

A Sneak Peek

Lesson Focus

Because we know the end of the story, we always have a sense of hope. As a child studies who Jesus is, some aspects of Jesus' life can be a bit scary. By showing the end of the story, we set up these harder lessons with a reminder of how everything will be in the end.

Key Passage(s)

No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

– *Revelation 22:3-5, NIV*

"Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

– *Revelation 22:12-13, NIV*

"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star."

– *Revelation 22:16, NIV*

For the Parent

Most people have a natural curiosity to know the end of the story. When we look at a book and it has gotten our interest and attention, we may think about reading the last few pages, just to see how everything will turn out. Will the author stay on the path we think is being laid out or is there a twist we didn't expect? We may find ourselves thumbing through the end of the book just to find out.

As Christians we can turn to the end of the book for God has given it to us. John's Revelation tells us the final chapter in God's redemptive story for us, His children. There are a lot of scary things in the Bible a child could come across. By starting at the end, we can show our children that no matter what happens in the pages before, everything is as it should be when all is said and done.

Appeal to your child's curiosity by showing him the Bible and perhaps looking to start at the beginning, in Genesis 1:1. Then remark about how you often like to find out how the book ends and flip to the very last pages of the Bible. Read through the key verses with a joyful spirit. Then discuss how the passages in those last couple of pages tell us everything is going to be okay. If you can think of a time when the child has gone through some uncertainty which ended well (for instance, a family pet escaped but was

later found safe or mom tried a new recipe that turned out well), use that as an example of how it feels when we don't know how things will turn out. Reinforce the feelings experienced by the child when the good ending came about. Ask how that experience might have been different if the child knew ahead of time everything was going to be fine.

If your child asks about the curse in verse 3, explain simply that the curse is everything related to sin, to evil, to all that is not of God. All the bad things we see today will be gone. In the end, there will only be what is healthy, what is good, what is pleasing to God. This is the future we have to look forward to if we trust and believe in Jesus.

For the Child

Jesus is the most amazing person you will ever meet. One of the reasons He is so amazing is because He is God. The Bible is all about Jesus from the first page to the last and as we look at what the Bible says about Him, you'll be able to see just how amazing Jesus is.

We'll start learning about Jesus by starting at the back of the book. Another reason Jesus is so amazing is because of what He has promised: living forever with Him. The last few pages tell us a little about what that future will be like. No matter what happens, this is the future for us if we believe in and love Jesus.

As you read the Bible verses, try and remember what Jesus is promising. His promise for the future is something you can keep in your heart in good times and in bad. You can remember this promise when you are happy, when you are sad, and when you are scared. It is a promise you should keep close to you as we look at Jesus' life. Sometimes things got scary. But in the end, it all works out. Jesus has promised us this and He always keeps His promises.

Reinforcement

Spend some time with your child either watching cartoons or reading children's stories, especially ones with endings that repeat. For instance, with *Scooby Doo* the gang will always uncover the culprit and solve the mystery. At the end of the cartoon or story, have the same discussion about knowing the ending. Ask your child what he or she might think if the ending were suddenly different. For instance, what if Scooby, Shaggy, and the rest of the crew *didn't* solve the mystery.