Galilee in the region of Galilee.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 21:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Simon Peter
- Thomas
- Nathanael
- The two sons of Zebedee
- Two other disciples
- And Jesus

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Seven of Jesus' disciples are together near the Sea of Galilee in the region of Galilee. They had traveled back to Galilee from Jerusalem in Judea. Simon Peter tells the other six disciples with him, "I'm going fishing." The other six disciples say, "We'll come fishing with you." So they all go fishing together on the Sea of Galilee. They fish all night in a boat using circular nets. They don't catch any fish.

Pause the drama.

The disciples see someone standing on the shore in the early morning. They don't know it's Jesus standing there. Jesus asks them, "Friends, you didn't catch any fish yet, did you?" The disciples answer Jesus, "no." Jesus tells the disciples to throw their nets on the right side of the boat to catch some fish.

Pause the drama.

The disciples throw the net on the right side of the boat. They catch a lot of fish. Their net is so full of fish that they can't pull the net into their boat.

Pause the drama.

The disciple Jesus loved knows who the man on the shore is. Because of the miracle Jesus has just performed, he recognizes that it's Jesus, the Lord! He says, "It is the Lord!"

Pause the drama.

Simon Peter hears the words, "It is the Lord!" Simon Peter gets ready to swim to shore to see Jesus. Simon Peter tucks his outer clothing in—he probably wants to have more clothes on to see Jesus. Simon Peter jumps into the water and swims to the shore to see Jesus. The other disciples follow behind Simon Peter. The other disciples are rowing the boat and dragging the net full of fish behind the boat. They row the boat about 100 meters to get to the shore.

Pause the drama.

Also, ask the people playing the disciples, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "Why isn't Simon Peter helping us with the net full of fish?" or "Wanting to row quickly to get to the shore as fast as possible to see Jesus," or "Amazed at the full net of fish behind our boat—it's really heavy!" [!end] Continue the drama.

The disciples arrive at the shore and get out of the boat. They see a charcoal fire on the shore. There is fish cooking on the fire, and there is also bread. Jesus is cooking them food to eat.

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells the disciples to bring some fish. Simon Peter goes to the boat and helps drag the net full of fish onto the shore. There are 153 large fish. The net is not broken or torn, even though there are so many fish.

Pause the drama.

Jesus says, "Come and eat breakfast with me." Jesus wants to share the meal with the disciples. None of the disciples ask Jesus, "Who are you?" They know he is the Lord, but they still want to ask him some questions.

Pause the drama.

Jesus comes and gives them the bread and the fish to eat.

Pause the drama.

The author John gives background information about this miracle. John says this is the third time Jesus shows himself to the disciples.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 21:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus shows himself to his disciples another time. The **disciples** followed Jesus and learned from him. Use the same word for disciples as you used in previous passages. For more information on disciples, refer to the Master Glossary.

Seven of the disciples are together by the **Sea of Galilee**. The Sea of Galilee is a large freshwater lake in the region of Galilee. Use the same word for the Sea of Galilee as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Sea of Galilee, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a picture of the Sea of Galilee and a map showing Jerusalem, the Sea of Galilee, and the regions of Judea and Galilee again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

The disciples near the lake are Simon Peter, Thomas the Twin, Nathanael from a town called Cana in Galilee, the two sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples. The disciples get into a fishing **boat** to go fishing on the lake. They bring fishing **nets** with them. Use the same word for boat as you used in previous passages. For more information on boat and fishing net, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at pictures of a fishing net and a boat again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Early in the morning, the disciples see someone standing on the shore. The **shore**, or beach, is the land next to the lake.

The disciple Jesus loved says, "It is the **Lord**!" He recognizes Jesus on the shore after the miracle of the net full of fish. "The Lord" was a term of respect for Jesus that could be translated "sir." It was also a way for Jesus' followers to refer to Jesus as God and master. Use the same word for Lord as you used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

Simon Peter tucks in his outer clothing, which is probably a **robe** or **cloak**. A cloak is a long robe that people wore over their other clothing. For more information on robe or cloak, refer to the Master Glossary.

The disciples drag the net full of fish behind their boat. They are 100 meters from the shore.

The disciples arrive on the shore and see a charcoal fire with fish cooking on it. A charcoal fire is a fire made with hot, burning coals. Use the same words for cooked fish and charcoal as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of a charcoal fire again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Also, stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your language, discuss how you will translate fish that are alive and swimming in the lake, and fish that are cooked for food. Discuss if you will use the same or different words.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 21:1–14

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5059217 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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John 21:15–25

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear John 21:15–25 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of John 21:15–25 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of John 21:15–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Jesus is crucified and then comes back from the dead. Jesus appears to his disciples twice in a locked room in Jerusalem. Then, he appears to them at the Sea of Galilee. Jesus provides fish for the disciples to catch, and then they eat breakfast together on the shore. After they eat, Jesus talks with Simon Peter, the disciple also known as just Peter, and encourages him. Simon Peter asks Jesus about the disciple Jesus loved. Finally, the book of John ends with statements from the author John. John says what he wrote is trustworthy, and that Jesus did many other miracles besides the ones in this book.

Jesus and the disciples ate fish and bread together for the first meal of the day. Jesus asks Simon Peter three questions, and Simon Peter answers Jesus each time. Before Jesus' death, Simon Peter denied knowing Jesus three times, and now Jesus asks Simon Peter three questions. One of the purposes of this passage is that Jesus is restoring Simon Peter's relationship with Jesus. Each time, Jesus calls Simon Peter "Simon, son of John" because John is the name of Simon Peter's father. The first question Jesus asks Simon Peter is, "Do you love me more than these?" The author John uses a certain word for "love" in one of the original languages. In Simon Peter's answer, "You know I love you," there is a different word for love in the original language. Some people think the author John uses a stronger word for "love" in Jesus' first two questions than the word for love in Simon Peter's responses, but most people believe the two words have the same meaning. In other parts of the book of John, both of these words for love in the original language are used for the love of God and the love of the disciples for Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about people you really like or love. Pay attention to the words you use to express your love for them. What different kinds of words do you use, and when do you use the different words? Pause this audio here.

The first question Jesus asks Simon Peter is, "Do you love me more than these?" The words "more than these" could mean, "Do you love me more than you love your boat and nets?" but this is not likely. "More than these" probably means, "Do you love me more than the other disciples love me?"

Simon Peter's answer to Jesus is, "Yes Lord, you know that I love you." Simon Peter calls Jesus "Lord," meaning the one in authority over him. Simon Peter does not say he loves Jesus more than other disciples love Jesus. Simon Peter only says, "You know I love you."

Jesus' first reply to Simon Peter is, "Feed my lambs." The word "lambs" here means Jesus' followers. "Lambs" are young sheep. Because Simon Peter loves Jesus, Simon Peter should take care of the followers of Jesus in the same way a shepherd takes care of his lambs and sheep. Jesus called himself the shepherd before. Now, Jesus knows he will leave soon, and Jesus wants Simon Peter to care for Jesus' followers when Jesus is gone. Jesus is still the true shepherd of his people.

Stop here and look at pictures of a lamb and a sheep as a group. Pause this audio here.

Also, stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people care for animals in your community? Pause this audio here.

Jesus asks Simon Peter again if Simon Peter loves Jesus. This time, Jesus does not include the words "more than these" because Jesus is not asking Simon Peter to compare his love with the other disciples' love. Again, Simon Peter answers the same thing as before: "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

Again, Jesus says to Simon Peter, "Take care of my sheep." These words in the original language mean the same thing as "Feed my lambs."

Finally, Jesus asks Simon Peter "do you love me?" a third time. Simon Peter is sad and upset because Jesus asks him the same question a third time. Simon Peter may also be upset because Simon Peter remembers denying Jesus three times.

Simon Peter tells Jesus, "You know everything. You know I love you." In the original language, the word "you" is first in the sentence in all three of Simon Peter's replies because Simon Peter is making this an important part of his reply. Simon Peter knows that Jesus knows all about Simon Peter's feelings. Jesus says a third time, "Feed my sheep," meaning Simon Peter should care for Jesus' followers like a shepherd cares for his sheep.

Next, Jesus compares Simon Peter's life as a young man and as an old man and talks about the kind of death Simon Peter would have later. Jesus starts by saying "truly I tell you" to emphasize that he is about to say something very important. Jesus says when Simon Peter was young, Simon Peter dressed himself, or tied his own belt on his clothing. This is similar to the story before this where Simon Peter ties his own clothing on before jumping in the sea to swim to Jesus on the shore. During Jesus' time, people usually used something like a rope to tie their long robes around themselves so their robes didn't fall on the ground.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about clothing in your culture. How do people fasten or tie their clothing to secure it? Do they use belts, ropes, or something else? Pause this audio here.

Jesus says Simon Peter also was free to go wherever he wanted to go. When Simon Peter gets old, Simon Peter will not be able to go where he wants to go. Simon Peter will have less freedom when he is older. This is normal for people as they get older. Most people believe the words "you will stretch out your hands" probably means Roman soldiers will prepare Simon Peter to be crucified like Jesus was crucified on a cross. Someone else, probably Roman soldiers, will also tie Simon Peter's hands to the cross when Simon Peter is crucified. Some people think "someone else will tie you up" means someone else will tie up Simon Peter's clothing. It is more likely this is about how Simon Peter will die. It is possible this shows Simon Peter will die for following Jesus, but it might not be from crucifixion. The author John says Jesus tells Simon Peter these things to show what kind of death Simon Peter will have. This death will bring glory or honor to God.

The last thing Jesus says to Simon Peter is, "Follow me." Jesus wants Simon Peter to follow Jesus by continuing to believe in Jesus and continuing to obey Jesus. This also may mean that Jesus wants Simon Peter to follow Jesus in death or die in the same way that Jesus died.

At some point, Simon Peter is walking with Jesus. Simon Peter turns around and sees the disciple Jesus loved. This disciple is walking behind them. The author gives some background information about this disciple. He is the disciple who leaned back during the last meal before Jesus died to ask Jesus, "Lord, who will betray you?" Betray here means helping Jesus' enemies arrest Jesus. When Simon Peter sees this disciple, Simon Peter asks Jesus about this disciple. Simon Peter wants to know what will happen to this other disciple, or how this other disciple would die. Jesus replies to Simon Peter with a question that shows Simon Peter does not need to know what will happen to the other disciple. Jesus says, "If I want him to remain until I return, what is that to you?" Jesus' return means when Jesus will come back to the earth a second time. Jesus does not want an answer to his question. Jesus says again to Simon Peter, "You, follow me!" Jesus wants Simon Peter to focus on following Jesus and not worry about anyone else.

John, the author of the book, adds some more background information. John says there was a rumor that the disciple Jesus loved would not die. The disciples talked about what Jesus said, and the whole community of believers passed along the information that the disciple might not die. A rumor is a saying that is uncertain. People tell rumors to other people, and often the rumors spread in the community.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss rumors in your culture. What kinds of things do people talk about? How do people know if a rumor is true or untrue? Pause this audio here.

The author corrects this untrue rumor that the disciple Jesus loved would not die. Jesus did not actually say, "This disciple will not die." Jesus said, "If I want this disciple to stay alive until I come, that should not matter to you, Simon Peter."

The book of John ends with more statements from the author. First, he says he, John, is the disciple Jesus loved. This is the first time we learn who the author is of the book of John. He also says all these things he wrote are true because he saw them happen, and his testimony is true. "These things" may mean the whole book of John, or the story of the fish miracle and eating and talking with Jesus on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. A testimony is a report of what someone sees or experiences. It is possible John himself wrote the book with his own hand, or maybe he told someone else to write down what he said to them.

Finally, the last statement of the book of John is that there were many other things that Jesus did besides the ones written down in this book. These other things were probably other miracles that Jesus did. The author says if someone tried to write all the miracles in other books, there would not be enough room in the world for all of the books. This is an exaggeration. This means there would be many, many books full of the miracles of Jesus.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of John 21:15–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus asks Simon Peter three times, "Do you love me?" Simon Peter answers Jesus three times. Three times, Jesus tells Simon Peter, "Feed my sheep." Jesus also talks about how Simon Peter will die.

In the second scene: Simon Peter asks Jesus about the disciple Jesus loved. Jesus tells Simon Peter that Simon Peter should not worry about that disciple. Jesus reminds Simon Peter, "You follow me."

In the third scene: The author John says his testimony is true in this book. He also says Jesus did many other miracles that aren't in this book.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Simon Peter
- The other disciples
- The disciple Jesus loved who is John, the author of this book
- And the community of believers

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, remember that Jesus and the disciples are sitting on the shore of the Sea of Galilee together. It is morning, and they just finished eating breakfast together. Jesus talks with Simon Peter, one of his disciples. We don't know exactly where Simon Peter and Jesus are while they are talking. They may already be walking together. They are probably near the other disciples by the shore. Remember that Jesus asks Simon Peter three questions about Simon Peter's love for Jesus. Three times, Simon Peter answers Jesus that he does love Jesus. Simon Peter calls Jesus "Lord." Three times, Jesus tells Simon Peter to care for Jesus' followers like a shepherd cares for his sheep. Remember this is special language that compares Jesus' followers to sheep, and compares Simon Peter to a shepherd.

Remember that the first question Jesus asks is "Do you love me more than these?" Jesus does not make it clear what Peter might love more than Jesus. However, Jesus probably wants to know if Simon Peter loves Jesus more

than the other disciples love Jesus. You can leave this unclear in the translation, or if you need to, you can say, "Do you love me more than these other disciples love me?" Remember that the author John uses two different words in the original language for "love" in Jesus' first two questions and in Simon Peter's reply to Jesus. Remember that the two words for "love" have the same meaning. The second question Jesus asks Simon Peter is "Do you love me?" without "more than these." For both of Jesus' questions, Simon Peter replies the same thing: "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

Remember, Jesus asks Simon Peter a third time, "Do you love me?" The phrase "the third time" is repeated twice to emphasize that Jesus asks this question for the third time. Remember, Simon Peter is sad that Jesus asks him the same thing three times. Simon Peter says, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Remember that the way Simon Peter answers Jesus emphasizes that Jesus knows these things. Jesus knows everything—he knows Simon Peter's thoughts and feelings.

Jesus says for the third time, "Feed my sheep." Remember that the words "feed my lambs" and "take care of my sheep" mean the same thing.

Next, Jesus tells Simon Peter, "Truly I tell you..." This means Jesus is about to say something important and Simon Peter should pay attention.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do you say in your language to emphasize the next thing you say will be very important? Pause this audio here.

Jesus compares Simon Peter's life as a young man and as an old man. Remember that Jesus describes two ways of using the word "tie." The first one is how Simon Peter tied his own clothes up when he was a young man. Remember people often used something like rope to keep their robes off the ground. Remember also Jesus says Simon Peter could go where he wanted when he was young.

Next, Jesus describes Simon Peter's life as an old man. When Simon Peter is old, he won't be able to go where he wants to go. Some people think this means someone, probably Roman soldiers, will also stretch out Simon Peter's hands. Remember this probably means Roman soldiers will crucify Simon Peter someday when Simon Peter is old. Someone will also dress or tie up Simon Peter, probably meaning they will tie Simon Peter's hands to a cross to kill him. It could also mean someone will dress or tie up Simon Peter's clothing for him, but it is most likely about how Simon Peter will die. Remember, the author of this book says that Jesus told Simon Peter these things so Simon Peter will know about his death. This death will bring honor to God.

It is important to remember that the last thing Jesus says to Simon Peter is, "Follow me." Jesus wants Simon Peter to keep obeying Jesus.

In the second scene, Jesus and Simon Peter are walking together. We are not sure if they have been walking together, or if they just started walking together now. Simon Peter turns around and sees another disciple following behind them. This other disciple is the disciple Jesus loved. The author John gives background information about who this other disciple was. He was the one who asked Jesus, "Lord, who will betray you?" at the meal the night before Jesus died. Simon Peter asks Jesus a question when Simon Peter sees this other disciple following behind them. Simon Peter says, "Lord, what about him?" Remember that Simon Peter wants to know what will happen to that other disciple. Remember, Jesus talked to Simon Peter earlier about Simon Peter's death, and now Simon Peter wants to know how that other disciple will die.

Jesus replies to Simon Peter, "If I want him to remain until I return, what does that matter to you?" Jesus does not want an answer to this question. Jesus is saying that he does not want Simon Peter to worry about what happens to the other disciple. Jesus also says again, "You follow me."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is the most natural way to say this in your language? Would you use a question, or a statement like: "If I want him to live until I return to earth, you do not need to know about it." Pause this audio here.

Next, remember there is more background information from the author of the book. John says there was a rumor that the disciple Jesus loved would not die. This rumor was not true—Jesus never said, "This disciple will not die." The author corrects this wrong information. The author makes a strong contrast to show the difference between the rumor that Jesus did not say, and the thing that Jesus did say. He says that Jesus actually said, "If I want this disciple to stay alive until I come, that should not matter to you, Simon Peter."

In the third scene, remember there is additional information from the author of the book. Remember that he says, "I am the disciple Jesus loved." Remember this is the first time we know who wrote the book of John. He says he wrote these things and that his testimony about what happened is true. Remember also that Jesus did many other miracles. These other miracles were not written down in this book. John says the world could not hold the books full of these other miracles. This is an exaggeration to show that Jesus did many, many other miracles.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you emphasize something as being a lot? Would you use an exaggeration like "the world could not hold all of the books" or would you say it in a different way?

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of John 21:15–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Jesus
- Simon Peter
- The other disciples
- The disciple Jesus loved who is John, the author of this book
- And the community of believers

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Jesus and the disciples are sitting on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. They just finished eating breakfast. Now, Jesus asks Simon Peter three questions. First, Jesus says, "Do you love me more than these?"

Simon Peter answers, "Lord, you know I love you."

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells Simon Peter, "Feed my lambs." Jesus wants Simon Peter to care for Jesus' followers like a shepherd cares for his sheep.

Pause the drama.

Jesus asks Simon Peter a second time, "Do you love me?"

Simon Peter says again, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

Again, Jesus says, "Take care of my sheep."

Pause the drama.

Jesus asks Simon Peter a third time, "Do you love me?" Simon Peter is sad this time because Jesus asks him the same question three times.

Simon Peter says, "Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you."

Pause the drama.

A third time, Jesus tells Simon Peter, "Feed my sheep." Then, Jesus compares Simon Peter's life as a young man to Simon Peter's coming life as an old man. Jesus says that Simon Peter could tie his own clothes up as a young man, and go where he wanted to go. Jesus also says to Simon Peter, "As an old man, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will tie up your clothes for you. They will take you where you do not want to go." Jesus told Simon Peter this so Simon Peter would know the kind of death Simon Peter would have. This death would honor God.

Pause the drama.

The last thing Jesus says to Simon Peter is, "Follow me."

Pause the drama.

Simon Peter and Jesus are walking together. Simon Peter turns around and sees the disciple Jesus loved. This disciple is following Jesus. This is the same disciple that asked Jesus, "Lord who will betray you?" at the last meal before Jesus died. Simon Peter asks Jesus, "What about this other disciple?" Simon Peter wants to know how this other disciple will die.

Pause the drama.

Jesus tells Simon Peter that Simon Peter should not worry about this other disciple. Jesus says, if he wants this other disciple to stay alive until Jesus returns, it should not matter to Simon Peter. Jesus tells Simon Peter, "You follow me!" The author gives background information here that many people talked about this rumor. People thought that the disciple Jesus loved might not die. Jesus never said this disciple will not die. Jesus only said Simon Peter should not be concerned about this other disciple.

Pause the drama.

The author of the book of John says some important statements. He says that he is the disciple Jesus loved. He's the one who wrote this book about Jesus. He says his testimony is true and that he wrote everything down. He also says Jesus did many other things. If someone wrote down all the things Jesus did, the whole world could not fit the books full of these things.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of John 21:15–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus calls Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John." Simon Peter's father's name was John. Jesus asks Simon Peter if he loves Jesus more than the other disciples love Jesus. **Love** means to care about someone. Two different words in the original language both mean "love," and sometimes people think that one word is more for God's love and one word is more for human love. However, Jesus uses both words in the book of John to talk about love for God and love for people.

Simon Peter uses the word **Lord** three times when he answers Jesus' questions. Lord was a term of respect for Jesus that could also be translated "sir." It was also a way for Jesus' followers to refer to Jesus as God and master. Use the same word for Lord as you used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

Jesus tells Simon Peter "feed my lambs," "tend my sheep," and "feed my sheep." Each time, Jesus is telling Simon Peter to care for the followers of Jesus in the same way that a shepherd cares for his sheep. Jesus compares himself to a shepherd, and his followers to the sheep.

Stop here and look at pictures of a lamb and a sheep again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Jesus says Simon Peter's death will glorify God. **Glorify** means to bring honor to God. Use the same word for glorify as you used in previous passages. For more information on glorify, refer to the Master Glossary.

Simon Peter sees the disciple who Jesus loved. The **disciples** followed Jesus and learned from him. Use the same word for disciples as you used in previous passages. For more information on disciples, refer to the Master Glossary.

There was a saying or rumor that went around the community of the believers. The saying was that the disciple Jesus loved might not die. In the original language, the saying went to all the brothers, which does not mean brothers by blood. It means both brothers and sisters in the community of believers.

The author of the book **testifies** that these things are true. A **testimony** is telling about something that happened in a person's own experience. Use the same word for testimony as you used in previous passages. For more information on testimony, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

John 21:15–25

Audio Content

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