

Mighty God

Lesson 2

Unit One: Descriptions of Jesus the Messiah

Scripture: Isaiah 9:6; John 12:44-47

Life Focus: Jesus is the Mighty God, our rescuing superhero sent from Heaven.

If Everyone Is Special . . .

In the film *The Incredibles*, we are introduced to a world populated by superheroes. Yet in this world the "supers" must hide their abilities and attempt to live secretly among ordinary mortals. Why? Because this society is set upon proving that all people are special, needing no superheroes to come to their rescue. The presence of extraordinary ones is rejected, if not outright denied.

This society is a parody of our own. In 1933, a handful of philosophers wrote *The Humanist Manifesto*, spelling out their blueprint for the ideal society. In it they stated, "Humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves."

Yet humans cannot save themselves. Daily we find ourselves in need of one greater than ourselves. Isaiah predicted the coming of Mighty God, a superhero sent from Heaven. Jesus is that hero who serves as *liaison*, *light*, and *liberator*.

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Hide It in Your Heart

"If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world."

—*John 12:47*

For a pre-session or take-home activity, memorize this key passage using the puzzle found on your *High School Resources* CD.

Isaiah 9:6

⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

John 12:44-47

⁴⁴Then Jesus cried out, "Whoever believes in me does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. ⁴⁵The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me. ⁴⁶I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

⁴⁷"If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world."

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Today's Challenge

Who are your heroes?
Will they be there
to save you on a
moment's notice?
Participate in these
activities and
discover the Mighty
God, a superhero who
is real and ready to
come to the rescue.

Step 1

Setting the Stage

Describe some heroic
actions or characters.

Step 2

Searching the Word

Defend this statement:
"Jesus is history's
greatest hero."

Step 3

Making It Real

Explain why people
today still need Jesus.

Step 4

Living It Out

Try to emulate the
heroic nature of Jesus
in a specific way in
the coming week.

Encountering God's Word

LIAISON John 12:44, 45

At the end of Jesus' ministry, He had arrived triumphantly in Jerusalem. Many in the crowd remained unconvinced He was the Messiah, even though He "had performed . . . many signs in their presence" (John 12:37).

Jesus said that, in reality, they didn't even believe in God, for believing in Him and believing in the one who sent Him was the same (v. 44). He claimed to be God incarnate, the same claim John made for Him as he introduced his Gospel (John 1:1).

Though God revealed Himself in the Old Testament, He fully and finally revealed Himself

Jesus came as the representative of God, the Father.

in the Son of God, "the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (Hebrews 1:1-3). That is quite a claim. Paul said it this way: He "is the

image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15). God knew the best way to reveal Himself and His will was to personify Himself. God came in reality, in the flesh. How else could we have ever fully understood Him?

It is vital that Mighty God came from outside of this world, and not just as a gifted human being. Consider a house on fire. Those trapped within the house do not have the ability or equipment to put out the fire. Help must come from outside of the burning building. In the much more significant spiritual realm, we live in a world of decay and destruction. No one in this world can save it from these results of sin and death. People in a world out of control need Jesus because He alone brings help from beyond the confusion of our globe, help from the throne of God Himself.

LIGHT John 12:46

When earthquakes or terrorist bombs collapse buildings, one of the first cries heard is, "Send light!" Darkness intensifies the terror of such circumstances. Darkness multiplies helplessness. When God saw darkness, He sent exactly what was needed. Jesus, Mighty God, came as light, one who would help us see the state we are in and who would lead us out of darkness and back to God.

Thomas Kinkade, popular Christian artist, calls himself the Painter of Light. His images sparkle with illumination. The apostle John was the first "painter of light." From chapter one of his Gospel to chapter one of his first epistle, John put the brush of his pen to the black canvas of the world

Jesus was sent to illuminate, to direct humankind back to God's path.

and stroked on light. How better to know where one stands—lost in darkness—and how better to know which way to go—toward Heaven—than to receive light. A blindfolded blind man in a sealed cavern is hopeless. The hero comes first, bearing light.

The tragedy is that people have rejected God's offer of light (John 3:19-21). Stumbling about in the dark, sooner or later they learn to love it. In her children's fantasy trilogy, Ursula LeGuin, noted atheist, wrote of Arha, the princess of *The Tombs of Atuan*. This young lady, fated by an accident of birth to replace the dead mistress of the underworld, at first despised her duty. She was the only one allowed to tend to the tombs, tombs in utter darkness beneath the ground. But she so learned to be comfortable there, she resisted the call of the wizard savior Ged to leave.

LIBERATOR John 12:47-50

Jesus did not come to blind men in a dark cavern to yell, "You morons!" He came to call gently, "Come, follow my voice." He came to touch sightless eyes with healing. Some translations render the Hebrew phrase in Isaiah 9:6 given as "Mighty God" as "Mighty Hero." The picture Isaiah gives is indeed of a conquering hero, a conquering hero of grace.

Jesus made His role clear to a nighttime visitor and inquirer, Nicodemus (John 3:1, 2). Nicodemus knew that the religious teachers of his day relished their roles of power, including the power to separate dissenters from the religious community (John 9:22). But Jesus told Nicodemus that He did not come to condemn the world, but to save it (John 3:16, 17).

Private Jessica Lynch, a 19-year-old army supply clerk, was injured and captured by Iraqi forces after her group was ambushed on March 23, 2003. On April 1 of that year, U.S.

forces went behind enemy lines and rescued Lynch.

Of course, these liberators were immediately hailed

as heroes because they risked their lives to save a comrade. Jesus not only risked but also gave His life to liberate the world from the shackles of sin. Calvary would become the setting for history's greatest heroic act, one man saving billions.

We live in a world which many would like to believe needs no hero from beyond. But that thinking is simply wrong. We need Jesus, Mighty God, who came as God's representative, illuminates our knowledge, our state and the solution to it, and liberates us from our desperate situation. Jesus is Mighty God, God's mighty hero!

Jesus came to be a Savior, not a judge.

Life Focus: Jesus is the Mighty God, our rescuing superhero sent from Heaven.

Use ONE of the following activities to help your students describe some heroic actions or characters.

QUICK STEP What a Superhero Looks Like

As students arrive, give them access to paper and markers. Individually or in small groups they are to create their own superhero. They should be prepared to share the following: the powers their superheroes have, the costumes they wear, the superheroes' logos on their costumes and what those logos signify, and finally, where the superheroes got their powers.

Then ask: **Do you like watching shows and movies about superheroes? Why? Are there enough real heroes in our world? Defend your answers. What makes someone a hero? Have you ever thought about Jesus as a superhuman superhero?** Now display Sheet 1 from the resource pack or project it digitally from the CD-ROM. Allow your students to cut out their created superheroes and tape them on or around the poster. Lead into Bible study by stating: **Let's look at three reasons why Jesus is qualified to be our hero.**

To the Rescue

Cue the video to the line, "Wait a minute, I don't think I can go on any further." In this clip, Arthur finds a way to rescue his grandfather. Stop the video after the line, "If the young lady would care to step this way." (Note: At the time of publication, this video and others suggested can be downloaded from www.wingclips.com.)

If you have a computer available, you may wish to show our classic cartoon clip "To the Rescue" from the *High School Resources* CD instead of using the Hollywood clip.

Discuss either clip with these questions:

- What characteristics does the cartoon hero in this clip have? What makes someone a hero?
- Why do people create fantasies about heroes? Does our society invent heroes that are too good to be true because they are unhappy with real-life heroes? Are there enough real heroes in our world? Defend your answers.

Lead into Bible study by asking: **Have you ever thought about Jesus as a superhero? Let's look at reasons why Jesus is qualified to be our hero.**

The Scene

For an opening activity based on a current news headline, download The Scene online. Go to <http://www.21stcc.com/> and click on "Downloads." There you'll find a free article with discussion questions to begin this week's lesson.

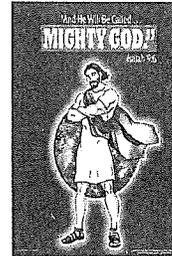


Time
5–10 minutes

art

Materials

High School Resources Sheet 1 or CD-ROM and projection equipment, paper, markers, scissors, tape

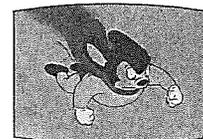


Time
10 minutes

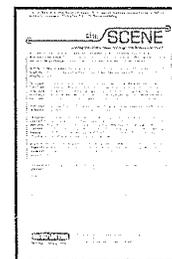
video

Materials

copy of *Arthur and the Invisibles* (2007), a TV and a DVD player, or the *High School Resources* CD and a computer



news



Step 2

Searching the Word

Life Focus: Jesus is the Mighty God, our rescuing superhero sent from Heaven. Use ONE of the following activities to help your students defend this statement: "Jesus is history's greatest hero."

Time

20 minutes

game

Materials

Bibles, *High School Resources Sheet 7C*, scissors, tape



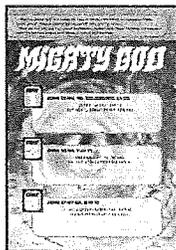
Time

20 minutes

writing

Materials

High School Student, Bibles, pens



QUICK STEP Super Power Match

Make a copy of Sheet 7C. Cut apart the power cards and Scripture cards. Tape one power card to the back of each of 12 volunteers. If you have fewer than 12 students, tape more than one power card to each student as necessary. Then distribute Scripture cards to students. Students will look up their Scriptures and match each card to the power card of one of your volunteers.

When matching is complete, have your students explain the matches they made on the basis of what they found in Scripture.

Turn with the class to John 12:44-47 and ask a volunteer to read the passage aloud. Briefly summarize the meaning of this passage, making the three boldfaced points found in *Encountering God's Word*.

Lead into the next section of the lesson by saying: **Jesus, our hero, is worthy to be given the title Mighty God because He came as God's representative to show the way out from our extreme circumstances and to save us, not to laugh at our predicament. Let's further explore why people need this type of hero yet today.**

Mighty God

Divide the class into groups of three to five students, and turn with them to page 8 in their student books. Give each group one of the assignments found there. They will read the Scripture references and complete the stanza of the "Mighty God" song found there.

As groups work, move among them and help them with their verses. Explain the text, referring to the commentary found in *Encountering God's Word* to help you. The suggested verses which follow will also help give direction to your songwriters:

John 12:44, 45; Colossians 1:15-20	John 12:46; 3:19-21	John 12:47-50; 3:16-18
Jesus is our hero. He didn't come from earth. No one from this world can help us. We need one of Heaven's worth.	Mighty God is Jesus. He came to bring us light. Without His guidance from above, We'd stumble in the night.	He did not come to judge. He came to save instead. He's someone who will love us, Not someone we should dread.

Have groups present their verses one after another for the complete song of Jesus, the Mighty God, Heaven's hero. Then have one group at a time read their verses and explain why they completed the song as they did. Comment to make sure points are made clearly and accurately.

Lead into the next section of the lesson by saying: **Jesus, our hero, is worthy to be given the title Mighty God because He came as God's representative to show the way out from our extreme circumstances and to save us, not to laugh at our predicament. Let's further explore why people need this type of hero yet today.**

Life Focus: Jesus is the Mighty God, our rescuing superhero sent from Heaven.

Use ONE of the following activities to help your students explain why people today still need Jesus.

QUICK STEP "Everyday Superhero"

Turn to the article "Everyday Superhero" in the Lesson 2 issue of ENCOUNTER—*The Digital Magazine*. Have your students read the article and then discuss the following questions as a class:

- Why do you think people admire others who do heroic deeds? It is easy to believe that people are heroes because they have abilities normal people do not. Tell what you think of that idea.
- Select one of the ways that the article says Jesus was heroic. What are some specific ways you could do the same?

Lead into the last lesson step by saying: We are all called to imitate the heroic nature of Jesus. Let's consider specific ways we can do that this week.

Dark and Stormy Night

Turn with your students to page 9 in the student books. Listed there are three paragraphs designed as story starters. Your students will be challenged to write a follow-up paragraph to explain why the person in their scenario needs Jesus as a hero. They should attempt to write their paragraphs in a similar style of dramatic writing as shown. Divide the class into at least three groups to work on this activity, and assign each group one of the three story starters from the student page. (If groups do not want to write, they may choose to act out their scenarios or draw them instead.)

Challenge your students to really think about why teens in the world today still need Jesus to be a hero in their lives. Assist groups as necessary. After some time, allow each group to share its work. Congratulate their creativity. Then lead into the last lesson step by saying: Let's consider how we can imitate the heroic nature of Jesus this week.

Bonus Option!

Song Suggestion: To help your students reflect upon the application of today's lesson, read the lyrics to "Rescue" by Stellar Kart. Have students reflect upon the lyrics and consider why people still need Jesus to rescue them. (You can find these lyrics by doing a simple internet search.)

Time
20 minutes

discussion

Materials
ENCOUNTER—*The Digital Magazine*
for each student



Time
15-20 minutes

writing

Materials
High School Student, pens, paper



Step 4 Living It Out

Life Focus: Jesus is the Mighty God, our rescuing superhero sent from Heaven. Use ONE of the following activities to help your students try to emulate the heroic nature of Jesus in a specific way in the coming week.

Time
5–10 minutes

self-evaluation

Materials
High School Student



Time
5–8 minutes

audio skit

Materials
High School Resources CD, CD player



QUICK STEP You Are a Superhero!

Turn with your students to page 10 in the student book. Say: **Although being the ultimate superhero like Jesus is impossible, we can imitate many of His heroic qualities as we strive to reach out to other people.** Read together the list of heroic qualities shown there. Then ask students to figure out which qualities they possess. Allow volunteers to share their answers. Then discuss how your students could use these qualities this week in specific ways to influence the lives of those around them with the love of Jesus.

After some discussion time, close in prayer.

Distribute ENCOUNTER—*The Digital Magazine*. You can either print these and hand them out or e-mail an issue to your students each week.

"Hero"

Play the skit found on Track 1 of the CD. This was created to sound like a movie trailer for a new release called *Hero*. Yet it's also designed to challenge your students to consider how they can become heroes themselves by imitating Jesus, our Mighty God. Play the skit a second time, this time calling attention to the three things this new kind of hero does: speaks with authority from beyond this world, knows where he is going and invites others to join him, and helps the world break free from the illusions of the enemy. Those are three things that Jesus did when He came to earth. How can your students do the same for other people today? Spend a few minutes brainstorming specific ways your students can live out these heroic qualities in their own lives to reach others with the love of Jesus. After some discussion time, close in prayer.

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ENCOUNTER™

Here's what's in ENCOUNTER—*The Digital Magazine* this week:

- Being an everyday superhero
- The homecoming queen and the love of Jesus
- "Giving Christmas Away"