

I AM

PART 2: JESUS DECLARES HE IS GOD



I AM: PART 2

MONTHLY PREPARATION GUIDE

UNIT 4 - PRE-K

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 (one per class), Toilet Paper Rolls (1 roll for every 3 children), *The Grave Lesson Activity Page* (1 copy), *Jesus is Life Lesson Activity Page* (1 copy), *The Grave Activity Page* (1 per child), *Jesus is Life Activity Page* (1 per child), Glue Sticks, Crayons

WEEK 2

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), *Jesus is the Light of the World Activity Page* (1 per child), 1” Yellow Tissue Paper Squares (Optional—15 per child), Glue Sticks (Optional), Crayons

WEEK 3

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

WEEK 4

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), *Greek Alphabet Activity Page* (1 per class), Pipe Cleaners (1 per child), Green Pony Beads (10 per child), Yellow Pony Beads (1 per child)

I AM: PART 2

UNIT 4 - JESUS DECLARES HE IS GOD

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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 | Toilet Paper | *The Grave Lesson Activity Page* | *Jesus is Life Lesson Activity Page* | *The Grave Activity Page* | *Jesus is Life Activity Page* | Glue Sticks | 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, so incorporate worship songs with corresponding actions. Then, invite a couple of your kids to lead the class in music and movements.



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: “We want to know You, Father, so please help us and teach us. We love You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “This month, we get to keep learning about Jesus’ ‘I Am’ sayings. These ‘I Am’ sayings are so important! Do you remember when we learned that Jesus is the Good Shepherd, the Door, the Bread of Life, and the Way, the Truth, and the Life? Aren’t you grateful Jesus taught us so many things about Himself? He really is the best teacher! I can’t wait to read about our next ‘I Am’ saying.” Post this week’s 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: | Toilet Paper Rolls (1 roll for every 3 children) |

Say, “Today, we are going to play the *Mummy Game*! You will roll one of your friends in toilet paper until they look like a mummy. Let’s see how you do!”

GAME GOAL: To work together to “roll” a teammate in toilet paper (representing grave clothes) until they look like a mummy.

HOW TO PLAY:

- Divide the children into groups of three to four people.
- Choose one volunteer from each group to be wrapped in toilet paper.
- The remaining teammates will roll the volunteer in toilet paper so that they look like a mummy.
- Once everyone has finished, determine as a group which team’s mummy is “best.”
- Have the children remove the toilet paper (grave clothes).

TRANSITION: Say, “Great job! Did you know that in Bible days when someone died, they wrapped their body in cloths? Well, today’s ‘I Am’ saying is about Jesus coming back to life! Did we leave our friends wrapped up in toilet paper? No! We unwrapped them! When Jesus came back to life, He came out of His grave clothes too! This game can remind us that Jesus died but came back to life! Let’s listen to our story.”

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *The Grave Lesson Activity Page* (1 copy) | *Jesus is Life Lesson Activity Page* (1 copy) |



USE THE GRAVE LESSON ACTIVITY PAGE AND THE JESUS IS LIFE LESSON ACTIVITY PAGE TO DEMONSTRATE THE LESSON AS YOU TEACH. USE THIS VISUAL TO SHOW THAT JESUS IS NO LONGER IN THE GRAVE. INSTEAD, JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD. HE IS LIFE!

Say, "Jesus said that He is the Resurrection [came back to life] and the Life. That is pretty amazing, isn't it? Jesus told His followers not to worry when they see Him die [on the Cross] because He promised He would come back to 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. ²⁶And he who lives and believes in me will never die."

Say, "Jesus said He is the Resurrection [the One who comes back to life] and the Life! Did you know that **God sent Jesus to be our Resurrection and Life?**"

Ask, "If one of your friends told you they were going to die and then come back to life, what would you think? [Wait for responses.] This would have surprised everyone. It also would have been hard to believe. Jesus was dead for three whole days, but He is so much more powerful than death. Praise Jesus! He came back to life on the third day. **God sent Jesus to be our Resurrection and Life**, and Jesus is our life."

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: Jesus died on the Cross, but then He came back to life!

3. How could Jesus come back to life?

Response: Jesus could come back to life because He is God and He is all-powerful (full of power).

4. Name some other things Jesus has power over.

Response: Answers will vary, but reinforce the idea that Jesus (God) has power over everything.

5. Have you ever thanked Jesus for His love and power?

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 is powerful, Jesus is God, etc.

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

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *The Grave* Activity Page (1 per child) | *Jesus is Life* Activity Page (1 per child) | Glue Sticks | Crayons |



BEFORE CLASS, CUT OUT A JESUS FROM THE *JESUS IS LIFE* ACTIVITY PAGE FOR EACH CHILD.

Say, "With today's craft, we will remind ourselves that Jesus is Life and the One who comes back to life. It will help us remember that Jesus died and rose from the grave to give us life forever. Let's create it."

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Give each child one of *The Grave Activity Pages* and a cut-out Jesus from the *Jesus is Life Activity Page*.
- Have the kids color both *The Grave Activity Page* and the cut-out Jesus. Then glue the cut-out Jesus on the back of *The Grave Activity Page*.
- Encourage the kids to retell the story to each other. (Tell the kids they can switch the page from one side to the other to show how Jesus is the opposite of death. He is Life!)

MODIFICATION: To save a couple of steps for the little ones and for you, print *The Grave Activity Page* and the *Jesus is Life Activity Page* double-sided on the same piece of paper.

TRANSITION: Say, "Jesus really is amazing, isn't He? Remember, **God sent Jesus to be our Resurrection and Life!**"

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "We have a very exciting verse this month. 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)



IF THIS VERSE IS CONFUSING FOR YOUR KIDS (WITH THE REFERENCE TO MOSES), SIMPLIFY IT. FOCUS ON MEMORIZING GOD'S IDENTITY: "I AM WHO I AM."

CHALLENGE: This is the fifth week your class will be memorizing this verse. Go through all of the 'I AM' sayings you have learned so far and ask the children which one they like best. (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

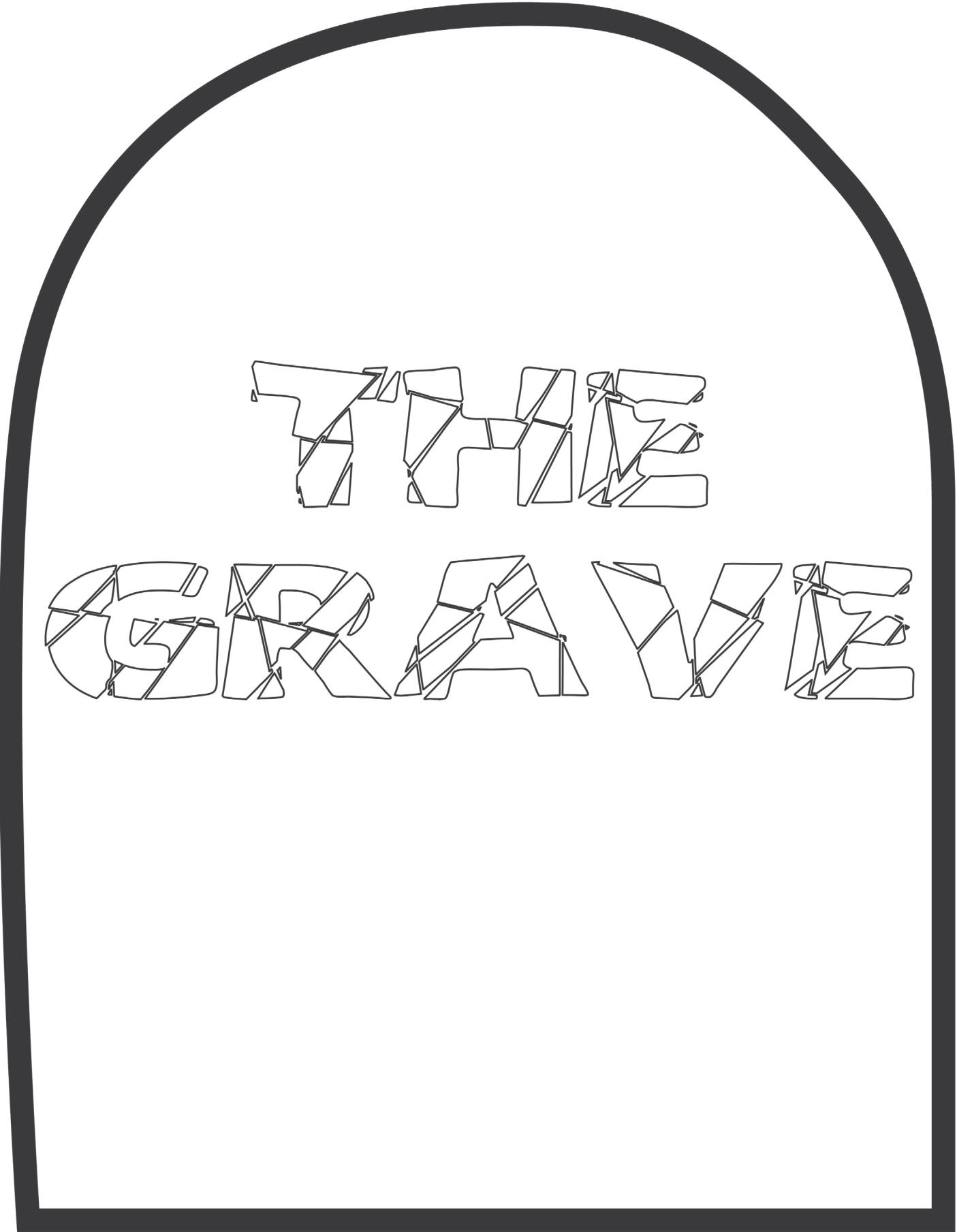
Say, "**God sent Jesus to be our Resurrection and Life.** God loves us so much that He gave us His one and only Son, Jesus. We know that Jesus loves us too because He died for us so that we could have life forever with Him. Let's take some time to tell God how much we love Him."

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 share that love with others. Amen."

RELEASE —

If you have extra time, sing your worship songs again, or learn a new one. You can also reinforce the lesson by playing *Have a Ball!* To do this, have the children sit in a circle and pass around a ball. Whoever has the ball gets to share something they learned from today's Bible story. Finally, be sure to give out a new monthly parent guide today.



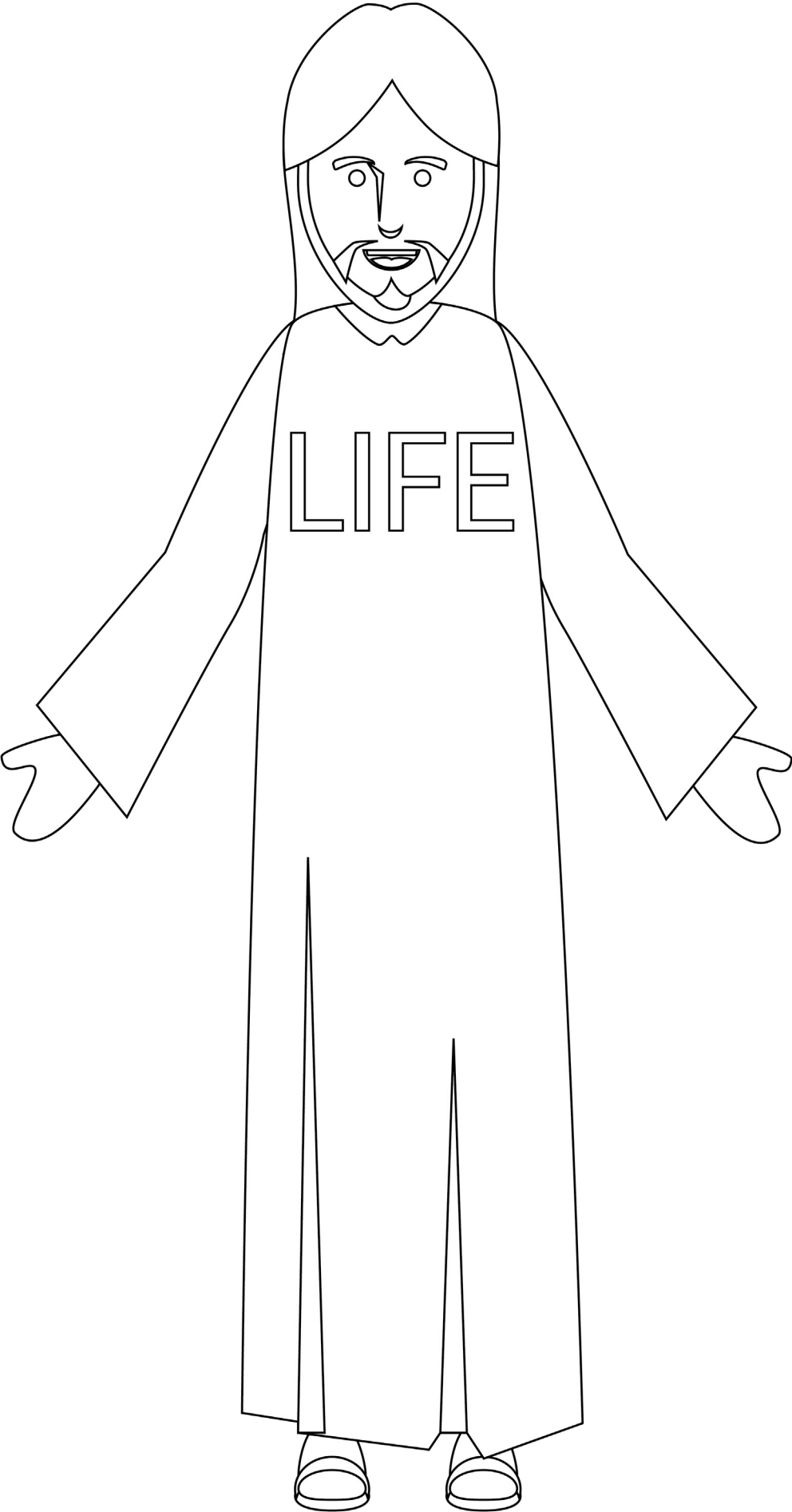


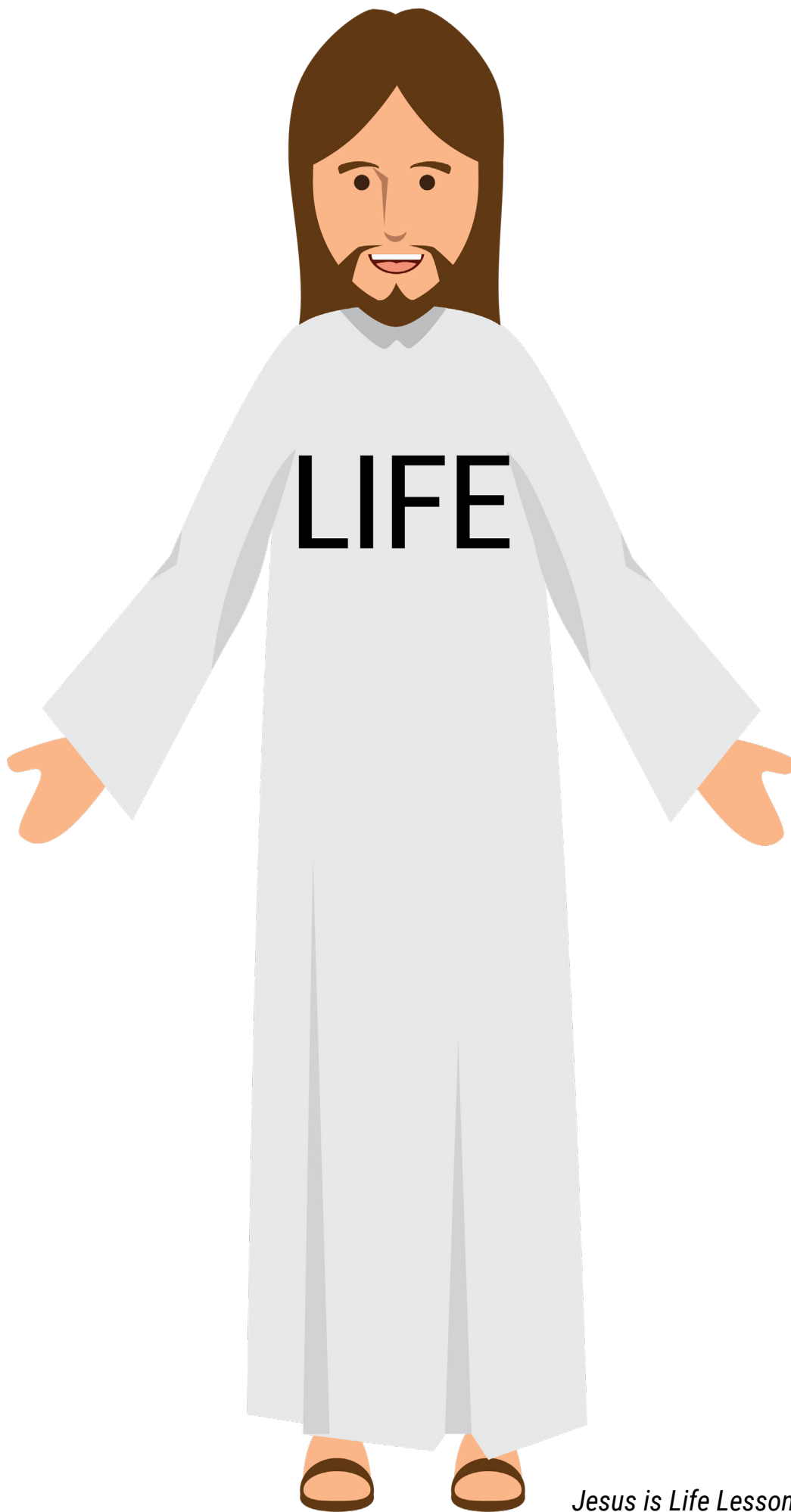
TWO

GRAVE



**THE
GRAVE**





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 | *Jesus is the Light of the World* Activity Page | 1" Yellow Tissue Paper Squares (Optional) | Glue Sticks (Optional) | Crayons |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What would life be like if we did not have light?
- Do you like summer or winter better? Why?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Ask, "Why do we worship? [Wait for responses.] We worship God because He deserves it." Before you sing, take a few moments to ask the kids what they love about God, and then speak words of praise to Him from Psalm 86:8-10 (ICB): "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."



INVITE THE CHILDREN TO TAKE TURNS PRAYING. KIDS NEED PRACTICE PRAYING OUT LOUD. THEY WILL BENEFIT FROM KNOWING YOU TRUST THEM TO DO SO.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Before beginning the lesson, pray with your kids!

SAMPLE PRAYER: "God, we worship and honor You! Help us listen well and learn from the best teacher in the world—YOU! We love You so much! Amen."

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

BACKGROUND: Say, “We have been learning about some of Jesus’ 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! Are you ready to hear Jesus tell us another *I Am* story? Me too! Let’s put up the puzzle piece.” Have a child post this week’s puzzle piece.

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

ENGAGE — 15 MINUTES

Say, “The game we will be playing is called *Watch the Light!* Whenever the light is on, you have to freeze in place, but when the light is off, you can move around however you like. The only trick is that when the lights come back on, you need to make a funny pose [demonstrate]. Who thinks they can play *Watch the Light?*”

GAME GOAL: To freeze in a funny pose every time the lights turn on.

HOW TO PLAY:

- Have the kids pick a spot around the room.
- Whenever the lights turn off, the kids can move around and wiggle. But, when the lights come on, everyone must freeze in a funny pose.
- If the kids do not freeze when the lights turn on, they must sit out (to the side or out of the way).
- Continue this game as time and interest allow.

MODIFICATION: If your kids cannot handle sitting “out” and staying engaged in the activity, keep everyone playing the entire time. Be sure to remind your class to “watch the light.”

TRANSITION: Say, “You did a great job ‘watching the light!’ We played this game to get our minds thinking about light. Did you know Jesus called Himself ‘the light of the world’? Let’s find out why!”

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, “In today’s Bible passage, Jesus teaches us that He is THE special Light that we need to watch! In fact, God sent Jesus to be the Light of the [entire] world! Let’s read 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.”



MAKE SURE YOU CLARIFY THAT EVERY TIME JESUS USES THE WORD "LIGHT," HE IS TALKING ABOUT HIMSELF.

Say, "Jesus is the Light of the World! Our amazing and loving **God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world!**"

Ask, "Why do we need Jesus, the Light of the world? [Wait for responses.] We need Jesus, our Light, so we can see the right way to go! In the Bible, Jesus tells us how to live so we will be happy [blessed]. Most importantly, Jesus shows us the way to God, our Heavenly Father. When we don't follow Jesus [walk in the darkness], we get hurt. That isn't fun, is it? No! **God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world.** Do you see why we played *Watch the Light*?"

"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!**"

MODEL IT: Show the kids that it is EASY to walk around in the light. Then, turn off the lights and show the kids that you run into things when you try to walk in the darkness. Tell the children, "This is why we need Jesus! Without Him, we would not be able to find our way. Jesus is the greatest light in the world."

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. Why does Jesus say to walk in the light?

Response: Walking in the light is safe because we are with Jesus. Most importantly, though, Jesus shows us the way to the Father!

3. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus is the light of the world?

Response: Answers will vary.

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

Response: Answers will vary.

5. If we are ever scared, especially in the dark, who can help us?

Response: Jesus can help us because He lights up the darkness. Jesus is the Light!

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 is safe, Jesus came 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: | *Jesus is the Light of the World Activity Page* (1 per child) | 1" Yellow Tissue Paper Squares (Optional—15 per child) | Glue Sticks (Optional) | Crayons |

Say, "Do you remember when Jesus called Himself the Light of the World? Well, **God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world** for YOU! The craft we are about to do can remind us that Jesus is the brightest Light. He brings light to all the darkness!"

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Give every child a *Jesus is the Light of the World Activity Page* and crayons.
- Optional: Crumble the tissue paper squares and glue them to the outside rim of the light bulb to make it look like Jesus, the light of the world, is glowing.
- Have everyone color their light bulb.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job! **God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world**. Now, we know we can always have the light when Jesus is with us."

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "It is memory verse time! Who likes to memorize verses? I think we can have a lot of fun remembering God's Word! Let's practice the memory verse that reminds us that God is the great 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: Draw a picture for every word in the memory verse. Then, the class can recite the verse by "reading" the pictures. (The kids can do this individually on paper, or they can take turns drawing each word on a dry erase board at the front of the classroom.)

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

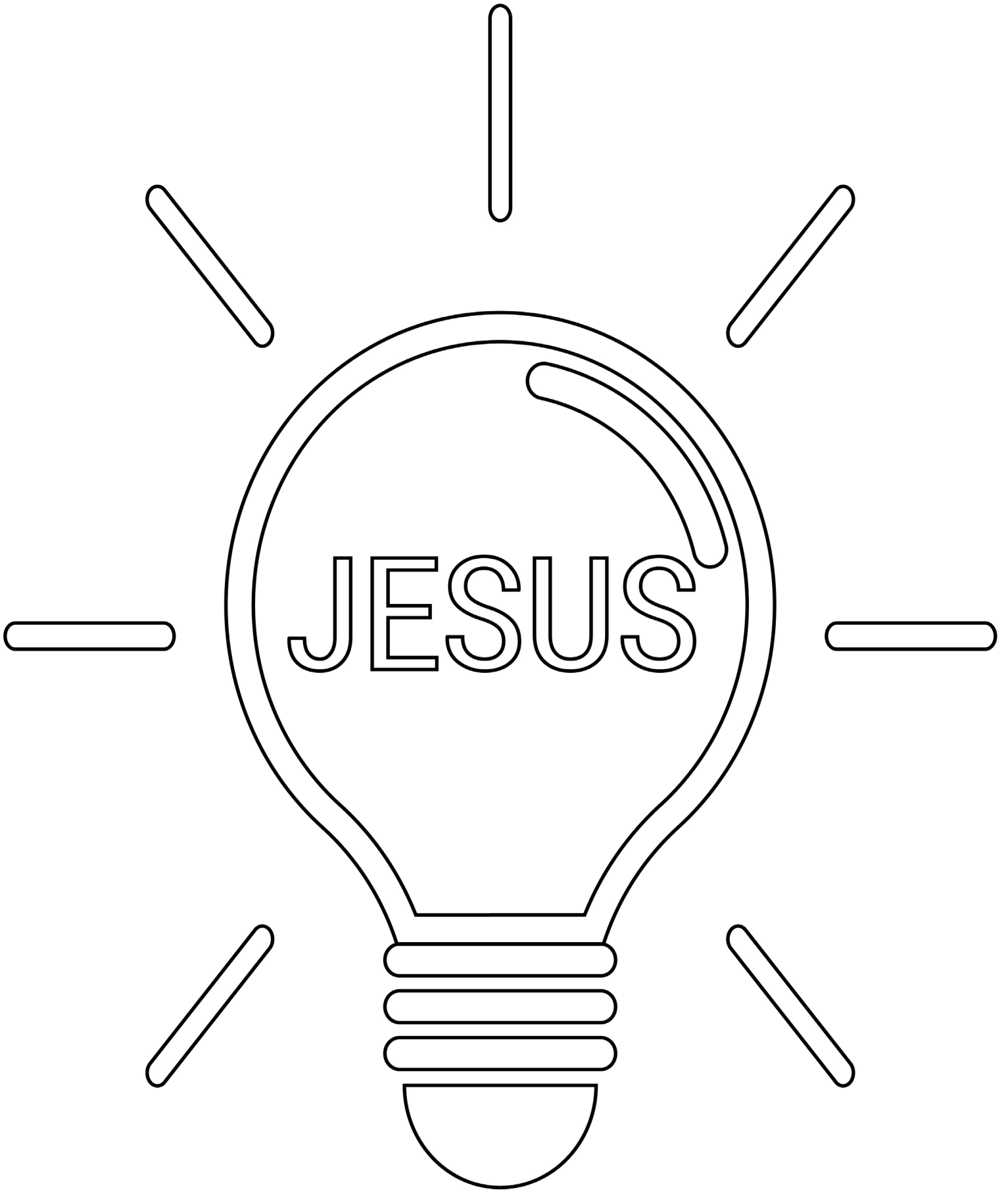
Say, "**God sent Jesus to be the Light of the world** for you and me. God loves us a lot, doesn't He? Who can tell me one loving thing God has done for you? [Wait for responses.] Those are great examples of how God shows us His love! Now, let's pray!"

SAMPLE PRAYER: "God, thank You for sending the Light into the world! Jesus is the most beautiful Light You could give us. Because of Jesus, we do not have to be afraid. In Jesus' name, Amen."

RELEASE —

Take advantage of every moment you have with the children! Replay *Watch the 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 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 | Balloons | Timer (Optional) | Plant or *The Vine* Activity Page (Optional) | Large Popsicle Sticks | Green Pipe Cleaners | *Leaf Cutouts* Activity Page | Liquid Glue | Crayons |

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 vegetable do you *not* like?



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. 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**MATERIALS:** | Balloons (1 per pair) | Timer (1 per class-Optional) |

NEVER FORCE ANYONE TO PLAY A GAME. IF YOU HAVE A CHILD WHO IS NOT 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, “LET ME KNOW IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND.”

Say, “The game we will play today is called *Stay Connected!* In just a moment, we will get connected to a partner in the class, but the trick is to see if you can ‘stay connected’? Let’s find out more!”

GAME GOAL: To be the first team to complete the race while remaining connected to their partners with a balloon. (This game is similar to a traditional three-legged race, but instead of tying the children’s ankles together, they will be connected with balloons.)

HOW TO PLAY:

- Inflate the balloons before the children arrive.
- Divide the class into pairs based on similar heights. If you have an odd number of children, have one child go twice with two different partners.
- Once everyone has been paired, choose one pair to go first and have the two children stand next to each other (side-by-side) and place a balloon gently between their sides. The balloon is their connection point.
- Mark the starting line and designate a wall (or another marker) as the ending point.
- When you say, “go,” have the first sets of partners walk together, keeping the balloon between them all the way to the ending point marker as quickly as possible. (Optional: Time how long it takes each pair to make it to the ending point. Each pair will try to beat the best time.)
- If the balloon drops to the floor or one of the partners grabs the balloon with their hands, the team must return to the starting line and begin again.
- Once the first pair reaches the ending point, the next duo will start.
- Replay as time and interest allow.

MODIFICATION: Switch up partners and the finish lines’ placement to keep the game fun and interesting.

TRANSITION: Say, "You all did a wonderful job at 'staying connected!' Were you able to keep the balloon between you and your partner? Well, Jesus' 'I Am' saying is all about staying connected too, but He wants us to stay connected to *Him*."

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?** Let's talk about what this means."



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). CONTINUE TO USE THE PLANT IN THE STORY EXPLANATION BELOW. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A PLANT AVAILABLE, USE THE VINE ACTIVITY PAGE TO DESCRIBE TODAY'S "I AM" SAYING.

Ask, "What happens when we do not stay connected to Jesus? [Wait for responses.] We can not do anything without Jesus [v. 5]. We have to stay connected to Him. Let's use plants as an example! If you are growing a plant in your backyard and pull off a branch, what will happen to that branch? [Wait for responses.] Right! It will die because it is no longer connected to the rest of the plant. A branch cannot live, grow, or create flowers and fruit without staying connected. But if the branch stays connected to the plant, what happens? [Wait for responses.] Right! The branch lives, grows, and creates beautiful flowers and fruits. This is why we need to stay connected to Jesus! We cannot do anything good without being connected to Jesus because He is the Vine. He is the One who gives us life! **God sent Jesus to be our Vine!**"

TRANSITION: Say, “Stay connected to Jesus [the Vine], and over time, you will become more and more like Jesus! Can you say, ‘**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. Finish this sentence: God sent Jesus to be...

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

2. Can a branch grow all by itself away from the vine?

Response: No! Eventually, the branches will die.

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

Response: We will not grow and do all the good things He has for us to do.

4. How can we tell if a plant is healthy and doing its job?

Response: Most plants grow and make flowers or fruit when they are healthy. That is their job! (If possible, show the children pictures of living plants and dying/dead plants. Ask the children about the differences they see between the living and dying plants.)

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

Response: We can stay connected to Jesus by singing to Him, loving Him, praying, obeying Him, reading His Word, etc.

6. Staying connected to Jesus will make us happy and healthy. (See John 15:11.) How does staying close to Jesus make you happy?

Response: Answers will vary.

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

Response: Jesus is the Vine, **God sent Jesus to be our Vine**, Jesus keeps us alive, Jesus makes me happy, Jesus helps me grow, 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 |



BEFORE CLASS, WRITE “I AM THE VINE” ON ONE OR BOTH SIDES OF THE POPSICLE STICKS WITH A MARKER.

Say, “Now, we are going to make a craft to help us remember what Jesus taught us—that **God sent Jesus to be our Vine**. Who is ready to get started?”

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Give every person 3 pipe cleaners and one large popsicle stick with “I Am the Vine” written on it.
- Using the popsicle stick as the vine, have them 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, "It is time to say our memory verse! We have focused on this verse for many weeks now, which means you probably know it! Remember, we will hear the words 'I Am' just like from our story today—'I Am the Vine.' 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

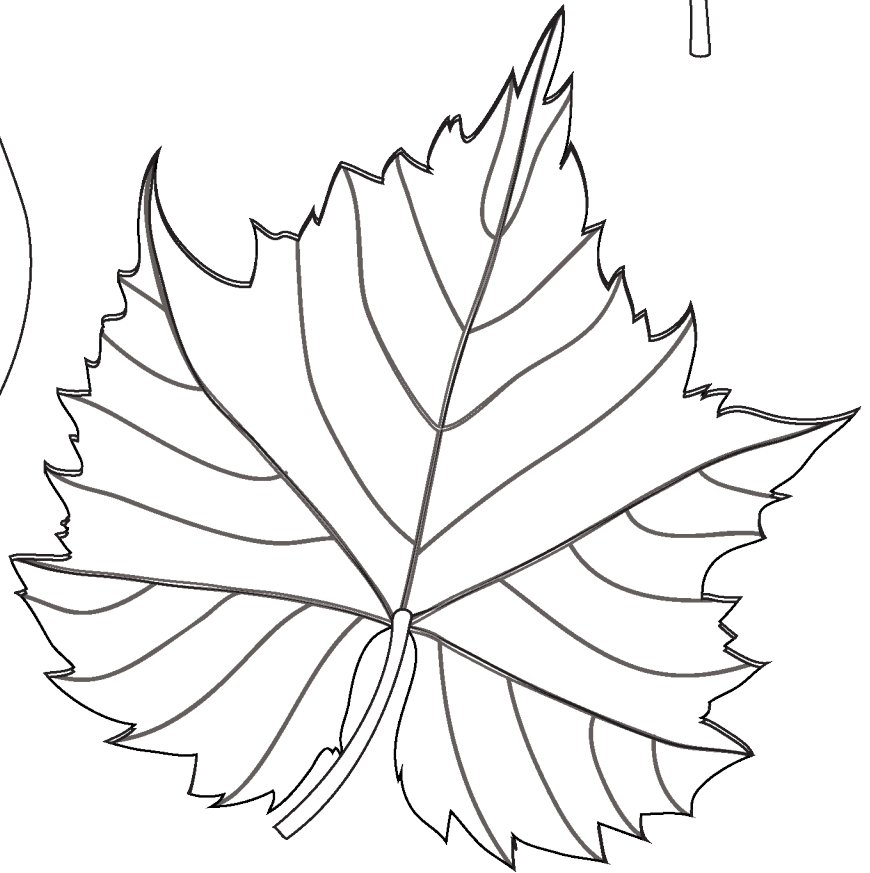
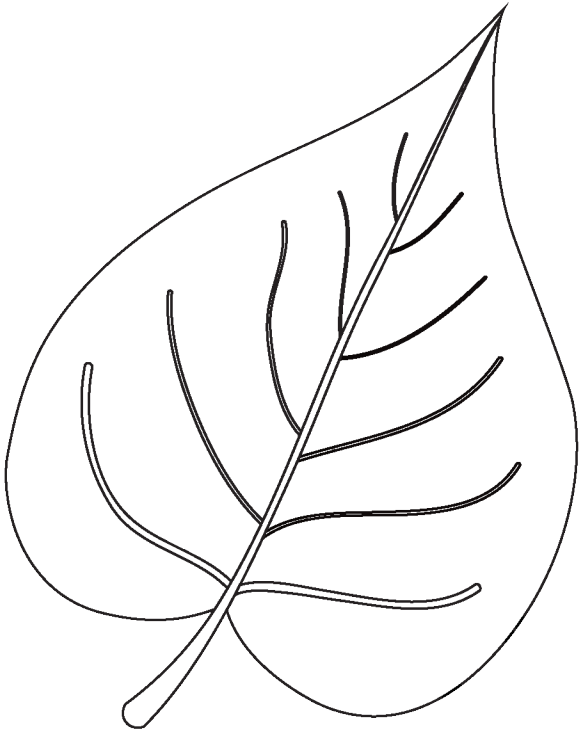
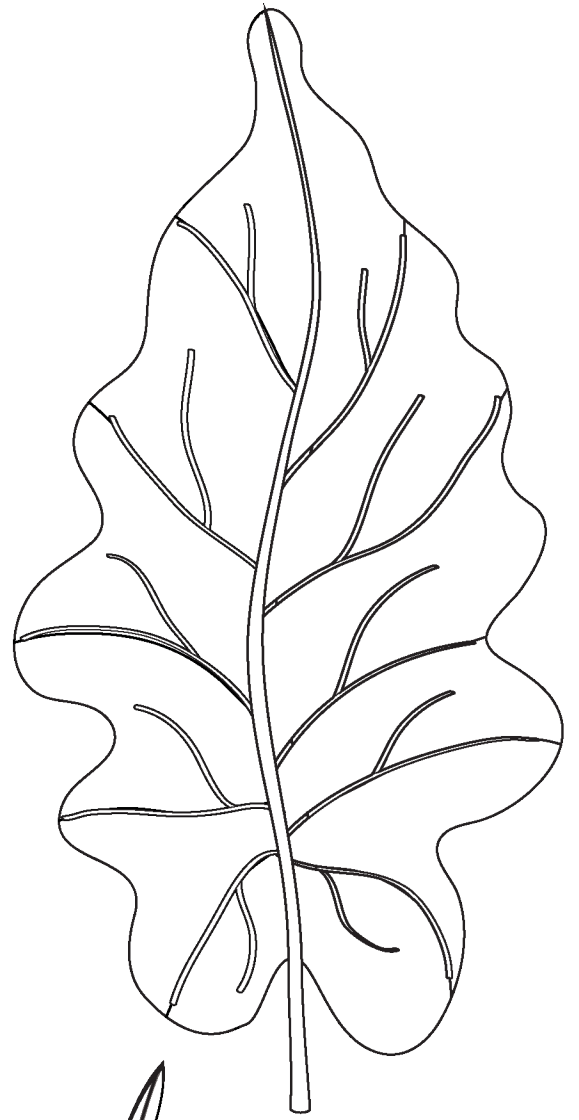
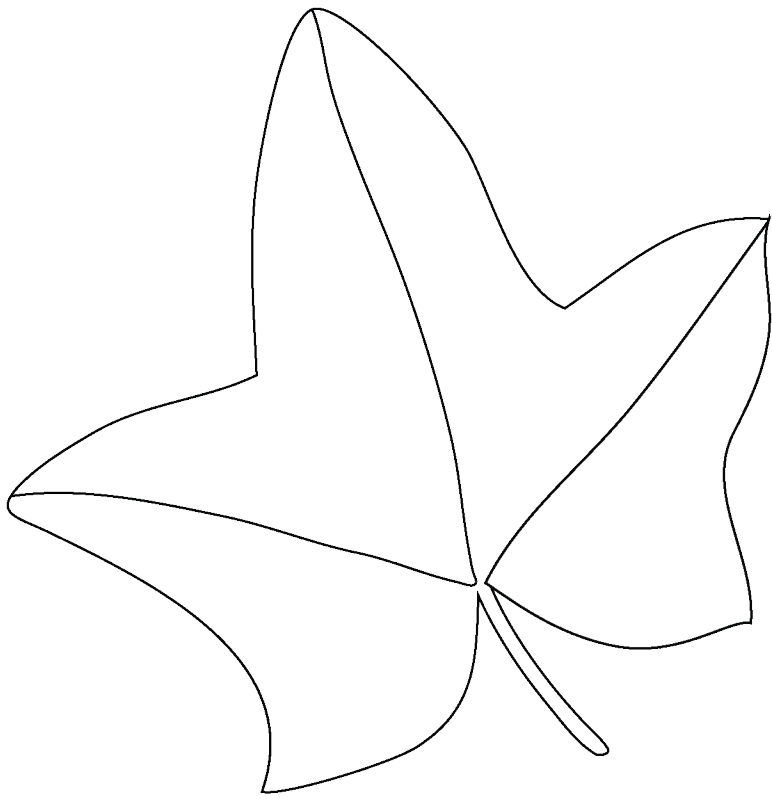
Say, "**God sent Jesus to be our Vine.** He came so we can learn how to be connected to Him. To stay connected to Jesus, have an adult, sibling, or friend read the Bible to you. You can also stay close to Jesus by singing to Him. Another way to connect with Jesus is to talk to Him. Let's pray that the Holy Spirit will help us stay connected to Jesus, our Vine!"

SAMPLE PRAYER: *"God, we are so grateful You want us to stay connected with You. Help us stay close to You, Jesus! We love You! In Jesus' name, Amen."*

RELEASE —

Do not forget to tell the children how much God loves them and wants a relationship with them. 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 and speaking to 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 | Pipe Cleaners | Green Pony Beads | Yellow Pony Beads |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What color would you be if you could be any color?
- Have you ever been the winner of a game? Tell me about it.

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, “Sing. Shout. Dance. Praise. Shout. Twirl. Kneel. Bow. Sit. Jump. God is worthy of all of it! Let’s worship Him with every part of ourselves.”

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Do not forget to pray FIRST and LAST! Show the kids that we need God from the beginning to the end of every day and every lesson.

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“Jesus, thank You for loving us so much! Help us love You more as we learn about You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “This is our very last *I Am* lesson, and it is a good one! Remember, God sent Jesus to be everything and anything we need. [Point to the puzzle pieces from the past seven lessons as you review the ‘I Am’ sayings.] Jesus is our Good Shepherd, our Door, our Bread of Life, our Way, the Truth, and Life, our Resurrection and Life, our Light of the World, and our Vine. Well, today we get to talk about Jesus’ last ‘I Am’ saying in the very last book of the Bible—Revelation. Who would like to get us ready by putting up the last puzzle piece?” Allow a kid to add the puzzle piece to the wall.

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

ENGAGE — 15 MINUTES

Say, "Let's play a game called *Opposites*! Who can tell me what the word 'opposite' means? [Wait for responses.] Great! 'Opposites' are two things that are super different from one another. For example, 'hot' is the opposite of 'cold.' 'Stop' is the opposite of 'go.' 'Hard' is the opposite of 'soft.' Are you ready to try the game?"

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

HOW TO PLAY:



THE ONLY WAY THIS GAME WILL WORK IS IF ONE ADULT IS CALLING OUT COMMANDS AND ONE ADULT IS MODELING THE OPPOSITE ACTIONS. THE KIDS WILL FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF THE ADULT PRACTICING OPPOSITES.

- Before the game begins, designate an adult or teen to model the opposite actions along with the children.
- Say, "In this game, when I tell you to do something, you will do the opposite. If you aren't sure what to do, you can follow [name of the designated adult or teen]."
- Explain that when you give a command, the kids should respond with an opposite movement. For example, when you say, "Walk fast," they should walk slow.
- Here is a list of active commands: walk backward, reach high to the sky, fold yourself into a tiny ball, walk slow, walk fast, take a giant step, take a tiny step, wiggle, stand still, run, walk, jump high, jump low, hop, crawl, spin in a circle, squat, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Wow! Those were a lot of opposites! Great job showing me the opposites. Are you wondering what our game about opposites has to do with our Bible lesson? Let's find out!"

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, "This week, we get to hear Jesus' last 'I Am' saying! After Jesus went to heaven, He spoke to one of His followers, John, and He shared something special about Himself. Are you ready to hear what Jesus told John?" Read Revelation 1:8 (ICB).



BEFORE STARTING THE STORY, DEFINE THE WORDS ALPHA AND OMEGA AS FIRST AND LAST (OR BEGINNING AND END). KIDS LEARN GREAT WITH VISUALS, SO YOU CAN ALSO DEMONSTRATE THE CONCEPT OF "FIRST" AND "LAST" BY PLACING SEVERAL SIMILAR ITEMS IN A LINE ON A TABLE AND ASKING, "WHICH ONE IS FIRST?" "WHICH ONE IS LAST?" THEN, EXPLAIN THAT WE CAN CALL THE FIRST ITEM THE "ALPHA" AND THE LAST ITEM THE "OMEGA."

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."

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.** Can you say that with me? [Repeat the Big Idea with the children.] Jesus told John that He is the Alpha and the Omega. These are fancy words for ‘first’ and ‘last.’ Does this ‘I Am’ seem a little strange?”

Ask, “How can Jesus be the First and the Last? [Wait for responses.] When we hear Jesus’ ‘I Am’ sayings, sometimes we think they sound silly! We may wonder how Jesus can be the First and the Last at the same time. When we run a race, we cannot win both first place and last place, but Jesus is different. The Bible tells us that Jesus was there at the VERY beginning when the world was made [Colossians 1:17, 1 Corinthians 8:6]. [Remind children of the creation story.] The Bible also says that Jesus will be with us until the VERY end [1 Thessalonians 4:17-18, Matthew 28:20]. Jesus is the First and the Last—the Alpha and the Omega!”

TRANSITION: Say, “I am glad **God sent Jesus to be the Alpha and Omega**—the First and the Last.”

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, “Let’s talk about the ‘I Am’ statement: ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega.’”

1. Finish this sentence: God sent Jesus to be...

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

2. How can Jesus be the First? How can Jesus be the Last?

Response: Jesus is the First because He was with God before creation. Jesus is the Last because He will be with us forever.

3. How does it make you feel to know that God is always with you?

Response: Answers will vary.

4. Jesus also says, “I am the All-Powerful.” Why is it important that Jesus is powerful?

Response: Answers will vary.

5. 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 will take care of us forever, etc.

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

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Pipe Cleaners (1 per child) | Green Pony Beads (10 per child) | Yellow Pony Beads (1 per child) |

Say, “What a great ‘I Am’ saying! Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, and that is what our craft is all about!”



YOU MAY HAVE A CHILD WHO DOES NOT ENJOY CRAFTS. ENCOURAGE THIS CHILD TO COMPLETE THE ACTIVITY NOT FOR THEMSELVES, BUT TO GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO NEEDS TO HEAR THAT JESUS IS THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Give each child a pipe cleaner, 10 green pony beads and 1 yellow pony bead.
- Tell the kids that today we're going to make a craft called "Jesus is the First and the Last" to help illustrate how Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega.
- Instruct the kids to put all of the green pony beads on their pipe cleaners and place the 1 yellow pony bead on the end.
- After the children have put all of the beads on their pipe cleaners, demonstrate how to use their "Jesus is the First and the Last" craft.
 - Say, "Look. This is the beginning [point to the yellow bead] and this is the end [point to the green bead on the opposite end]. Jesus is the beginning of ALL time!"
 - Now take the green bead on the end and move it to the beginning. Repeat this with the next green bead and so on while moving the yellow bead to the middle and eventually to the end.
 - Say, "Jesus is the Beginning and the End. Jesus is the First and the Last, and He is everywhere inbetween."



TAKE TIME TO EXPLAIN THAT THE GOD (JESUS) THAT CREATED THE UNIVERSE, LOVES US SO MUCH. THE GOD (JESUS) THAT CREATED TIME, WANTS TO SPEND TIME WITH US. JESUS IS THE FIRST AND THE LAST AND IS WITH US RIGHT NOW.

TRANSITION: Say, "Look at everyone's craft! You all did so great! Make sure you use what you have created to tell someone that **God sent Jesus to be the Alpha and the Omega**, the First and the Last."

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "One of the most important things we can do is remember the words in the Bible because they are God's words! So, let's practice our verse one more time this month."



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

"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: Divide the children into two groups. Have the first group stand and say the first portion of the verse in a normal voice: "God said to Moses..." Then, have those children quickly sit down as the second group stands and responds in a deep voice with "...I AM WHO I AM." Practice this way a few times and then switch the groups so that everyone has a chance to say both parts of the memory verse.

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, **“God sent Jesus to be the Alpha and Omega.** Jesus was there before time began, and He will be with us in heaven forever too. Jesus is the First and the Last. This means that Jesus loved you and knew you before you were born. How does that make you feel? What an amazing God we have!”

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“God, we are so grateful that we get to love You and be loved by You! We believe Your Word, and we want to say that You are amazing. You are the most wonderful God! In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

RELEASE —

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

