

"That You May Believe"

Gospel of John

Week 5

Main Idea – Death has power over sinners. Jesus has power over death.

The goal of this week's lesson is to help the children understand the serious power that death has over sinners. After the Fall, death was the new normal for humans made in the image of God. Thankfully, God promised that one day a Savior would come to defeat the curse of sin and death. This week's lesson culminates in the Person of the Lord Jesus, who has power over death. When the religious leaders asked Jesus for a sign that showed them His authority to cleanse the Temple, to their request for a sign by promising that He would rise from the dead after three days by His own power. If sinners want to live, they need a Savior who has power over their greatest enemy — death.

Sunday school teachers should emphasize the first half of the main idea in an interactive way for **20 minutes**, and explain the second half clearly without much interaction as a conclusion for **5 minutes**. *Children's church* teachers should explain the first half without much interaction for **5 minutes** as an introduction and emphasize the second half in an interactive way for **20 minutes**.

 **Pedagogical Tool** — If you struggle with time management, have your helper set a timer and give you updates on how much time you are using.

Sunday School — Genesis 2-5

Preparation

Materials:

- Who's Got The Power Images
- Two levels of word searches to emphasize the main point.
- Adam and Eve leaving Eden Coloring Page

Set-up:

- Print out the materials.

Bible Verse (5-10 minutes)

Romans 1:16 (ESV) – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

Memorization — Have the students repeat the Bible verse with hand motions 2-3 times.

Song — Have the students sing “Not Ashamed” (Seeds Family Worship, ESV) at least once.

NOTE — Start the Bible Verse section at the beginning without waiting for students who may arrive late. This will preserve the allotted times for other sections.

Lesson (20-25 minutes)

Main Idea – **Death** has **power** over sinners.

Pray

Introduction (5 minutes)

Opening Game — “Who’s Got The Power?” — In the following game, students must decide who is more powerful between two options. Before revealing the answer, you can ask a few students for their reasoning with questions like, “Why do you think <your choice> is more powerful than <the other option>?”

	Option 1	Option 2	Answer
Round 1 - Battle	Lion	Tiger	Tiger – A tiger has an advantage in a 1-on-1 battle with a lion because that is their typical mode of combat.
Round 2 - Battle	Pride of Lions	Ambush of Tigers	Pride of Lions – A pride of lions are used to working together as a group, while tigers are individual fighters and wouldn’t work together.
Round 3 - Horsepower	Ford Mustang	Dodge Challenger	Dodge Challenger – 807 Horsepower! Compared to the 800 Horsepower of the Mustang.
Round 4 - Windspeed	F5 Scale Tornado	Category 5 Hurricane	Tornado – A F5 Tornado has incredible wind speed of 261-318 mph! A category 5 hurricane begins at 157 mph and can grow from there.

Today, we are going to look at another two options and make a decision on who has the power.

Body (15 minutes)

Main Point — Death has power over sinners.

In the beginning, God created the world and everything in it, including men and women in His image. **What were some of the commands that God gave to Adam and Eve?**

- Be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1:28)
- Reign over the earth (Genesis 1:28)

- Do not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17)

Why was it so important that Adam and Eve not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? First, because God is their Creator and they should obey Him. But second, and important for our lesson, the day they disobeyed God, they would die. Read Genesis 2:15-17.

Did death have power over Adam and Eve *before* they sinned? No. Without sin, there can be no death, because the Bible teaches us that death comes through sin (Romans 5:12).

Death didn't have power over Adam and Eve because they had a right relationship with God and wanted to obey Him. But then something terrible happened — Satan was able to convince Eve and Adam that they could eat from the forbidden tree, disobey God, and not have to die. Read Genesis 3:1-13. Close with God's curse to Adam, which ends with his death, Genesis 3:19.

So does death have power over Adam and Eve *after* they sinned? Yes! God said that Adam would now have to die because he was a sinner.

How else do we know?

One of the best places in the Bible to show that after Adam and Eve sinned death had power over sinners is Genesis 5. I am going to read quickly through a section of Genesis 5, and each time I stop at the end of the verse you will finish the verse for me by saying, "he died!"

As we study the genealogy of the first man who ever lived, we can now answer the question, "Who has the power over man because of sin?" Death!

How will sinners, like us, ever be able to overcome the power that death has over them?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

Before God promised that Adam would die, He made a promise in Genesis 3:15 — that the seed of a woman would strike the head of the serpent, dealing it a fatal death blow, while suffering an injury in the process.

That promise is the earliest appearance of the good news of the gospel. Immediately after Adam and Eve sinned, God promised that to send His Son — born of a woman we later find out is the virgin Mary — to die as a substitute for sinners. However, His Son would only taste death, rising from the dead on the third day, while the great enemies of Satan and death itself would be defeated and face eternal death for their rebellion against God's good design for humanity before the Fall.

So one final time we ask the question, "Who has the power over death?" Jesus! When Jesus rose from the dead, it proved that He has power over death! This is great news for sinners who remain under the power of death.

If you want to live, if you want to be free from death's power, you need to believe in the only Person who has the power over death and the authority to give life. If you fail to believe in the Savior, you will die. But, as our verse says, if you believe in the gospel, it becomes the power of God to save you from sin and death and give to you eternal life.

Pray

Lesson Activities (20-25 minutes)

Children's Church — John 2:13-25

Preparation

Materials:

- Who's Got The Power Images
- Two levels of word searches to emphasize main point.
- Jesus Cleansing Temple Coloring Page

Set-up:

- Print out the materials.

Bible Verse (5-10 minutes)

Romans 1:16 (ESV) – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

Memorization — Have the students repeat the Bible verse with hand motions 2-3 times.

Song — Have the students sing “Not Ashamed” (Seeds Family Worship, ESV) at least once.

NOTE — Starting with the Bible verse in Children's Church will help the children get some movement in before the lesson starts.

Lesson (20-25 minutes)

Main Idea – Jesus has **power** over **death**.

Pray

Introduction (5 minutes)

This morning in Sunday school we took a look at the book of Genesis and learned that because of sin, death has power over sinners. Adam's genealogy has a repeated phrase to prove it — “And he died.” Therefore, every human descendant of Adam has at least one thing in common — death has power over them, as Paul said, “The wages of sin is death.” Today, we are going to talk more about the solution to that problem. But first, we have a game to play.

Opening Game — “Who's Got The Power?” — In the following game, students must decide who is more powerful between two options. Before revealing the answer, you can ask a few students for their reasoning with questions like, “Why do you think <your choice> is more powerful than <the other option>?”

	Option 1	Option 2	Answer
Round 1 - Battle	Alligator	Crocodile	Crocodiles – While gators are faster, crocs are usually bigger, they have a more lethal bite due to strength and size, and they are much more aggressive.
Round 2 - Strength	Leafcutter Ant	Dung Beetle	Dung Beetle – Dung Beetles are the strongest animal/insect on the planet compared to body weight. They can pull 1,141 times their body weight, while a Leafcutter ant can carry 50 times their body weight.
Round 3 - Rank	Lieutenant Colonel	Captian	Lieutenant Colonel – They outrank a captain by two rankings.
Round 4 - Most nutritious	Spinach	Kale	Spinach – While both have positive health benefits, spinach has more valuable nutrients per one cup.

Today, we are going to look at a few options in John’s account and determine who he records as having the most power.

Body (15 minutes)

As I read the following verses, listen carefully for who has the power. Read John 2:13-14. **Who has the power?** That brings us to our first point:

1. Religious leaders have power over the people

How do we know that the religious leaders have power over the people? They have set up a marketplace in the Temple. When a Jew came for Passover, they needed to bring a sacrifice. Here, the religious leaders have set up a system to take advantage of travelers by selling them a sacrifice at the Temple for profit. They made it seem like they were helping travelers worship God, but it was really a cover up for their greed.

Illustration — This is kind of like buying food at a sporting event or amusement park. Why does the food cost so much? Most people don’t bring their own food to the park. In fact, sometimes amusement parks make it difficult for you to bring your own food into the park! Their goal is to charge you extra for food when you get hungry! You have a need, and they have a solution.

So we see that the religious leaders have power over the people in the system that they have set up for those who come to worship. But God was mad at the religious leaders for taking advantage of his children, and He was going to make it right through His Son.

As I read the next section, listen carefully for who has the power. Read John 2:15-18. **Who has the power?** This is our second point:

2. Jesus has power over the religious leaders

How do we know that Jesus has power over the religious leaders? Jesus cleanses the Temple, He kicks the merchants out and removes the system that the religious leaders put in place. What are some of the things that Jesus did?

- He made a whip
- He chased the merchants out of the Temple
- He chased the animals out of the Temple
- He scattered the money of the money changers
- He turned over their tables
- And finally, Jesus ends it all with a command — “Get these things out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a marketplace!” (2:16)

Now, when someone gives a command, what does that mean? It means that they have (or think they have) the power to do so! **Illustration** — God gives your parents the authority to give you commands and instructions that must be obeyed.

The religious leaders understand that Jesus is making a claim of authority by putting an end to their business. Jesus’ actions say to the religious leaders, “I have power over you!” They didn’t like that at all, because the power they had over the people was their favorite thing in the world. They loved the worship that came from men, rather than the worship that belonged only to God.

To show that they are angry, the religious leaders ask Jesus a question: **What do they ask Him?** “What are you doing? If God gave you authority to do this, show us a miraculous sign to prove it!” (2:18). They want Jesus to give them a sign to prove that He has power over them AND the people. “Show us a sign Jesus, to prove that you’re really in charge.”

As I read the final section, listen well for who has the power. Read John 2:19-22. **Who has the power?** Jesus has power over death! Which brings us to our final point, and main point for the lesson.

3. Jesus has power over death

How do we know that Jesus has power over death? When the religious leaders ask for a sign, Jesus tells them that they will destroy the temple of His body, and in three days He will raise it up. If you can raise yourself from the dead, you have power over death!

But there’s a problem with what the religious leaders heard: **what was the problem?** They didn’t understand! They thought Jesus was speaking about the physical Temple. But John tells us that He was referring to the temple of His body.

So even though Jesus will not perform a sign on the spot to confront the religious leader’s unbelief, He does promise that His resurrection from the dead will be enough evidence to prove to the world once and for all that He has power over death and the authority to give life.

Conclusion (5 minutes)

Main Point — Jesus has power over death.

The truth of Jesus' resurrection from the dead, that He has power over death, is what you need to be freed from death's power over you. As our verse says, the gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

This passage closes by telling us that there are many people who say that Jesus is their Lord, but don't really believe in Him. If you don't believe in Jesus, you will remain under death's power and you will face eternal death after you die physically. But the promise for those who come to Jesus — the only One who has power over death — is that they will never die, but have eternal life.

Look to the cross, look to the resurrection, and believe in Jesus — because He has power over death.

Pray

Lesson Activities (20-25 minutes)