

Verified

Sure Evidence for the Savior

GOSPEL OF JOHN



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STRONG

curriculum

A world weak on truth needs a strong, trustworthy message. STRONG Curriculum builds stronger churches by teaching all Scripture to produce spiritually mature believers who measure up to the stature of Christ.

A Plan You Can Trust

We believe the Bible has the answers to what students need most. No other book or philosophy contains God's power to save and transform lives. Because of this, we've made it our unwavering commitment to build Strong Students upon the sure foundation of God's Word. With this curriculum, your church can develop teens who will be strong defenders of the faith.

The Strong Students scope and sequence is designed around the seven teaching aims Jesus modeled in His ministry. Since these are Jesus' aims, teachers can be confident in the aims' effectiveness and purpose. Every lesson in the Strong Students scope and sequence addresses at least one of Jesus' teaching aims.

Every lesson also addresses students' needs. We understand the challenge of teaching the Bible to today's teens because of four barriers culture has pushed on them:

- Struggles with identity
- Subjective view of truth
- Hope in a social utopia
- Belief that a career and wealth guarantee happiness

Strong Students takes care of the tough part for you by striking at the foundation of these barriers and providing a Biblical response to each one. With Strong Students, you can concentrate on communicating to your teens and helping them grow into strong believers in Christ without worrying whether you are effectively addressing the philosophies competing for their minds.

Look for the **BuildUP** icons in the table of contents and on the first page of each lesson.

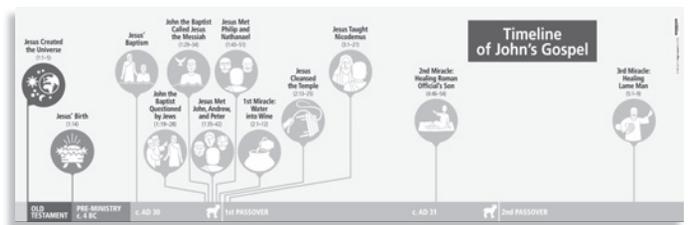
JESUS' TEACHING AIMS

-  **BELIEVE THE GOSPEL.** Jesus taught His students to trust in Him alone for salvation and to share the gospel with others. This aim is obviously fundamental to all the rest.
-  **UNDERSTAND BIBLICAL ETHICS.** Jesus instructed His students to live according to moral values. These values provided them with the tools to make wise decisions.
-  **INTERNALIZE GODLINESS.** Jesus taught His followers to be godly on the inside. He warned them not to become like the Pharisees, with a mere outward appearance of godliness.
-  **LEARN DOCTRINE.** Jesus knew the importance of teaching His students the truth, and He identified doctrine as one of the means for spiritual growth. Wishy-washy doctrine leads to faulty practice.
-  **DEVELOP LIFE SKILLS.** Jesus taught His followers to meet life's challenges in a way that honored and glorified God. He gave them the skills to navigate those challenges successfully.
-  **UPLIFT OTHERS.** Jesus' life was all about others. Leading by example, He taught His followers to be all about others too.
-  **PREPARE TO SERVE.** Jesus prepared His followers to serve in the context of local churches that were established soon after His ascension. He emphasized sacrifice and dedication.

STRONG[®] curriculum

High School Kit Contents

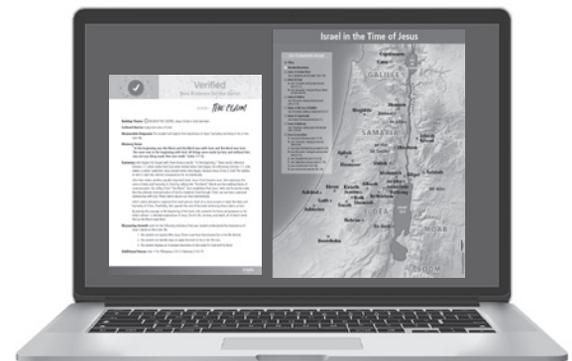
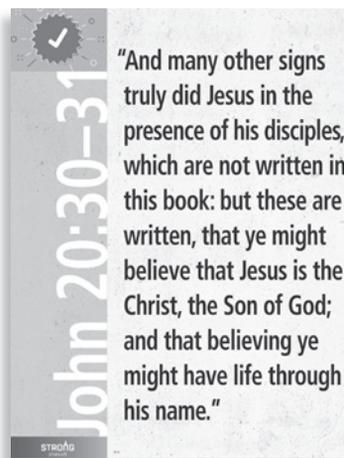
- Teacher Guide*
- Student Book*
Order one book for each student
- Resource CD*
(with online download code)
Includes PowerPoint,
Home Connection Tool, and
additional teacher resources
- Supplemental DVD*
- Posters*



Ordering Information

All materials are available from Regular Baptist Press.

- Web: www.StrongCurriculum.com
- Email: orders@rbpstore.org
- Toll-free orders in the United States: 1-800-727-4440
- Fax: 1-847-843-3757
- Canada: Contact your distributor.



The Doctrinal Basis of Our Curriculum

A more detailed statement with references is available upon request.

- The verbal, plenary inspiration of the Scriptures
- Only one true God
- The Trinity of the Godhead
- The Holy Spirit and His ministry
- The personality of Satan
- The Genesis account of creation
- Original sin and the fall of man
- The virgin birth of Christ
- Salvation through faith in the shed blood of Christ
- The bodily resurrection and priesthood of Christ
- Grace and the new birth
- Justification by faith
- Sanctification of the believer
- The security of the believer
- The church
- The ordinances of the local church: baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper
- Biblical separation—ecclesiastical and personal
- Obedience to civil government
- The place of Israel
- The pretribulation rapture of the church
- The premillennial return of Christ
- The millennial reign of Christ
- Eternal glory in Heaven for the righteous
- Eternal torment in Hell for the wicked

How to Teach **STRONG STUDENTS** Lessons

Leading a Student to Christ

STRONG STUDENTS has been designed to help you clearly present God's Word to your students. Each lesson will guide students through the Bible, encouraging them to interact with the material and apply it to their lives.

Familiarize yourself with the resources included in the kit so that you can maximize your effectiveness in the classroom. The key resources you need are Student Books, the Resource CD, and the Home Connection Tool.

Encourage students to use their Student Books during each lesson so they can follow the PowerPoint presentation by taking notes.

Before Each Lesson

- Read the Scripture Focus passage several times.
- Do the Time with God section of the Student Book to know what your students are studying.
- Memorize the key verses.
- Prepare the materials you will need for each activity.
- Work through the Bible Study section and carefully plan the lesson.
- Plan how you will apply the Bible lesson to your students' lives. Make sure what you say is clear and shows students how they can use the lesson.
- Pray for yourself, your students, and your lesson.

AS A TEACHER, your most important concern is the personal salvation of your students. Find out whether your students know Jesus Christ as their Savior in a way that doesn't introduce doubt in their minds. An easy and gentle way to find this out is to give your students several minutes to write out an answer to a question like, How can a person get to Heaven? Collect their answers and read them during the following week. If any of your students seem confused about salvation, you can present the gospel to them and provide the opportunity for them to receive Christ. If possible, deal with students individually.

The Plan of Salvation

- Everyone is a sinner. No one can live up to God's perfect standard (Romans 3:23).
- Sin's penalty is death (Romans 6:23).
- God loves us and sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to pay for our sin. Christ died in our place (John 3:16; Romans 5:8).
- When a person places his trust in Jesus' payment for sins, Christ becomes his Savior. His sins are forgiven, and he receives God's gift of eternal life (John 1:12; 5:24).
- Everlasting life begins the moment we trust in Jesus (John 3:36).
- After that, nothing we ever do will take us out of God's hand; we are secure (John 10:27–29).
- The experience of the new birth (being born into God's family) is not based on a feeling, but on confidence in God's Word (1 John 5:11, 12).

Encourage students to pray, but explain that prayer does not save a person. Prayer is how we communicate our inward thoughts to God. Ask new believers to explain what they have done and what has happened to them.

Discipleship

Encourage new believers to read the Bible, and explain the importance of prayer. Also explain 1 John 1:9 to them so they can deal with sin in their new Christian life. Make it a priority to follow up with new believers.

Knowing Your High School Students

Description of Physical, Social, and Emotional Development

- I MAY feel developmentally out of step with my peers—behind or ahead in physical changes—as I experience puberty.
- I MAY be sensitive about my weight and body shape and worry about whether I am normal.
- I AM developing my own sense of identity.
- I AM more interested in and influenced by my peer group than by the adults in my life.
- I MAY be moody, depressed, or anxious about academic or social issues in my life.
- I AM very focused on myself and may feel both high expectations and lack of confidence.
- I AM better able to express feelings through talking, but I tend to respond dramatically, feeling that no one else has ever experienced the same feelings and emotions.
- I DO NOT always exhibit the emotional maturity that matches my more adult-like appearance. I have trouble thinking before acting; sometimes I seem silly and unfocused on the task at hand.

Effective Responses

- Provide emotional and spiritual support and encourage students to develop a strong sense of self as a valuable person created by God.
- Accept students as they are and avoid comparing them to others. Resist stereotyping. Not every tall boy is a basketball player.
- Generate an atmosphere of acceptance and love for all, demonstrating interest and care for each student.
- Create an atmosphere of mutual respect so youth feel they are part of a community.
- Help build genuine relationships by honestly sharing mistakes and life experiences.
- Help students talk through the ramifications of their choices without asking, How could you? What were you thinking?

- Avoid arguments by remaining calm and not engaging in banter over an issue.
- Be patient with the tendency of some youth toward constant personal grooming.

Cognitive (Learning) Development

- I MAY be hesitant to try new things for fear of embarrassing myself in front of my peer group.
- I AM developing new thinking skills and am able to think about multiple options and possibilities.
- I CAN think more deeply and significantly about abstract ideas such as faith.
- I AM developing a stronger sense of right and wrong.
- I MAY be ready to take significant steps in areas of faith and Christian growth.

Effective Instructional Methods

- Create an open and stress-free environment where youth can learn and share concerns in a confidence-building atmosphere.
- Provide background information, a purpose to the lesson, and understanding of the text.
- Combine love, high energy, enthusiasm, and seriousness with engaging ways to present the lesson.
- Use personal stories that illustrate Biblical principles to keep students engaged in learning.
- Provide honest answers to questions.
- Stimulate thinking in areas of salvation and Christian growth.
- Help Christians work through issues of assurance of salvation and to begin studying the Bible for daily decision making.
- Encourage students to articulate Biblical principles of right and wrong that they are learning from God's Word.
- Invite volunteers to look up and read aloud Bible passages. But don't put students on the spot or ask them to do things that make them feel foolish.

SESSION 1

THE CLAIM

Scripture Focus

John 1:1–18

BuildUP Theme



BELIEVE THE GOSPEL

Jesus Christ's deity and humanity impact our lives tremendously.

Measurable Response

The students will explain the importance of Jesus' humanity and deity in their own lives.

Memory Verses

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:1–3).

Teacher Preparation

- John used precise language in verse 1 of his Gospel to establish that (1) Christ (the "Word") existed eternally before the beginning of time; (2) Christ is distinct from God; and (3) Christ is God, possessing the single divine nature.
- Read John 1:1–18. In the Old Testament, Israel's relationship with God was primarily a national focus. Individuals depended on priests to approach God. Christ, called the *logos* (Word), however, became human. He bridged the gap between people and God. The term *logos* reveals Christ's role as the communication of God. Through Christ, we can have a personal relationship with our Creator.

Focus

This quarter focuses on the first BuildUP aim: Believe the Gospel. Jesus Christ's deity and humanity are both essential to the gospel. Christ's humanity allowed Him to physically die and to be an equivalent sacrifice for humanity. Christ's deity provided the infinite righteousness and life necessary to pay for the countless sins of the world. If Christ lacked either deity or humanity, He could not have provided salvation for us. If we deny either, we cannot be saved. The lessons this quarter will verify these two truths about Christ's unique nature.

Cultural Barrier

This session refutes the world's subjective view of truth. John asserted Christ's divine and human natures as indisputable, objective truths. He established Christ as the source of all created things and the embodiment of God. If Christ were not God, nothing would exist since Christ made all things that exist. The existence of the material world, therefore, is objective proof of Christ's deity. Students can trust Christ's deity because God's Word is trustworthy.

Session Starters

Option 1—Claim Game

Steps

1. Students form a circle. Going around the circle, students make three claims about themselves. At least one claim must be true, and one must be false.
2. The group decides which claims they believe to be true or false. If time allows, students can play another round.
3. Discuss the process for determining truth.

ASK: How did you decide whether someone’s claim was true or false?

ASK: How can we know the Bible’s claims are true?

4. Transition to the Bible lesson.

Whether we’re in a casual conversation or a heated debate, we all make claims. But just because we claim something doesn’t make it so. God’s claims, however, are always true. Our lesson is about two of God’s claims concerning Christ. We will discover how they impact our lives.

Option 2—True or False Trivia

Gather

- Paper and pencils.

Steps

1. Organize students into teams of three.
2. Instruct teams to decide whether each of the following statements is true or false. After reading each statement, give teams 15 seconds to write down their answers.
 - a. President Abraham Lincoln was a champion wrestler. *True. He lost only 1 of 300 matches.*
 - b. The Sahara Desert is the largest non-polar desert in the world. *True. The desert covers 3.5 million square miles.*
 - c. NASA plans to send children into outer space. *False.*

- d. On Good Friday in 1930, the BBC reported that there was no news and played piano music to fill a segment. *True.*
 - e. Killing 100,000 people per year, snakes are the deadliest animals in the world. *False. Mosquitoes kill 750,000 by spreading disease.*
 - f. Alaska is the only state whose name can be typed on a single line of keyboard keys. *True.*
 - g. The nation of China owns every panda in the world. *False. Mexico owns 2.*
 - h. Lake Superior is the largest freshwater lake in the world. *True.*
 - i. The Bible is the most widely distributed book in history. *True. 5 billion copies.*
 - j. Mainland Australia is the largest island in the world. *False. Australia is a continent. Greenland is the largest island.*
3. Share answers with students. Teams report how many questions they answered correctly.
 4. Discuss the importance of claims.

ASK: What difference might these claims make in your life? *None.*

ASK: What claims could impact your life? *God is real. The Bible is true. Jesus came to earth as the God-Man.*

5. Transition to the Bible lesson.

People's claims often have little impact on us, but the God's claims in His Word will impact our lives tremendously. We need to know God's claims and understand how they affect us.

Bible Study

Gather

- Video 1 from the DVD—"The Word Made Flesh."
- A bright coin, jewelry, or kaleidoscope.

VIDEO: Show video 1 ("The Word Made Flesh"). The video introduces the material covered in this lesson.

No one compares to Jesus Christ. He is the only person in existence Who is both Almighty God and finite man. The apostle John was so convinced of this that he staked his entire reputation on it. John had complete confidence that Jesus Christ is the one and only God-Man, and as he wrote his Gospel, he confronted others with this fact. How we respond to Who Christ is will affect us forever.

John didn't just assert his claims and say, "Take it or leave it." He spent the rest of this Gospel verifying his claims. As we begin our journey through this powerful Gospel, we must thoroughly examine John's two major claims about Jesus Christ.

I. Claim #1—Jesus Is God (John 1:1–13)

READ: John 1:1. **ASK:** What words in this verse sound like the words from another verse? "*In the beginning;*" *Genesis 1:1*.

John intentionally forces our attention back to Genesis as he repeats the Bible's famous opening words: "In the beginning." If we are to properly understand John's Gospel, we must understand its connection to the creation account.

Genesis 1:1 reveals that when time began, God already existed. God is eternal and is the author of time. By quoting Genesis 1:1, John links God's eternal existence to the "Word." Just as God existed before time, so did the Word. The Word is eternal. But Who is the Word?

Words are the building blocks of communication. In communication, thoughts are transferred from one person's mind to another's by packaging the thoughts in recognized symbols. In this case, these symbols are words. Words are combinations of letters and sounds that communicate thoughts.

In John 1, the Greek word for "Word" is *logos*. Like our English word, a *logos* is a unit of communication—whether a single word or a long discourse. As John employs this term here, he speaks of Jesus Christ, describing Him as the Living Word. By applying this term to Jesus, John establishes that Jesus is a special communication, unlike any other, in that He is a living person. Jesus Christ is the living communication of God.

As the Word, Jesus has not only existed eternally, but He also lived "with God" before time began. This tells us two things: (1) Jesus is distinct from God; and (2) Jesus is personal. Jesus and God the Father did not live for eternity in a cold, emotionless state. They existed in eternal joy and companionship. Here the Greek preposition for "with" (*pros*) carries the idea of movement toward an object. In describing Jesus as moving toward God, John shows that Christ has an eternal longing to be close to God the Father. For us, this has huge implications, because it means that God is personal and that we, too, can have a relationship with Him.

ASK: How does it feel to know that you can have a personal relationship with God?

ASK: What are some ways you, like Christ, could become closer to God the Father?

Jesus is both fully God and distinct from God the Father. That seems impossible to our limited minds. But if we as limited creatures could understand everything about God, that would mean He, too, is limited. God, of course, is not limited. God is infinite.

John wrote that the Word is both God and with God so we might understand Jesus' supernatural nature. Jesus was more than just a man.

ASK: Name something you know to be true even though you nor any other human fully understands it.

ASK: What is your best explanation for some of those truths?

ASK: Why do you accept those facts without being able to understand them completely? *Because reality is not limited by our understanding—it exists regardless of whether we understand it or not.*

READ: John 1:3.

As the Word, Jesus created the universe *ex nihilo*, meaning "from nothing." To emphasize this truth, John gave both a positive and a negative statement. Positively, he wrote that everything that has ever been created came into being through Jesus Christ. Negatively, he wrote that nothing has ever been created without Jesus Christ. There are no exceptions. All creation was made through Christ.

READ: John 1:4, 5. **ASK:** How would you define "life"?

Secular scientists frequently bemoan their inability to define life. They offer lengthy descriptions, but they never quite strike its true meaning because they reject God, the only basis for life.

John wrote that life is a natural characteristic of the Word. The Word is also the source of life. To be alive, then, is to be connected to the Word. Jesus, as the Word, is not only the creator of all things but is also the source of all life (cf. Gen. 2:7).

John continued by saying Jesus' life was the light of men. Light is an emission of energy. God designed our eyes to convert this energy into discernible information so that it accurately portrays our physical surroundings. Without light, we cannot interact with the physical world in a productive or safe way.

ASK: Imagine if everyone was born without sight. How would that affect our lives?

Jesus shed light on, or revealed the truth about, sin and salvation. Through Christ, our light, we can see, or understand, the truth and be freed from our spiritual blindness.

When Jesus, the giver of life, came into the world, the darkness wasn't

able to overcome His light, or stop it from shining. On the cross, Jesus gained victory over all who opposed Him, including Satan. Christ defeated darkness once and for all when He died and rose again. He guaranteed that those who believe in Him will have eternal life, being delivered from the power of darkness and called into His marvelous light (Col. 1:12–14; 1 Pet. 2:9).

READ: John 1:9, 10.

Some people refuse to believe in God, wanting Him to show Himself to them. God did exactly that when Jesus came to the earth He created. But instead of receiving Jesus, the world didn't "know" Him. That means they had no relationship with Him. They rejected the light He brought to humanity as their creator.

READ: John 1:11. **ASK:** Who were Jesus' "own" people? *Israel.*

Even Israel, Jesus' own people, rejected Him. God deeply and eternally loves Israel (Deut. 7:6–8). Because of His love, He privileged Israel to be the only nation to receive and record His truth (Rom. 3:1). In His revelation to Israel, God revealed His plans, including His promise of their Messiah. Yet, when Jesus, their Messiah, appeared, they hated Him.

How could Israel reject their own Messiah? They wanted a Messiah on their terms. They wanted Him to deliver them, but they didn't want to turn from their sin and put their faith in Him.

READ: John 1:12, 13. **ASK:** What must one do to become a child of God? *They must receive Jesus Christ.*

Despite humanity's ignorance and Israel's rejection, Jesus still extended His offer to any and all who would believe. Some did trust in Christ and began to follow Him.

When people place their trust in Christ, God regenerates their spirits so they will live eternally. Everyone is born physically alive, but no one is born spiritually alive. We are born spiritually dead, or separated from God. We must be reborn into the family of God through faith in Christ. Believers become the children of God.

II. Claim #2—Jesus Became Human (John 1:14–18)

READ: John 1:14.

While Jesus has eternally existed as God, He did not always exist as a human. Jesus "was made" a human. To be "made" is to arrive at a state different from the previous state. Like us, Jesus was born as a baby. God Almighty took on a human body and became fully man.

By becoming human, Jesus Christ became related to us physically (Heb.

2:14, 17). Because He shares humanity with us, He can represent us. As our representative, Jesus brought humanity and God together. After the Fall, humanity faced total separation from God. God no longer dwelt among us as He did with Adam and Eve. But God dwelt with humanity in the person of Jesus Christ. John explained that he was an eyewitness of Jesus Christ's divine glory.

ACTIVITY: Pass around several items that reflect light (e.g., coins, jewelry, kaleidoscope). Explain that the reflection off the items is a tiny fraction of the beauty Jesus displayed when He was transfigured.

John witnessed Jesus' transfiguration, meaning the unveiling of Jesus' glory (John 1:14). He was amazed at the brilliant light that radiated from Jesus (Matt. 17:1, 2). Of course, John got just a glimpse of Jesus' full glory. No one could look on His full glory and live.

READ: John 1:16, 17. **ASK:** What is grace? *God's undeserved favor.*

Jesus is full of grace and truth (1:14), and He gives us grace from that fullness (1:16). "Grace for grace" means "grace in place of grace." In other words, there is a constant flow of grace from God.

The grace from Jesus is better than the law, which gives truth but no grace (1:17). The law gave God's righteous standard, but it did not give the necessary grace to the lawbreaker. The law points out sin, but God's grace abounds toward the sinner so that the sinner is made righteous (Rom. 5:20, 21).

READ: John 1:18.

In verse 18, John connected his claim that Jesus is God to his claim that Jesus is human. Because Jesus is both God and human, He provides a knowledge about God that is superior to all other sources of revelation. Jesus declared God, meaning He revealed the nature of God.

John added that Jesus is in the bosom of the Father, a picture of Jesus reclining on the Father like John reclined on Jesus at the Last Supper (John 13:23). The close physical relationship is a picture of close fellowship between Jesus and the Father. Jesus could declare the Father because of His close relationship with Him.

So John claimed Jesus Christ is both God and human. Through faith in Christ we can have eternal life and a personal relationship with the God of creation. The question now is whether John's claims can be verified. We are confident they can, and that's why John wrote the rest of his gospel. Our hope for eternal life depends on the truth of John's claims.

ACTIVITY: Briefly review the titles John gives Jesus in John 1 (the Word, the Life, the Light, the only Begotten, Christ). **ASK:** What do

these titles mean? *The Word: the physical communication of God; the Life: the source of life; the Light: the Savior from corruption; the only Begotten: the Father's uniquely loved One; Christ: the Anointed One.*

Memory Builder

Gather

- Paper and pencils.

Steps

1. Explain the meaning of John 1:1–3.

Jesus is called the Word because He communicates God to man in a tangible way. As the Word, Jesus existed eternally, had close fellowship with the Father, and is God Himself. As God, the Word created the universe.

2. Each student writes the word “beginning” down the left side of his or her paper. On your mark, the students write down something Christ directly created as proof He is divine (e.g., eggs, iguanas). Students should not list things man invented using things Christ created (e.g., glue, basketballs).
3. Give the students two minutes to work. Call time and have the students read their lists for each letter, combining their answers for “G,” “I,” and “N.” Students cross off any answers that match another student’s answers.
4. Students get a bonus point for each word of the memory verses they can say in order. Stop them when they make a mistake.
5. Students total their scores. Declare the winner.

Session Application

Steps

1. Review John’s claims.

John claimed that Jesus is both God and man. Both claims are crucial to our lives. As God, Jesus is eternal, powerful, the source of life, and our creator. As man, Jesus communicates God to us, represents us, relates to us, and died for us. He is the only Person Who could bring God and humans together.

2. Discuss the importance of John’s claims.

ASK: How does Jesus' deity impact your life? *He is our creator; He gives us life; He gives us access to God the Father.*

ASK: How does Jesus' humanity impact your life? *He is related to us as a fellow human and represented us and died for us.*

ASK: If someone observed your life for a week, what might that person conclude about the importance of Jesus?

ASK: How might you demonstrate that Jesus is important to you and the rest of the world?

Session Takeaways

Before dismissing students, draw their attention to the Time with God of their student books. Instruct them to complete the activity at home. The activity emphasizes Christ's deity and humanity and how both impact the student's life.