

I AM

PART 2: JESUS DECLARES HE IS GOD



I AM: PART 2

MONTHLY PREPARATION GUIDE

UNIT 4 - ELEMENTARY

We continue this month with the *I AM* series. Our lessons will focus on the iconic “I Am” sayings of Jesus. By stating “I Am...” Jesus was claiming to be God. Many of Jesus’ statements we discuss this month focus on heaven and the eternal life Jesus offers. We will continue to focus on our memory verse for this series, Exodus 3:14 (ICB) – “Then God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM. When you go to the people of Israel, tell them, “I AM sent me to you.””

WEEK 1

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), Pool Noodle (1 cut in half), *Cross Activity Page* (1 per child on card stock), Ribbon (1 -12” strand per child), Hole Punch (1 per class), Scissors, Markers or Crayons

WEEK 2

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), Black or Dark Brown Construction Paper (40 pieces per class), *Light Bulb Activity Page* (6 per class), *Dark to Light Activity Page* (1 per child), Markers or Crayons

WEEK 3

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), Plant or *The Vine Activity Page* (1 per class), Large Popsicle Sticks (1 per child), Green Pipe Cleaners (3 per child), *Leaf Cutouts Activity Page* (3 leaves per child), Liquid Glue, Crayons or Markers

WEEK 4

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), *Greek Alphabet Activity Page* (1 per class), *Alpha and Omega Activity Page* (1 per child), Markers or Crayons

I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

BIBLE PASSAGE

John 11:25-26 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God sent Jesus to be our Resurrection and Life.

FOCUS VERSE

“Then God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM. When you go to the people of Israel, tell them, ‘I AM sent me to you.’” Exodus 3:14 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Pool Noodle | Cross Activity Page | Ribbon | Hole Punch | Scissors | Markers or Crayons |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Tell me about a time when you did something brave.
- Which superpower would you rather have: the ability to fly or the ability to talk to animals? Why?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

A great song to use throughout this unit is “I Am” by Eddie James (found on YouTube). You can play it as the kids enter the classroom each week or during your worship segment. You’ll be surprised how many “I Am” statements the kids will sing throughout the week.

Most kids love to worship by singing and dancing for God. If you incorporate songs with actions, have a couple of your kids who regularly attend help lead the words and motions.



GIVING KIDS LEADERSHIP ROLES WILL ENGAGE THEM IN WORSHIP, HELP THEM DEVELOP THEIR GIFTS, AND DECREASE BEHAVIORAL INTERRUPTIONS.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Pray to start your lesson.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “God, help us grow in knowing You. We cannot learn on our own. We need You to help us understand. So, teach us to know You better. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “This month, we are continuing our *I Am* series. These ‘I Am’ statements of Jesus are so important! If you remember, so far, we have learned that Jesus is the Good Shepherd, the Door, the Bread of Life, and the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Jesus taught us some incredible truths about Himself, and we will learn even more about Him this month! Who is ready?” Post the next puzzle piece.



USE THE PUZZLE PIECES FROM LAST MONTH’S *I AM* SERIES TO REVIEW.

TRANSITION: Say, “I have good news! It is time to play a game!”

ENGAGE — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Pool Noodle (1 cut in half) |

Say, “Today, we are going to play a special game of tag called *Life Tag!* I will explain how this game of tag works in just a moment, but first, who wants to be a tagger? I need two volunteers!”

GAME GOAL: To tag everyone in the class until everyone is in one long chain.

HOW TO PLAY:

- Designate two children to be “life taggers.” Give each child half of the pool noodle and have them join hands. They will use the pool noodles to tag their classmates. The taggers must remain “attached” throughout the game.
- Everyone else will run around trying not to get tagged.
- If a child is tagged, they become part of the chain by holding hands with the person who tagged them. The tagger will give the noodle piece to the newly tagged child, who becomes a new tagger on the end of the chain.
- Play until the last child is part of the chain.

TRANSITION: Say, “Great job playing our new game: *Life Tag!* Like our ‘life taggers,’ Jesus comes to bring us life. Sometimes we do not recognize His love and goodness, so we run from it. I’m so glad Jesus made me apart of His family, though. Now let’s learn from God’s Word so we can discover how to join Jesus in sharing the good news of who He is with those around us!”

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, “Before Jesus was crucified [killed], He made a BIG statement. He claimed that He was the resurrection [the One who comes back to life] and the life. This was hard for people to believe, but Jesus doesn’t just tell us who He is; He shows us! Let’s talk about what Jesus does to prove He really is the resurrection and the life.” Read John 11:25-26 (ICB).

²⁵Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will have life even if he dies. ²⁶ And he who lives and believes in me will never die.”

Say, “Jesus said He is the Resurrection and the Life! This means that **God sent Jesus to be our Resurrection and Life.**”

Ask, “Why do you think Jesus needed to tell us that He is the resurrection and life? [Wait for responses.] Jesus said His big ‘I Am’ statement— “I am the resurrection and the life”—before He was crucified. Jesus knew He was going to die, but He also knew that was not His end. He would rise from the dead! After Jesus died, His body was laid in a tomb [or grave] for three whole days, but then He came back to life [resurrected]! Death has no power over Jesus, and death has no power over us either [Romans 6:9]! Because **God sent Jesus to be our resurrection and life**, we can have life forever in Him.”



IF YOUR STUDENTS ARE OLDER, EXPAND ON TODAY'S STORY BY EXPLAINING HOW WE (AS CHRISTIANS) WILL BE RESURRECTED ON THE LAST DAY BY JESUS TO HAVE LIFE FOREVER (EPHESIANS 2:6-7).

TRANSITION: Say, “I am so thankful that **God sent Jesus to be our Resurrection and Life.**”

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, “Let’s see what you remember about today’s story.”

1. What did God send Jesus to be?

Response: **God sent Jesus to be our Resurrection and Life.**

2. How does Jesus show us that He is the Resurrection and the Life?

Response: He shows us that He is the resurrection and the life by rising from the dead! Jesus is alive right now!

3. What two things did Jesus conquer with His death and resurrection?

Response: Jesus conquered death (and offers us eternal life), and He conquered sin. From the moment sin entered the world (through Adam and Eve), it separated every person from our perfectly holy God. However, when Jesus died on the Cross, He took on our sin and paid for all of it. Only Jesus could do this because only He is God. When He rose from the dead, Christ destroyed the hold of sin. Now, when we believe in Him and accept Him as our Savior, He conquers our sin too!

4. The ‘I Am’ statements were shocking and made people furious. Why did Jesus say these words knowing He would make them angry?

Response: Jesus had to tell the truth that He is God. He came to set people free from sin and give them life. However, that freedom is only possible if people believe He is God.

5. Have you ever thanked Jesus for dying for your sins so you could have life?

Response: Answers will vary. (Practice thanking Jesus with your class.)

6. What do we learn about Jesus in this teaching?

Response: Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life, **God sent Jesus to be our Resurrection and Life**, Jesus gave up His life so we could live forever, Jesus wants us to believe in Him, Jesus speaks the truth, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, “Remember, **God sent Jesus to be our Resurrection and Life.**”

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Cross Activity Page (1 per child) | Ribbon (1 -12” strand per child) | Hole Punch (1 per class) | Scissors | Markers or Crayons |



BEFORE CLASS, MAKE ENOUGH COPIES OF THE CROSS ACTIVITY PAGE ON CARDSTOCK FOR EACH CHILD, AND CUT ENOUGH 12" PIECES OF RIBBON FOR EACH CHILD.

Say, "With today's activity, we will be reminding ourselves that Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Jesus didn't just say that He was the resurrection and the life; He became it! Jesus died and rose from the grave to pay the price for our sins and give us life forever. To make sure we do not forget this important 'I Am' statement, we will make door hangers that each of you can hang on your bedroom doors at home!"

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Give each child a *Cross Activity Page*, a piece of ribbon, a pair of scissors, and markers or crayons.
- First, instruct the children to color their *Cross Activity page*. Once it is colored, have them cut out their crosses.
- Then, punch a hole in the top of each cross. Finally, have each child string their ribbon through the hole and tie the ends together to create a loop that will fit around a door handle.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job! Remember, **God sent Jesus to be our Resurrection and Life**, and we get to experience His resurrection and eternal life forever!"

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "We have the most exciting verse this month because we get to talk about God's most amazing love! The great 'I AM' came to die for us so that we could have life! This is the same verse we were working on last week! Who remembers the words?"

"Then God [point to heaven] said to Moses [cup hands around your mouth], 'I AM WHO I AM [stand straight with your arms by your sides]. When you go to the people of Israel [point faraway], tell them, [cup hands around your mouth], 'I AM sent me [point to heaven] to you [point to the class].'"
Exodus 3:14 (ICB) (hold out hands like a book)

CHALLENGE: This is the fifth week your class will be memorizing this verse. Emphasize the importance of God sending His Son – the great I AM. Go through all of the 'I AM' statements you have covered so far, and ask the children which statement means the most to them today. (Quick reference: We have covered Jesus as the Good Shepherd; the Door; the Bread of Life; the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and the Resurrection and the Life.)

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

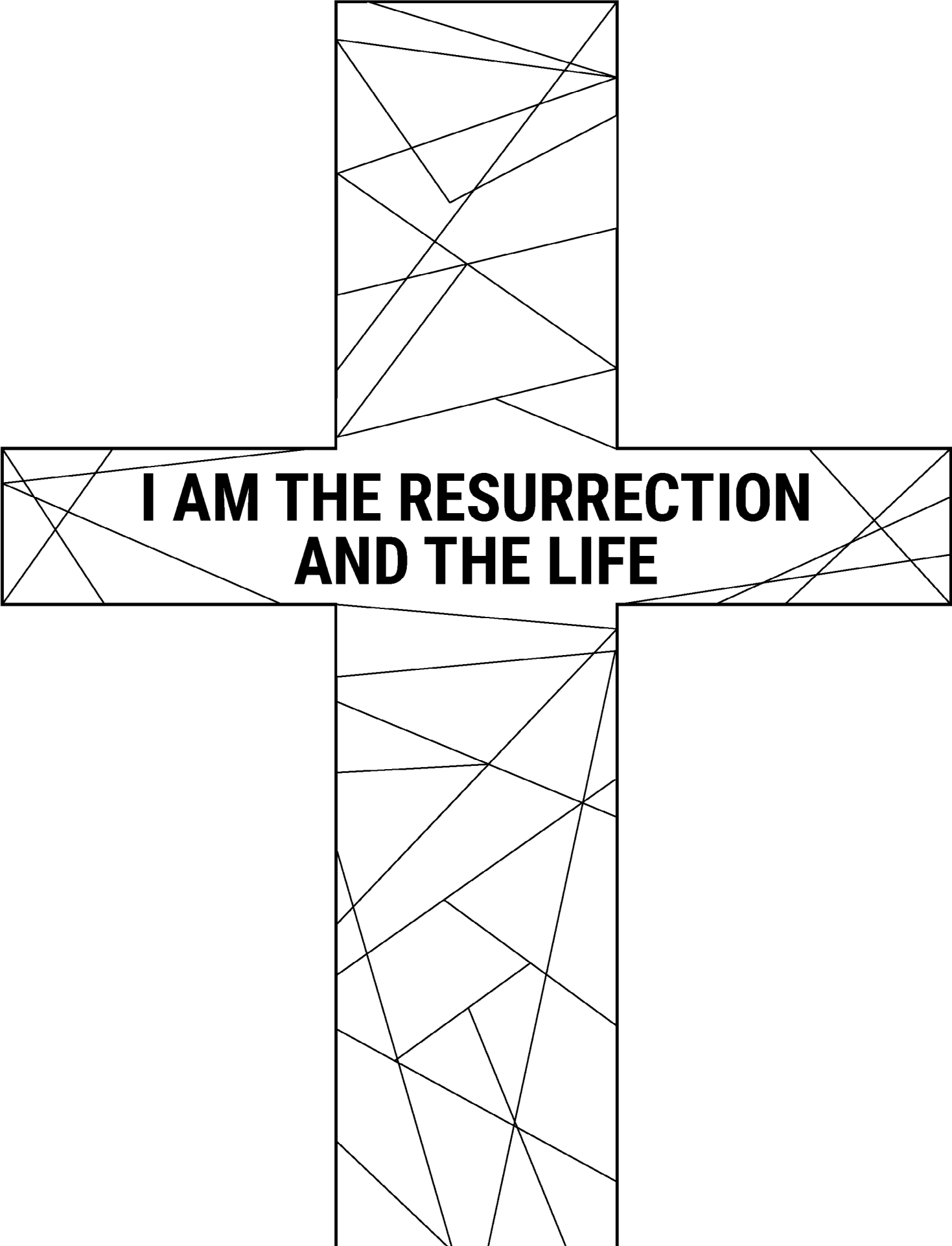
Say, "**God sent Jesus to be our Resurrection and Life.** Jesus loves us so much. In fact, He loved us so much that He willingly died on the cross and rose again to conquer sin and give us life forever! Isn't that amazing! God does love us! Let's take some time to tell our Heavenly Father how much we love Him because **God sent Jesus to be our Resurrection and Life.**"

SAMPLE PRAYER: "God, thank You for sending, Jesus, to bring us life! The more we learn about Your plans for us, the more we love You. Now, help us go out and share that love with others."

RELEASE —

If you have extra time, replay *Life Tag* or use the time for more in-depth discussion. For example, have everyone sit in a circle and consider this question: “How did this lesson change your view of who Jesus is?” Be sure to give out a new monthly parent guide today (even though this is technically the same unit).





**I AM THE RESURRECTION
AND THE LIFE**

I AM: PART 2

UNIT 4 - JESUS DECLARES HE IS GOD

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I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

BIBLE PASSAGE

John 12:35-36 and 8:12 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world.

FOCUS VERSE

“Then God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM. When you go to the people of Israel, tell them, “I AM sent me to you.”” Exodus 3:14 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Black or Dark Brown Construction Paper | *Light Bulb* Activity Page | *Dark to Light* Activity Page | Markers or Crayons |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What would life be like if we didn't have electricity to give us light?
- Do you prefer it when the days are long (in the summer) or when they are short (in the winter)? Why?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Why do we worship? We worship because God deserves it. That is it. We can worship Him for the gifts He gives or the things He does for us, and that's good. But most importantly, we worship Him because He is God. Before you sing, take a few moments and speak words of praise to God. Praise Him for who He is: “Lord, there is no god like you. There are no works like yours. Lord, all the nations you have made will come and worship you. They will honor you. You are great, and you do miracles. Only you are God” (Psalm 86:8-10).

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Before beginning the lesson, pray with your kids!



ENCOURAGE THE CHILDREN TO TAKE TURNS PRAYING. KIDS NEED PRACTICE PRAYING OUT LOUD. THEY WILL BENEFIT FROM KNOWING YOU TRUST THEM TO DO SO. OFFER THE FOLLOWING PRAYER IF IT PROVIDES THE CHILDREN WITH GREATER CONFIDENCE.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “God, we worship and honor You with our time! Help us listen well and learn from the best teacher in the world—YOU! Bless this time, in Jesus’ name, Amen.”

REVIEW – 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “We have been learning about some of Jesus’ BIGGEST and most important statements! Who remembers what we call those statements? [Wait for responses.] Right! They are Jesus’ ‘I Am’ statements, and He used them to teach that He is God! Today, we will continue with our *I Am* series! Are you ready to hear Jesus tell us another ‘I Am’ statement? [Wait for responses.] Me too! Let’s put up the puzzle piece.” Have child hang this weeks puzzle piece on the wall.

TRANSITION: Say, “Before we read our story, let’s play a game!”

ENGAGE – 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Black or Dark Brown Construction Paper (40 pieces per class) | *Light Bulb* Activity Page (about 6 per class) |



BEFORE CLASS, LAY THE CONSTRUCTION PAPER PIECES ON THE FLOOR IN A 5 BY 8 SQUARE, AND CUT OUT THE LIGHT BULBS. NEXT, SLIDE THE LIGHT BULBS UNDER THE PIECES OF CONSTRUCTION PAPER YOU CHOOSE FOR THE PATH. CREATE YOUR OWN PATH OR USE OUR DESIGN RECOMMENDATION BELOW. YOU WILL NEED AT LEAST 23 LIGHT BULBS.

Say, “The game we will be playing is called *Path of Light!* You will need to work as a class to discover the ‘path of light!’ Do you think you can find it?”

GAME GOAL: To take turns choosing different squares to reveal the path of light.

HOW TO PLAY:

- Begin with the construction paper pieces on the floor in a five by eight rectangle and the light bulbs under some construction paper pieces to make a “path of light.”
- Recommended “path of light:”

X	X	X		X	X	X	
		X		X		X	X
	X	X		X	X		
	X				X	X	
	X	X	X	X	X	X	

- Gather everyone around the game board and have the kids take turns guessing which pieces of construction paper are hiding the light bulbs. (The class will be working together to reveal the path as they correctly guess the location of the light bulbs.)
- Each time a correct guess is made, lift up the paper and place the light bulb on top of that piece of paper. If there is an incorrect guess, the papers do not get moved.
- The process continues until the entire “path of light” is revealed.

MODIFICATION: Create your own “path of light.”

TRANSITION: Say, “Was it hard to find the ‘path of light’? Why or why not? Today, we will be reading about who the most special Light is!”

LEARN – 15 MINUTES

Say, “In today’s Bible passage, Jesus teaches that He is our most special light! In fact, God sent Jesus to be the light of the world! While we are reading, make sure you remember that every time Jesus uses the word ‘light,’ He is talking about Himself. Let’s read it together!” Read John 12:35-36 (ICB).

³⁵ Then Jesus said, “The light will be with you for a little longer. So walk while you have the light. Then the darkness will not catch you. He who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. ³⁶ So believe in the light while you still have it. Then you will become sons of light.”

Read John 8:12 (ICB).

¹² Later, Jesus talked to the people again. He said, “I am the light of the world. The person who follows me will never live in darkness. He will have the light that gives life.”

Say, “**God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world!**”

Ask, “How is Jesus the Light of the world? [Wait for responses.] Jesus is the Light we all need. As ‘the Light,’ He shows us the truth [because He is the Truth]. He guides our lives [because He is the Way]. He shows us how to be rescued from death [because He is the Resurrection and the Life]. Aren’t you grateful **God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world?** I am!”

“Our world is dark because many people don’t know Jesus is the light. Bad things happen—people die, people do bad things and are hateful. But Jesus brings light into all the dark places! He has been doing that ever since He arrived. Jesus helps us do good things and be kind; He teaches us how to love as God loves. Jesus is the light of the world! And, these are only some of the reasons why **God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world!**”



IF YOUR CLASS CAN GO DEEPER, DISCUSS HOW THEY (AND YOU) CAN SHARE THE LIGHT OF CHRIST WITH PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN DARKNESS. READ MATTHEW 5:14-16 AND HAVE A DIALOGUE ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A “CITY ON A HILL.”

TRANSITION: Say, “I am so thankful that **God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world for us!**”

DISCUSS – 10 MINUTES

Say, “Let’s see what you can remember about today’s story.”

1. What did God send Jesus to be?

Response: **God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world.**

2. How does Jesus bring Light to the world?

Response: Jesus brings light to a dark world by offering salvation from spiritual death and giving life eternal instead of physical death. He also lights our way by showing us how to love

Him and others. Jesus brightens up the darkness with His light!

3. What do you think Jesus meant when He told His disciples they could become “sons of Light”?

Response: When we follow Jesus, we become God’s children too! The more we grow in knowing and loving Jesus, the more of His light we have, and that light will give others hope and can lead them to Jesus, so they become “sons [children] of light” too!

4. Does Jesus have any darkness in Him?

Response: Jesus has no darkness in Him. The Bible says that “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” (1 John 1:5)

5. Have you ever thought of Jesus as a light? Why or why not?

Response: Answers will vary.

6. What do we learn about Jesus in this teaching?

Response: Jesus is the Light of the world, **God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world.** Jesus does not have any darkness in Him, Jesus came into the world to bring light, Jesus helps you walk in the light, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, “Remember, **God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world** for us!”

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Dark to Light* Activity Page (1 per child) | Markers or Crayons |

Say, “The craft we will be working on will remind us that Jesus is the light of the world! He brings light to all the darkness!”

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Give every person a *Dark to Light* Activity Page and markers or crayons.
- Instruct the children to color the left half of the earth with dark colors symbolizing the world in darkness. Then, tell the kids to color the right half with bright colors to represent the light Jesus brings!

TRANSITION: Say, “Great job! Remember, **God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world**, and we get to see His light. Then, He makes us lights too! How does it make you feel to know that you can be the light of Jesus to others?”

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, “It is memory verse time! Who likes to memorize verses? I think we can have a lot of fun remembering Scripture! Let’s practice the memory verse that reminds us that God is I AM!”

“**Then God** [point to heaven] **said to Moses** [cup hands around your mouth], **‘I AM WHO I AM** [stand straight with your arms by your sides]. **When you go to the people of Israel** [point faraway], **tell them,** [cup hands around your mouth], **‘I AM sent me** [point to heaven] **to you** [point to the class].”
Exodus 3:14 (ICB) (hold out hands like a book)

CHALLENGE: Using card stock, write each word of the verse in large letters. Then, cut the words out so that each word is on a different piece of paper. When you say “go,” have the children move the words into the correct order. If you have a large class, make several copies of the verse and divide the kids into groups of 3-4 to accomplish the task.

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, “**God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world.** He shines brighter than anything or anyone else! You will never be in darkness when you have Jesus because **God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world.** Let’s pray!”

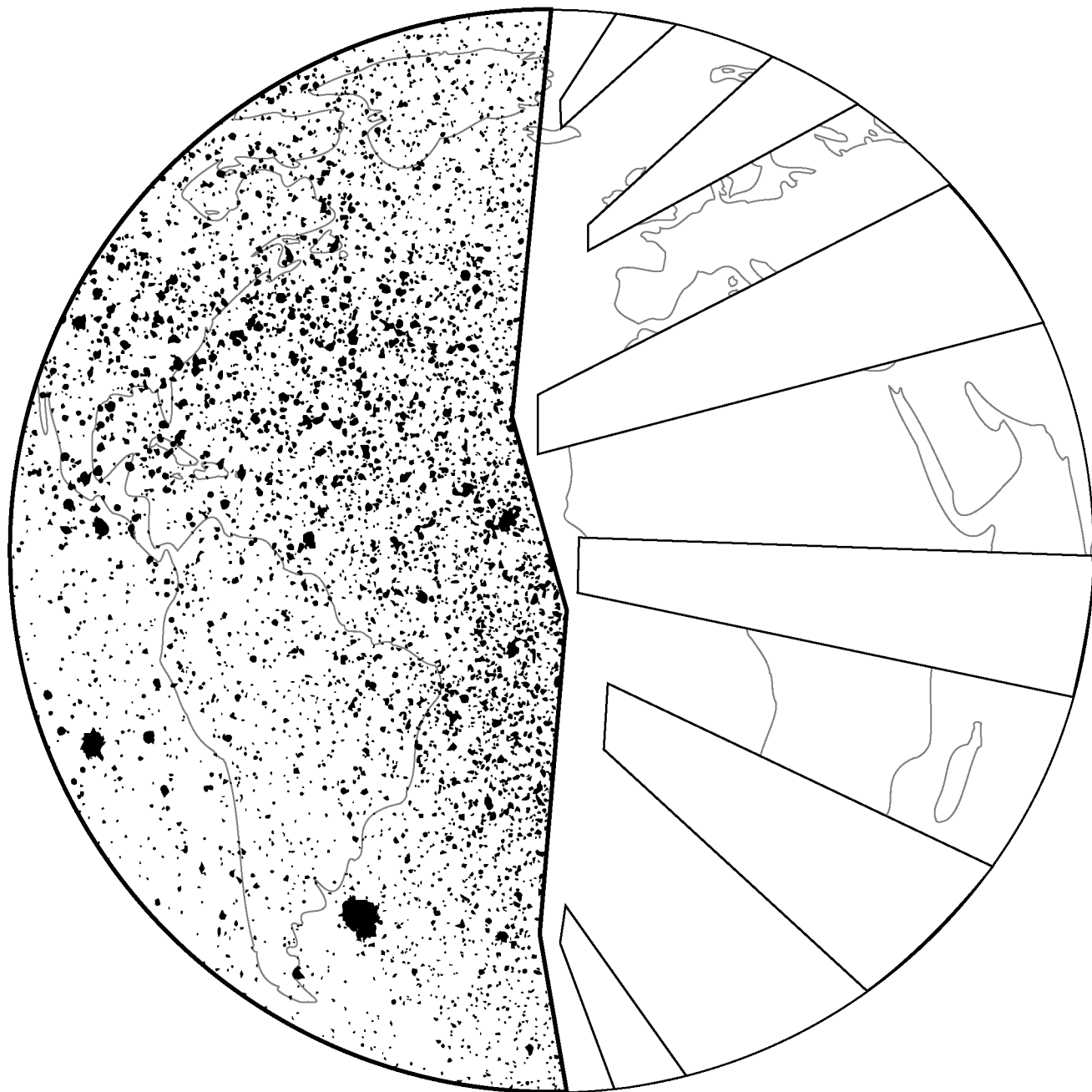
SAMPLE PRAYER: *“God, thank You for sending Light into the world! Jesus is the most beautiful Light we could have. Thank You for sending us exactly what we need. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

RELEASE —

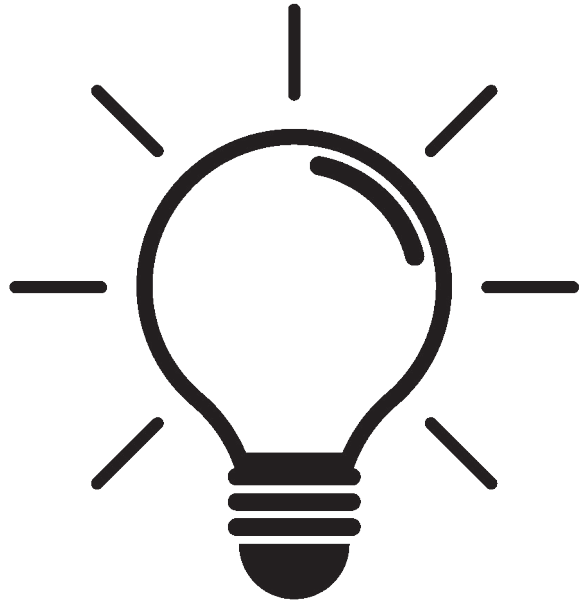
Take advantage of every moment you have with the children! Replay *Path of Light* or continue working on the memory verse. If you have a class full of curious children, periodically give them a time when they can ask you anything about God or the Bible. And remember, if you don’t know the answer to their questions, it is OK to say, “I don’t know,” and then find the answer together.



I AM THE LIGHT



OF THE WORLD



I AM THE VINE

BIBLE PASSAGE

John 15:5-11 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God sent Jesus to be our Vine.

FOCUS VERSE

“Then God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM. When you go to the people of Israel, tell them, “I AM sent me to you.”” Exodus 3:14 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Plant or *The Vine* Activity Page (Optional) | Large Popsicles Sticks | Green Pipe Cleaners | *Leaf Cutouts* Activity Page | Liquid Glue | Crayons or Markers |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Have you ever planted a seed? If so, did it grow? Tell me about it.
- What is your favorite vegetable? What is your least favorite vegetable?



EVEN IF YOU DON'T USE OUR SUGGESTED QUESTIONS, BE INTENTIONAL WITH THIS TIME. FOCUS ON GETTING TO KNOW THE KIDS GOD IS ENTRUSTING TO YOU.

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Psalm 150 (ICB) gives a beautiful outline of many ways we can worship God: “Praise the Lord! Praise God in his Temple. Praise him in his mighty heaven. Praise him for his strength. Praise him for his greatness. Praise him with trumpet blasts. Praise him with harps and lyres. Praise him with tambourines and dancing. Praise him with stringed instruments and flutes. Praise him with loud cymbals. Praise him with crashing cymbals. Let everything that breathes praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!” Choose one of the worship methods listed in Psalm 150 and practice it together. If your class does not have instruments, discuss ways to worship with our bodies (dancing, kneeling, raising our hands, clapping our hands, etc.).

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Pray to open your lesson.

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“God, we praise You for how wonderful You are! Only You deserve our worship, our prayers, and our devotion. Give us hearts of wonder and amazement as we learn about You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

REVIEW – 5 MINUTES**MATERIALS:** | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “We only have two more lessons about Jesus’ *I AM* sayings! Who can tell me about some of the ‘I Am’ sayings we have learned so far? [Wait for responses.] Right! We learned how Jesus is the Good Shepherd, the Door, the Bread of Life, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the Resurrection and the Life, and the Light of the world! Whew! We have learned a lot. Which one of those sayings do you like the best? I am grateful God sent Jesus to be everything we need! Who would like to put up this week’s puzzle piece?” Allow a child to hang the puzzle piece on the wall.

TRANSITION: Say, “Let’s get ready to hear today’s big ‘I Am’ statement by playing a game!”

ENGAGE – 15 MINUTES

DON’T FORCE ANYONE TO PLAY A GAME. IF YOU HAVE A CHILD WHO ISN’T READY TO JOIN, EXTEND THE INVITATION AND THEN PLAY NEAR THAT CHILD SO THEY CAN SEE HOW MUCH FUN THE CLASS IS HAVING. YOU CAN OCCASIONALLY CHECK IN WITH THE CHILD BY SAYING, “IS EVERYTHING OK?” OR “LET ME KNOW IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND.”

Say, “The game we will be playing today is called *Human Knot*! When something is in a knot, what do you do to fix it? [Wait for responses.] Right! You untangle it. The trick with this game, though, is that you have to stay connected the entire time! Let me explain.”

GAME GOAL: To untangle a human knot without releasing hands.

HOW TO PLAY:

- Have your class stand in a circle facing one another. (If you have less than five children, the teacher or volunteers will need to join in to make a large enough group.)
- When everyone is in place, instruct each individual to reach their left hand across the circle and take someone’s hand. Then, have each person reach across the circle with their right hand and take someone else’s hand. (Avoid having people hold hands with the person next to them.)
- Once everyone’s hands are connected, and a human knot is formed, begin to untangle without disconnecting hands.
- The children can rotate, move, climb over, or slide under one another to untangle their arms as long as no one releases hands! If the knot “breaks,” the game starts over with a new human knot!
- Play as time allows.

MODIFICATION: If this game proves too challenging, give the kids specific suggestions to help them untangle the human knot.

TRANSITION: Say, “Great job playing *Human Knot*! Were you able to stay connected the whole time and untangle yourselves? [Wait for responses.] Well, Jesus’ ‘I Am’ statement is all about staying connected too, but He wants us to stay connected to Him. Let’s read it.”

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Plant or *The Vine* Activity Page (1 per class) |

Say, “Today, we will learn about Jesus’ seventh ‘I Am’ saying. It is the last ‘I Am’ statement Jesus made before He died, rose again, and ascended to heaven, so let’s pay close attention.” Read John 15:5-11 (ICB).

⁵ “I am the vine, and you are the branches. If a person remains in me and I remain in him, then he produces much fruit. But without me he can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not remain in me, then he is like a branch that is thrown away. That branch dies. People pick up dead branches, throw them into the fire, and burn them. ⁷ Remain in me and follow my teachings. If you do this, then you can ask for anything you want, and it will be given to you. ⁸ You should produce much fruit and show that you are my followers. This brings glory to my Father. ⁹ I loved you as the Father loved me. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ I have obeyed my Father’s commands, and I remain in his love. In the same way, if you obey my commands, you will remain in my love. ¹¹ I have told you these things so that you can have the same joy I have. I want your joy to be the fullest joy.



WITH LONG SCRIPTURE REFERENCES, BE SURE TO STOP OCCASIONALLY AND MAKE SURE THE KIDS ARE FOLLOWING ALONG. TAKE TIME TO FURTHER EXPLAIN THE VERSES YOU’VE JUST READ.

Say, “Jesus said He is the Vine! Isn’t it interesting that **God sent Jesus to be our Vine?** But Jesus also said something about us! He said, ‘I am the vine, and YOU are the branches.’”



IF YOU HAVE A PLANT AVAILABLE, POINT OUT HOW THE LEAVES AND BRANCHES ARE CONNECTED TO THE MAIN PART OF THE PLANT (OR THE VINE). USE THE PLANT IN THE STORY EXPLANATION BELOW. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A PLANT AVAILABLE, USE THE VINE ACTIVITY PAGE TO EXPLAIN TODAY’S “I AM” SAYING.

Ask, “Why do we need to stay connected to Jesus, the Vine? [Wait for responses.] Let’s think about plants! If you are growing a plant or vine in your backyard, but you pluck one of the branches off, what will happen to that branch? [Wait for responses.] Right! It will die because it isn’t connected to the vine [or stem]. A branch cannot live or grow, create flowers or fruit without being connected to the rest of the plant, can it? It is the same way with us! Jesus is the Vine. He gives us life, enables us to grow, and produce fruit [or do good things for Him]. If we stay connected to Jesus, He says we will produce ‘fruit’ and always have life! Isn’t that great news? Jesus asks us to say ‘Yes’ to being His disciple, which means we will stay close to Him, learn more about Him, talk to Him, get to know Him, and obey Him. When we do that, He gives us a purpose—a reason for living! We get to make a difference in His Kingdom! **God sent Jesus to be our Vine!**”



GO DEEPER BY DISCUSSING HOW JESUS CONNECTS OBEDIENCE TO LOVE. AS WE GROW IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST, WE WILL DESIRE MORE AND MORE TO OBEY HIM BECAUSE WE LOVE HIM. THIS PASSAGE IS NOT SAYING WE HAVE TO EARN GOD’S LOVE. INSTEAD IT TEACHES THAT GENUINE OBEDIENCE COMES FROM A HEART THAT IS BEING TRANSFORMED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

TRANSITION: Say, “Stay connected to the Vine, and over time, you will increasingly act, sound, and become more like Jesus! This is why God sent Jesus to be our Vine!”

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, “Let’s see what you can remember about today’s ‘I Am’ statement: ‘I am the Vine.’”

1. What did God send Jesus to be?

Response: **God sent Jesus to be our vine.**

2. What happens if we do not stay connected to Jesus, the Vine?

Response: We will not grow in our relationship with Jesus. We will not become more like Him either.

3. What are the two ways Jesus said He stays connected to His Father? (See v. 10.)

Response: Jesus said He obeys His Father, and He remains in His love. (Note the connection between obedience and love. Read John 14:15.)

4. Why do you think Jesus calls us the branches?

Response: Answers will vary. However, continue to point the kids back to the importance of staying connected to Jesus for salvation, eternal life, growth in Christ, etc.

5. What are some ways we can stay connected to Jesus, the Vine?

Response: We can stay connected to Jesus by reading our Bible, loving Him, praying, obeying Him, etc.

6. What do we learn about Jesus in this teaching?

Response: Jesus is the true Vine, **God sent Jesus to be our Vine**, Jesus wants us to remain in Him and His love, Jesus loves us as the Father loves us, Jesus was sent to model for us how to be connected, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, “Remember, **God sent Jesus to be our Vine**. Let’s stay connected to Him!”

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Large Popsicle Sticks (1 per child) | Green Pipe Cleaners (3 per child) | | *Leaf Cutouts* Activity Page (3 leaves per child) | Liquid Glue | Crayons or Markers |

Say, “One great way to remember what Jesus taught is to do an activity or a craft about what we are learning. Let’s see if we can make something that will help us remember our story so we can share it with someone else!”

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Give every person 3 pipe cleaners and one large popsicle stick.
- Using the popsicle stick as the vine, instruct everyone to write “I am the Vine” on one or both sides of the popsicle stick with a marker.
- Help the kids bend the green pipe cleaners around the popsicle stick to make the craft look like branches connected to a vine.
- After the kids have finished the vine and branches, give each child a *Leaf Cutouts* Activity Page. Have them color the leaves and then cut them out.
- Help the children glue the leaves onto the branches.

- After the kids have attached the leaves to the branches, ask them to use their craft to explain to a partner today's 'I Am' lesson. (Each child can slide the "branches" off and on their vine to show what it is like to be connected and disconnected to the Vine.)

TRANSITION: Say, "I love your projects! Remember, **God sent Jesus to be our Vine!** Aren't you grateful Jesus is the Vine?"

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "Who can tell me what time it is? [Wait for responses.] Great! It is time to say our memory verse! We have focused on this verse for many weeks now, which means you probably know it! Can I hear you say it together, loud and proud?"

"Then God [point to heaven] said to Moses [cup hands around your mouth], 'I AM WHO I AM [stand straight with your arms by your sides]! When you go to the people of Israel [point faraway], tell them, [cup hands around your mouth], 'I AM sent me [point to heaven] to you [point to the class].'"
Exodus 3:14 (ICB) (hold out hands like a book)

CHALLENGE: If new children are present this week, don't emphasize the fact that most of the class knows the verse. Instead, bring everyone together by playing one of the memorization games from the previous weeks.

TRANSITION: Say, "Awesome job everyone with our memory verse! You guys really know your stuff. And what a great verse to know! He is the great 'I AM.'"

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

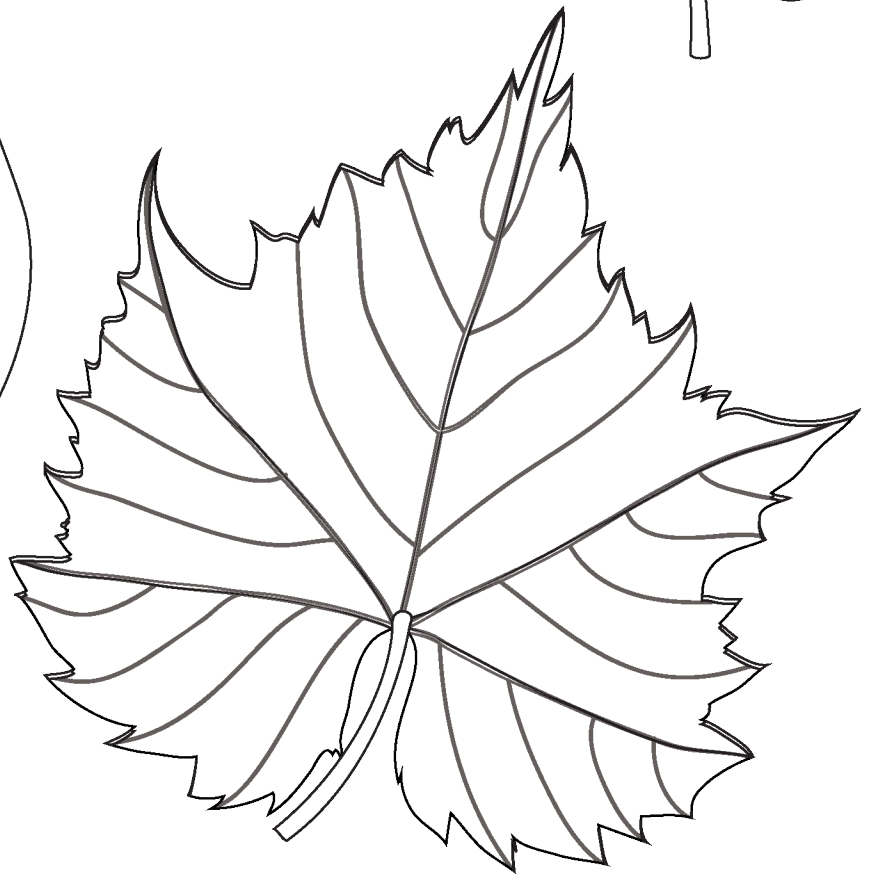
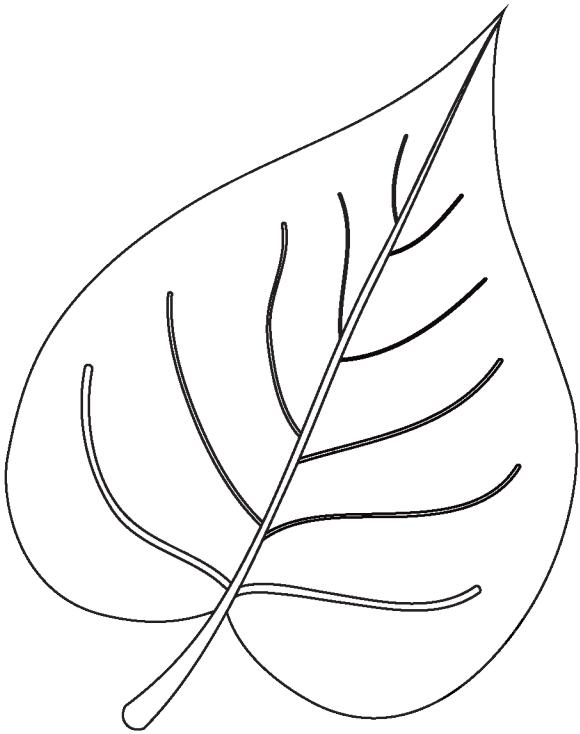
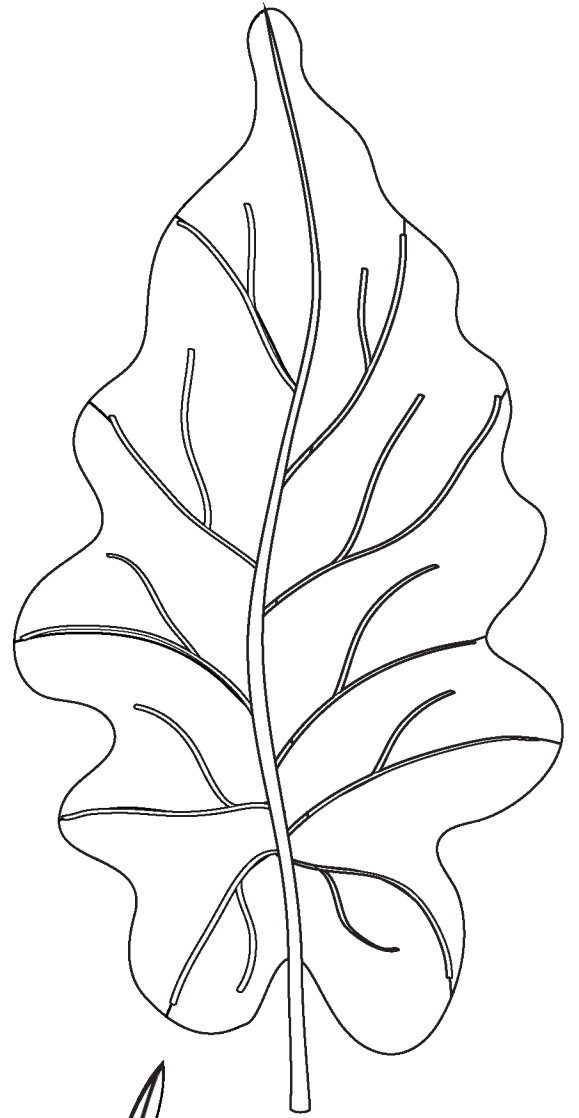
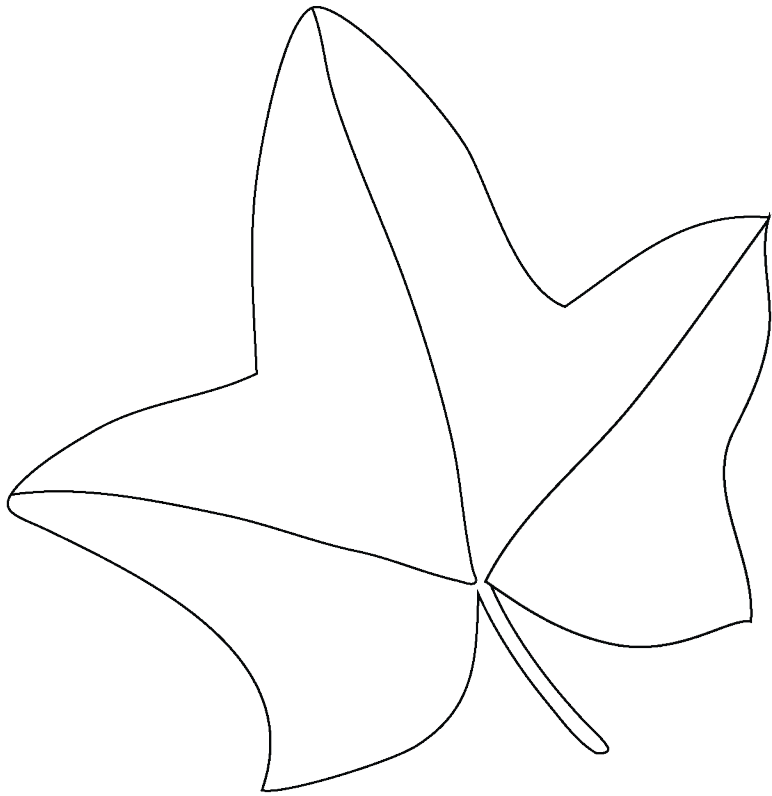
Say, "**God sent Jesus to be our Vine.** He came so we can learn what it means to be connected to Him. This week, do something new that will help you stay close to Jesus! For example, read your Bible; the book of John is a great place to start. You could also sing to Him during the week; ask your parents to play worship music while you do your chores or ride in the car. Finally, talk with Him; He's available all the time. Let's pray that the Holy Spirit will help us all stay connected to the true Vine, Jesus!"

SAMPLE PRAYER: "God, we are so grateful You desire to be connected with each of us. Help us stay close to You! Encourage us to pray, read our Bible, and remind us that we can do nothing apart from You. Thank You for Your grace and never-ending love. In Jesus' name, Amen."

RELEASE —

Do not forget to tell the children how much God loves them and wants a relationship with them. If they remember nothing more than that one truth, you have given them a great gift. As you wait on parents to arrive, ask the kids what God has taught them during this series. You may be surprised by the profound ways the Lord is leading them!







I AM THE ALPHA AND OMEGA

BIBLE PASSAGE

Revelation 1:8, 22:13 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God sent Jesus to be the Alpha and Omega.

FOCUS VERSE

“Then God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM. When you go to the people of Israel, tell them, “I AM sent me to you.”” Exodus 3:14 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | *Greek Alphabet Activity Page* | *Alpha and Omega Activity Page* |
Markers or Crayons |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What is something you want to learn about the Bible?
- Can you think of a time when you finished first in something? Have you ever finished last? Tell me about those experiences.

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Sing. Shout. Dance. Praise. Exalt. Shout. Twirl. Kneel. Bow. Sit. Jump. God is worthy of all of it! Let's worship Him with every part of ourselves. He is worthy of it all.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Do not forget to pray FIRST and LAST! Let's show our kids that we need God from the beginning to the end. We need God for everything!

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“We love You, Jesus! Thank You for loving us more than we could ever love You. Forgive us for the times we forget or do not want Your love. Now, please bless our time. We need You. In Jesus' name! Amen.”*

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “This is the last lesson in our *I Am* series! I am sad it is almost over, but I am thrilled that we will get a chance to learn from other parts of God's Word! Who can remember what we have

learned over the last seven weeks? [Use the puzzle pieces for review.] Great! We learned about the 'I Am' statements Jesus made while He lived on earth, and we can find those in the Gospels. Today, however, we get to talk about an 'I Am' statement in the very last book of the Bible—Revelation—but first, who would like to put up the last puzzle piece?" Have a child hang the puzzle piece.

TRANSITION: Say, "Get your minds, bodies, and hearts ready to play a game!"

ENGAGE — 15 MINUTES

Say, "Let's play a game called *Active Opposites!* In this game, every command means the opposite. First, I will explain how to play, and then we will try it!"

GAME GOAL: To respond to a command with an opposite action.

HOW TO PLAY:

- Explain that when you give a command, the kids should respond with an opposite movement. For example, when you say "Walk forward," they must walk backward. When you say "Hop," they should crawl. When you say "BIG," they must get as little as possible.
- If you want to play elimination style, have the children sit out until the end of a round if they fail to respond with an opposite action.
- Example commands: sit, stand, walk forward, walk backward, hop, crawl, get big, get little, walk slow, walk fast, take a giant step, take a tiny step, wiggle, stand still, spin in a circle, squat, etc.
- If you have extra time, create a list of more active commands and then play again.

TRANSITION: Say, "Wow! Those were a lot of opposites! You did a great job coming up with all of those different actions. Are you wondering what our game, that's all about opposites, has to do with our Bible lesson? Let's find out!"

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Greek Alphabet Activity Page* (1 per class) |

Say, "This week we learn Jesus' final 'I Am' statement! After Jesus returned to heaven, He came to one of His followers, John, in a vision [or a type of dream while awake] and revealed something special about Himself. Are you ready to hear what Jesus told John?" Read Revelation 1:8 (ICB).

⁸ The Lord God says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega. I am the One who is and was and is coming. I am the All-Powerful."

Now, read Revelation 22:13 (ICB).

¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

Say, "God sent Jesus to be the Alpha and Omega. Jesus told his follower, John, that He is like the first letter [Alpha] and the last letter [Omega] in the Greek alphabet. What? That seems a little strange."



USE THE GREEK ALPHABET PAGE TO SHOW WHAT JESUS WAS REFERRING TO WHEN HE SAID, "I AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA (THE FIRST AND LAST LETTER)."

Ask, "Why do you think Jesus called Himself the Alpha and Omega? [Wait for responses.] It may seem odd that Jesus compared Himself to the first and last letter in the Greek alphabet, but He wasn't telling John that He was like the alphabet. No! Instead, he told John that He was present in the beginning and will always be present – to the end of our world and for all eternity. Jesus is the first and the last because **He is God!** And God is eternal!

"The Bible tells us that Jesus was there in the VERY beginning of creation with God, the Father [Colossians 1:17, 1 Corinthians 8:6]. He has always existed, does exist, and will always exist [John 1:1, 1 Thessalonians 4:17-18, Matthew 28:20]! Jesus was never created. He was with the Father and the Holy Spirit before the world began because He is God. The fact that God, the Father, sent Jesus to Earth does not mean that Jesus is any less God. He is equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. They are three in one. God is the only one who could ever be the Alpha and Omega, the First and Last, the Beginning and End."

TRANSITION: Say, "I am glad **God sent Jesus to be the Alpha and Omega**. I am also glad to know that if we believe in Him, we will live forever with Him" (John 11:25-26).

DISCUSS – 10 MINUTES

Say, "Let's talk about the 'I Am' statement: 'I am the Alpha and the Omega.'"

1. What did God send Jesus to be?

Response: **God sent Jesus to be the Alpha and Omega.**

2. When Jesus said, "I am the Alpha and the Omega," was He saying that He is an alphabet? If not, what was He saying?

Response: Jesus is not an alphabet. He is the first and the last. He was present at Creation and will exist forever.

3. Was there anything in the universe before God?

Response: No, God has always existed. When Jesus said He is the "Alpha," He did not mean He had a beginning. Jesus meant He was present before time existed; in fact, He created time. There has never been a moment when God and Jesus did not exist.

4. How do you feel about Jesus being the Alpha and Omega?

Response: Answers will vary.

5. Jesus adds in the phrase, "I am the All-Powerful," in the middle of the 'I Am' statements. What does it mean to you that Jesus is "all-powerful"?

Response: Answers will vary.

6. What do we learn about Jesus in this teaching?

Response: Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, **God sent Jesus to be the Alpha and Omega**, Jesus is the First and the Last, Jesus is God, Jesus is one with the Holy Spirit and the Father, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, “Remember, **God sent Jesus to be the Alpha and Omega**—our First and Last, Beginning and End.”

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Alpha and Omega* Activity Page (1 per child) | Markers or Crayons |

Say, “What a great ‘I Am’ statement! Now, we get to do an activity that will help us remember that Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. **God sent Jesus to be the Alpha and Omega**, so we are making a craft to remind us of that truth! Let’s do it!”

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Give each child an *Alpha and Omega* Activity Page and markers or crayons.
- Instruct the kids to create their own timeline under the “My Timeline” section, starting with when they were born until now. They can add when they started walking/talking, started school, joined a group, went of vacation, got a pet, etc.
- After the majority of your class has completed their timeline ask these questions:
 - What have we been talking about today in our lesson?
(Response: Jesus is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, etc.)
 - How many of you put God (or Jesus) in your timeline?
- Now, instruct the kids to trace the letters “Jesus’ Timeline” and the dotted line underneath. Explain that Jesus’s timeline has no beginning and no end. He is eternal because Jesus is God.



USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE SURE THAT THE KIDS KNOW THAT GOD IS PRESENT EVEN IN THEIR TIMELINES. THE GOD OF THE UNIVERSE, THE GOD THAT CREATED TIME AND SPACE, THE GOD THAT HAS ALWAYS BEEN AND ALWAYS WILL BE, IS THE GOD THAT IS RIGHT HERE WITH US NOW.

TRANSITION: Say, “Look at everyone’s craft! These are fantastic! Make sure you use what you have created to tell someone what you learned today.”



FOR KIDDOS THAT HAVE A LITTLE TROUBLE WRITING, ENCOURAGE THEM TO DRAW LITTLE PICTURES ON THEIR TIMELINE INSTEAD OF USING WORDS.

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, “It is memory verse time! Yay! We have the opportunity to remember God’s Word and store it in our hearts! What a gift! Let’s practice this verse one more time.”

“**Then God** [*point to heaven*] **said to Moses** [*cup hands around your mouth*], **‘I AM WHO I AM** [*stand straight with your arms by your sides*].’ **When you go to the people of Israel** [*point faraway*], **tell them**, [*cup hands around your mouth*], **‘I AM sent me** [*point to heaven*] **to you** [*point to the class*].”
Exodus 3:14 (ICB) (*hold out hands like a book*)



IF YOU PARTICIPATE AND DEMONSTRATE EXCITEMENT ABOUT MEMORIZATION, THE CHILDREN ARE MORE LIKELY TO FOLLOW YOUR LEAD.

CHALLENGE: If your class is wondering why we memorize verses, point them to Psalm 119:11 [NIV] which says, “I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.” Then, share about a verse God has brought back to your mind at a critical time.

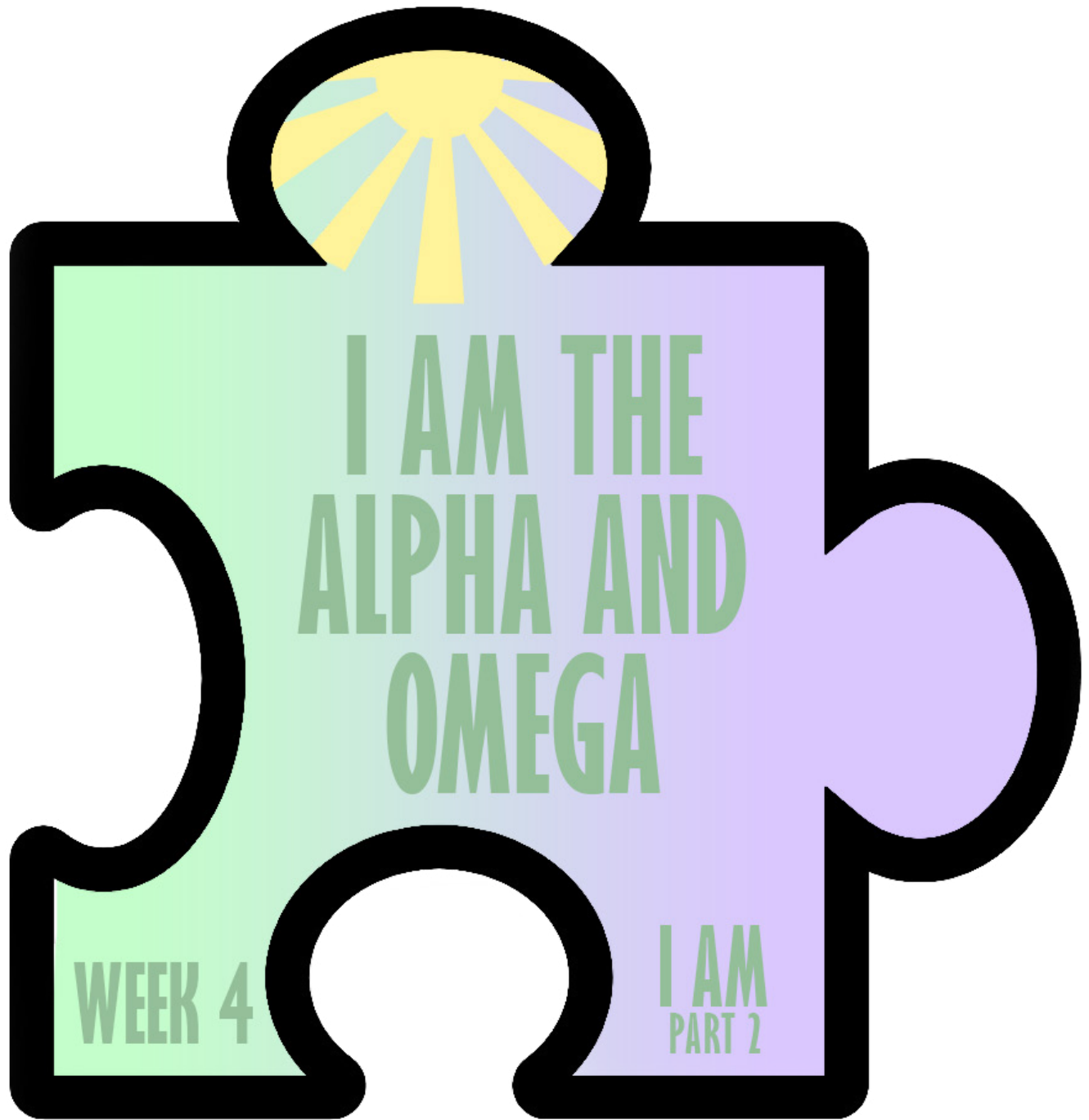
REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, “**God sent Jesus to be the Alpha and Omega.** Jesus was present before time began, and He will be there after it too. Do you think this is an important truth to know? Why? [Wait for responses.] Absolutely! Do you know what else? Jesus has loved you even before you were born. How does that make you feel? What an amazing God we serve!”

SAMPLE PRAYER: “*God, we are so grateful that we get to serve You, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords! It is hard to understand how You have always existed, but we believe Your Word, and we want to say that You are amazing. You are the most wonderful God we can imagine! You are the only God! Thank You for being so incredible! In Jesus’ name, Amen.*”

RELEASE —

If there is remaining group time, replay *Active Opposites*, finish the craft or pray for one another.



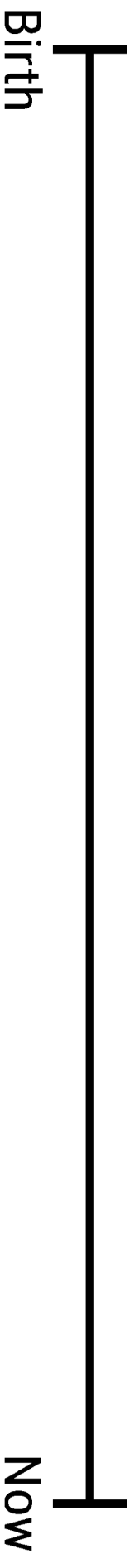
Greek Alphabet and Symbols

Alpha Α α	Beta Β β	Gamma Γ γ	Delta Δ δ	Epsilon Ε ε	Zeta Ζ ζ
Eta Η η	Theta Θ θ	Iota Ι ι	Kappa Κ κ	Lambda Λ λ	Mu Μ μ
Nu Ν ν	Xi Ξ ξ	Omicron Ο ο	Pi Π π	Rho Ρ ρ	Sigma Σ σ, ς
Tau Τ τ	Upsilon Υ υ	Phi Φ φ	Chi Χ χ	Psi Ψ ψ	Omega Ω ω

GOD SENT JESUS TO BE THE

Alpha and Omega

MY TIMELINE



JESUS' TIMELINE

