

WHO IS JESUS?



WHO IS JESUS?

MONTHLY PREPARATION GUIDE

YEAR 3, UNIT 01 - PRE-K

This month's lessons ask the question, *Who is Jesus?*, and they are focused on helping children understand who Jesus is. He is our God, our Messiah, our Friend, and our Redeemer. As you prepare, consider how you can invite the kids to connect with Christ as they worship, learn, and play. Give them an opportunity to think about Jesus in every part of your time together.

WEEK 1

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), Fabric Strips (1 for every 2 kids, 2' long each), *Stained-Glass Window* Activity Page (one per child) | *Jesus* Activity Page (one *Jesus* figure per child) | Tissue Paper Pieces (variety of colors) | Crayons | Glue

WEEK 2

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), Mystery Items (4-6 items), Blindfolds (1-2), Container and Lid, Paper, Pencils, White Cardstock Squares, Glass Bowl, Olive oil or Fractionated Coconut Oil (½ cup), Scented Perfume or Essential Oil(s) (several drops), Cinnamon (1 tsp), Cotton Swabs (1 per student)

WEEK 3

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), Colored Construction Paper (1 set per child), Washable Markers, Additional Craft Supplies (Glue Sticks, Stickers, Pompoms, etc.)

WEEK 4

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), Masking Tape, Beach Towel or Blanket (1 per class), Hand-Sized Bouncy Balls (20), Small Bucket

JESUS: IS HE REALLY GOD?

BIBLE PASSAGE

John 1:1-3;14, 1 John 1:1-3

BIG IDEA

Jesus wants you to know Him.

FOCUS VERSE

“Jesus answered, I am the way. And I am the truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through me. If you really knew me, then you would know my Father too.” John 14:6-7 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Fabric Strips | *Stained-Glass Window* Activity Page | *Jesus* Activity Page | Tissue Paper Pieces | Crayons | Scissors | Glue |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What is your earliest memory?
- What is something you hope you never forget?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

This month's lessons ask the question, *Who is Jesus?*, and they are focused on helping children understand who Jesus is. He is our God, our Messiah, our Friend, and our Redeemer. As you prepare for worship, consider how you can invite the kids to connect with Christ as they sing and learn. Give them an opportunity to think about Jesus and give Him praise.

The more we know about God, the easier it is to worship Him. So select songs that focus on learning more about Jesus. We recommend introducing “My Best Friend” by Hillsong Kids as a theme song for this unit.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

SAMPLE PRAYER: “Dear Jesus, we are glad that You are truly God. We can trust that You are who You say You are. Help us to know You better and thank You for wanting to be close to us! We are excited about all You will teach us. Thank You for loving us; we love You too. Amen.”



THIS YEAR WE ARE PLACING A SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON HELPING CHILDREN DEVELOP A BIBLICALLY ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF GOD. LOOK FOR THIS SYMBOL FOR SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO NATURALLY EMPHASIZE THIS TOPIC IN EACH LESSON.

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

BACKGROUND: Say, “Last month, we talked about the birth of Jesus. It’s important to remember that the birth of Jesus as a human baby was not the beginning of Jesus! He existed even before He was born. Although Jesus did become a human, He is so much more than that. This month, we are talking about who Jesus is, and one incredible thing you’ll learn is that **Jesus wants you to know Him!** Now, who wants to put up the first puzzle piece for this new series?”

TRANSITION: Say, “Let’s play a game together before we read our story!”

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES**MATERIALS:** | Fabric Strips (1 for every 2 kids, 2’ long each) |

GAME GOAL: Pairs of students will unite to win a three-legged race.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Have students pair up, side-by-side.
2. Tie the partners’ legs together (one person’s left and the other person’s right).
3. Partners will race to the finish line—walking quickly in sync.
4. Play several rounds as time allows.



PLAY OUTSIDE IF YOU CAN! ALSO, HAVE A PLAN FOR KIDS WHO DON’T WANT TO PARTICIPATE. FOR EXAMPLE, THEY MAY BE WILLING TO STAND AT THE FINISH LINE AND CHEER ON THEIR FRIENDS! FINALLY, IF THERE ARE AN UNEVEN NUMBER OF KIDS, MAKE SURE SOMEONE (OR YOU) WILL PARTICIPATE.

TRANSITION: Say, “Great job, everyone! Wow! It’s hard for two people to race as if you are one, isn’t it? Today we are going to learn something very important about Jesus! He was a person like us, but He is also so much more.”

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, “The best place to learn about Christ is in God’s Word. Who knows the name of the book God gave us? [Wait for responses.] Right! God speaks to us through the Bible, and He gave it to us so that we can learn more about who He is because **Jesus wants you to know Him!** Let’s read what Jesus wants us to know about Him today!” Read John 1: 1-3 (ICB).

¹Before the world began, there was the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ All things were made through him. Nothing was made without him.

Read John 1: 14 (ICB).

¹⁴ The Word became a man and lived among us. We saw his glory—the glory that belongs to the only Son of the Father. The Word was full of grace and truth.

¹We write you now about something that has always existed. We have heard. We

Read 1 John 1: 1-3 (ICB).

have seen with our own eyes. We have watched, and we have touched with our hands. We write to you about the Word that gives life. ² He who gives life was shown to us. We saw him, and we can give proof about it. And now we tell you that he has life that continues forever. The one who gives this life was with God the Father. God showed him to us. ³ Now we tell you what we have seen and heard because we want you to have fellowship with us. The fellowship we share together is with God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ.

Say, "Wow! The Bible says that Jesus was the Word who was there at the beginning of time. He was with God, and He is God too! We can't remember anything that happened before we were born, but Jesus had already lived forever in heaven before He was born into our world. He even created this world. When we read in Genesis about the creation of the world, Jesus was there making everything!

"Today, we are learning that Jesus was more than a human who lived on Earth. He is God who became a human. John, one of His disciples, wrote the Bible verses we read today. He saw Jesus and touched Jesus. So, this means Jesus was 100% [completely] God and 100% [completely] human at the same time! Whoa! This might seem hard to understand, and honestly, it's impossible for us to figure out exactly how that works."

Ask, "How can we know God if we don't understand Him? The Bible teaches us that we can know God, even have a friendship with Him, and yet not ever completely understand Him. [See Psalm 145:3, Job 26:14, and Isaiah 55:8-9.] However, Scripture also teaches us that one of the biggest reasons Christ became a man was so we could know Him. Isn't it amazing to think that **Jesus, GOD, wants you to know Him?** He wants you to know that He was not just a human, but He is God."

TRANSITION: Say, "It's incredible to think that Jesus wasn't created when He was born on Earth. At the beginning of time, He was the Creator God who became a human to live on Earth among the people He created. He was with God in the beginning but also with people so they might know Him. And the most fantastic thing about this is that **Jesus wants you to know Him!**"

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Our lesson today is so powerful! Let's talk about it."

1. Who wants you to know Him?

Response: **Jesus wants me to know Him!**

2. What does Jesus want me to know about Him?

Response: He is God!

3. Who is "The Word?"

Response: Jesus

4. Why do you think Jesus is called "The Word?"

Response: (Give the children time to come up with reasons for this. Then share that just like words help us understand things, Jesus becoming a person helped us understand who

God is because people knew, touched, laughed, cried, and experienced Him.)

5. When was Jesus created?

Response: He wasn't created—He is the Creator God! Like God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, Jesus has always existed.

6. Who saw Jesus when He was a human on earth?

Response: John, His disciples, His family, etc.

7. How can we know Jesus better?

Response: By reading the Bible

8. What is something you know to be true about Jesus?

Response: Responses will vary.

9. What do we learn about God from today's Bible reading?

Response: **Jesus wants us to know Him.** Jesus is God. Jesus has always existed. God loves us, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great discussion! Let's work on a craft that will help us remember that **Jesus wants you to know Him!**"

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Stained-Glass Window Activity Page* (one per child) | *Jesus Activity Page* (one *Jesus* figure per child) | Tissue Paper Pieces (variety of colors) | Crayons | Scissors | Glue |

Say, "Some churches have special windows made with stained glass. These beautiful windows often show pictures to help people learn the Bible's stories and remind us of how wonderful God is! Today, we learned that Jesus is God, so let's make a stained-glass window craft to remind us that Jesus is our wonderful Creator God!"

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each student a *Stained-Glass Window Activity Page*, tissue paper pieces, a glue stick, and one *Jesus* figure from the *Jesus Activity Page*.
2. Have the students glue the tissue paper pieces on the "window" in any pattern or design they wish.
3. Let kids color the *Jesus* figure, cut it out then glue it to the center of the window.

TRANSITION: Say, "Wow! What beautiful masterpieces you made! You can take these home to help you remember what we learned today."

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "This month, we are learning a verse about who Jesus is. I am going to read it first, and then we will say it together."

"Jesus answered, (touch the middle of each palm with your index finger) 'I am the way. (extend both arms out towards you a forward motion) And I am the truth (hold hands together like a book) and the life (bring your hands close to your heart). The only way to the Father is through me. (point to the sky) If you really knew me (touch your head with your index finger), then you would know my Father too (point to the sky).'" John 14:6-7 (ICB)



USE THIS GAME TO HIGHLIGHT SOME WAYS GOD IS DIFFERENT FROM US. EXPLAIN THAT YOU ARE GOING TO NAME AN ACTION. IF ONLY GOD CAN PERFORM THE ACTION, THE CHILDREN SHOULD STAND UP, BUT IF PEOPLE CAN DO IT TOO, THEN THEY SHOULD REMAIN SEATED. HERE ARE A FEW ACTIONS TO GET YOU STARTED: 1) CREATE THE UNIVERSE. 2) BE KIND. 3) LISTEN TO EVERYONE'S PRAYERS AT THE SAME TIME. 4) HEAL A SICK PERSON. 5) TELL THE TRUTH. 6) MAKE THE SUN SHINE. 7) SING. (ZEPH. 3:17)

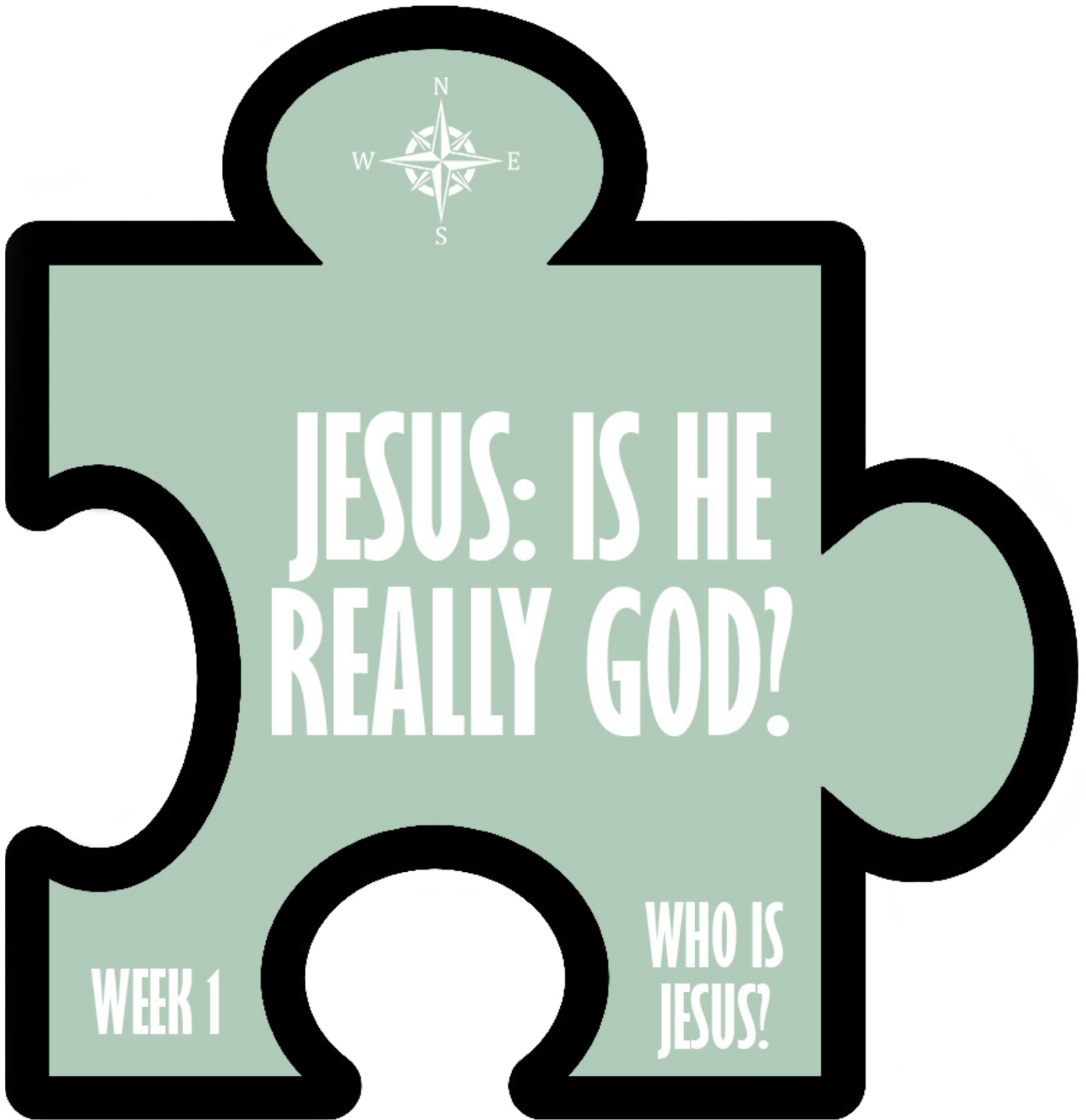
REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

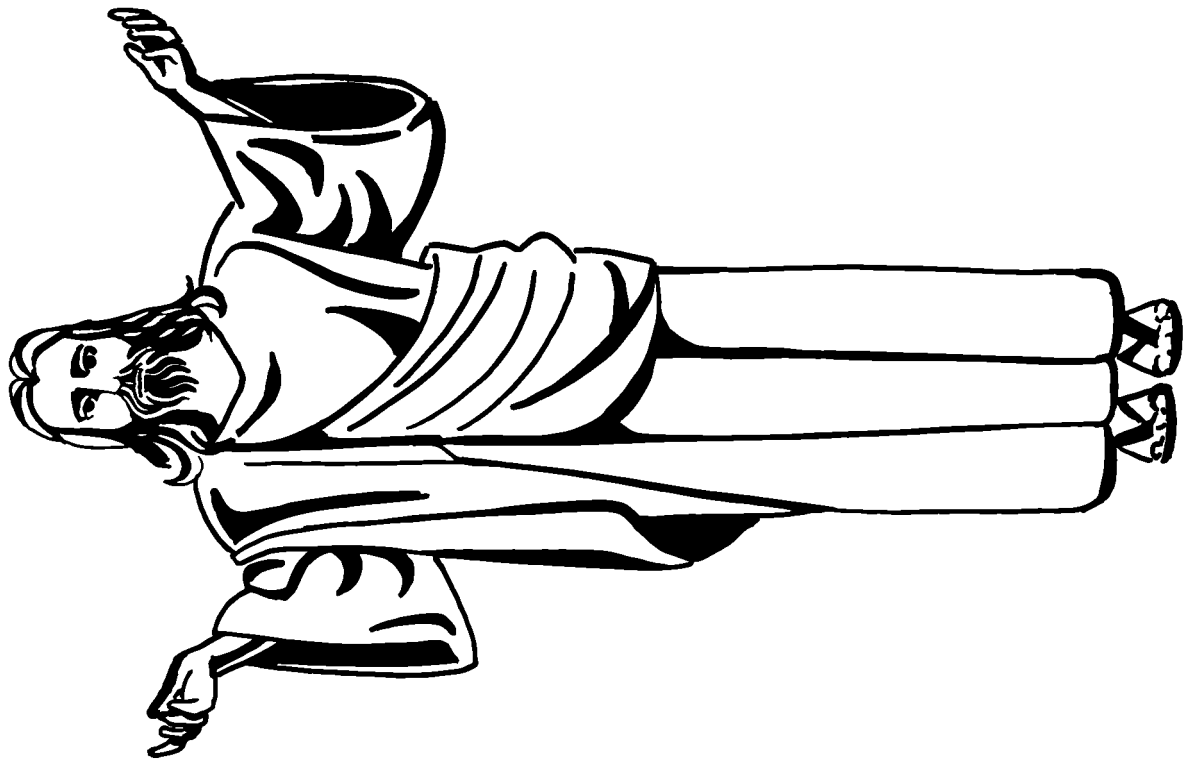
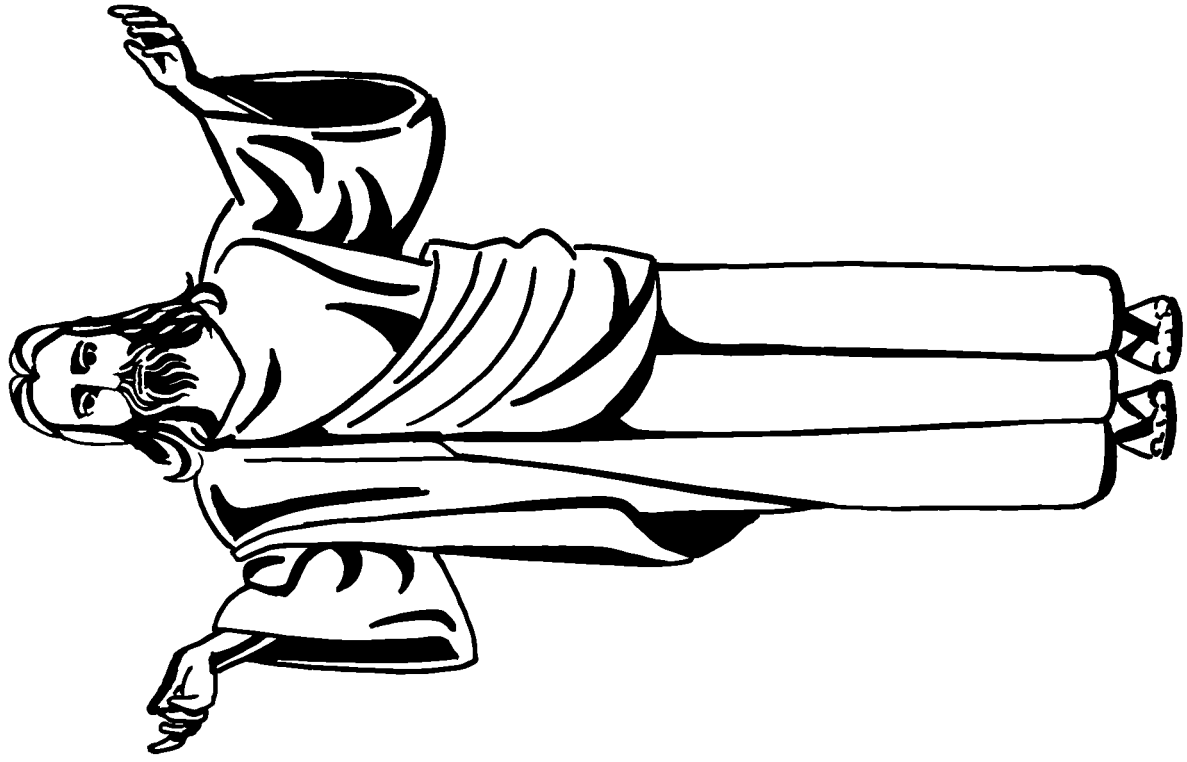
Say, "We learned something amazing about Jesus today! He was not just a human; Jesus is also God. And even though it's hard to understand how all that works, we will keep learning because **Jesus wants you to know Him!** And the more we read His Word the better we can do that!"

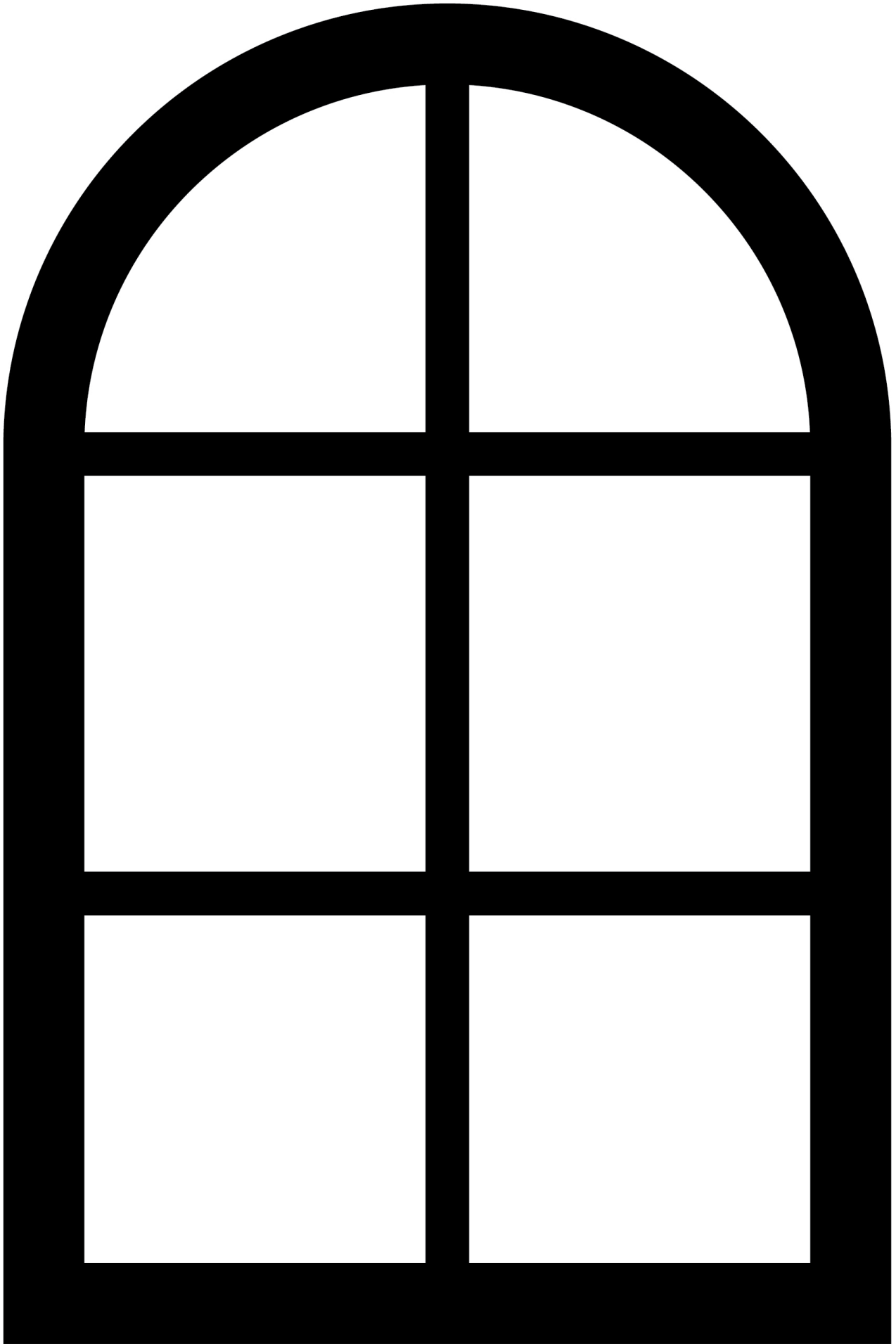
SAMPLE PRAYER: *"Thank you, Jesus, for helping us know more about You. We are grateful that You are our Creator God who loves us. Amen!"*

RELEASE —

If there is extra time, replay the game, finish the craft or practice the memory verse again. Also, be sure to give parents and guardians a copy of the monthly Parent Guide (downloadable) when they arrive.







WHO IS JESUS?



JESUS: WHY DO WE CALL HIM MESSIAH?

BIBLE PASSAGE

Numbers 24:17, Isaiah 9:6-7a, Isaiah 61:1-2a, Mark 8:27-29

BIG IDEA

Jesus wants you to know Him.

FOCUS VERSE

“Jesus answered, I am the way. And I am the truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through me. If you really knew me, then you would know my Father too.” John 14:6-7 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Mystery Items | Blindfolds | Container and Lid | Paper | Pencils | White Cardstock Squares | Glass Bowl | Olive Oil or Fractionated Coconut Oil | Scented Perfume or Essential Oil(s) | Cinnamon | Cotton Swabs |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What are some things you have to wait for? (Examples could include summer vacation, Christmas, a birthday, a playdate, screen time, etc.)
- How do you feel when you have to wait?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, “This month we are learning more about who Jesus is, and this week we will focus on Jesus as the Messiah—He is the one who forgives our sins! Worshiping through song is a great way for us to praise Jesus as our Messiah.” In addition to the recommended unit song, “My Best Friend,” we also suggest singing: “Jesus Messiah” by God’s Kids Worship Band and “The Way” by Worship for Kids.



BETWEEN SONGS REMIND THE CHILDREN THAT GOD IS A FORGIVING GOD, AND THAT HE NEVER GETS TIRED OF HIS CHILDREN HUMBLY CONFESSING OUR SINS. (1 JOHN 1:9) BECAUSE IT IS DIFFICULT FOR CHILDREN (AND ADULTS) TO FULLY BELIEVE THAT GOD DOES NOT STAY ANGRY WITH US, BUT FORGIVES US OVER AND OVER, THEY NEED TO HEAR US SAY IT REGULARLY.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

SAMPLE PRAYER: “Dear Jesus, thank You for being so good. You love us and help us every day. Teach us to know You better as we study Your Word! Amen.”

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

BACKGROUND: Say, “This month, we are learning more about who Jesus is. Last week we learned that Jesus is God! Today we will learn another amazing thing about Jesus. Long before Christ became human, God promised the people of Israel that He would send them a Messiah. ‘Messiah’ means ‘anointed one.’ In the Old Testament, special people like kings and priests in the temple were anointed with oil. Oil was poured on their head before they began their service. The anointing announced that a person was set apart [chosen] for a particular purpose.”

“God promised that an anointed person, or Messiah, would come to save Israel. The promises God gave about Jesus as the Messiah were written throughout the Old Testament. The Jewish people read them again and again as they waited hopefully for the Messiah. In today’s lesson, we will be learning more about Jesus as the promised Messiah. After all, **Jesus wants you to know Him!** Who wants to put up the puzzle piece for today’s lesson?”

TRANSITION: Say, “Let’s play a game together before we read our story!”

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES**MATERIALS:** | Mystery Items (4-6 items) | Blindfolds (1-2) | Container and Lid | Paper | Pencils |**GAME GOAL:** Students will try to guess the mystery items.

BEFORE CLASS BEGINS, SELECT SEVERAL FUNNY OR RANDOM MYSTERY ITEMS THAT WON’T BE EASILY GUESSED: I.E. A BOWL OF COOKED PASTA NOODLES OR AN ARTICLE OF CLOTHING WITH A UNIQUE TEXTURE. PLACE THE ITEMS IN A COVERED CONTAINER THAT YOU ONLY BRING OUT ONCE THE CHILD(REN) IS BLINDFOLDED.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Select a student to play each round and place a blindfold on them.
2. Give the child two clues about the “mystery item.”
3. Allow the student 10 seconds to feel the item and guess what they think it is.

CHALLENGE: Have multiple students play each round. After each blindfolded student has felt the object, everyone should write their guesses on a piece of paper.

TRANSITION: Say, “You guys did a great job guessing these mystery items! Some were a little tricky, but you used the clues I gave you to figure out what they were, even when you couldn’t see them! Now, we’re going to learn how Jesus gave His people clues so they would understand He was God’s special Messiah.”

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, “Today, we are learning about Jesus, the promised Messiah. When Jesus began His ministry, He did

specific things to fulfill the promises written about Him in the Old Testament. He did this to help people recognize Him as the promised Messiah. Let's read some of these Old Testament promises; then we will read from the New Testament to see if the people recognized Him. As you follow along, remember that **Jesus wants you to know Him!**"

Give each child a *Jesus: The Messiah* Activity Page. Then, read the following verse from Numbers 24:17 (ICB).

¹⁷I see someone who will come some day. I see someone who will come, but not soon. A star will come from Jacob. A ruler will rise from Israel.

Read from Isaiah 9:6-7a (ICB).

⁶A child will be born to us. God will give a son to us. He will be responsible for leading the people. His name will be Wonderful Counselor, Powerful God, Father who Lives Forever, Prince of Peace. ⁷Power and peace will be in His Kingdom.

Read this last Scripture from the Old Testament, Isaiah 61:1-2a (ICB).

¹The Lord God has put his Spirit in me. This is because he has appointed me to tell the good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort those whose hearts are broken. He has sent me to tell the captives they are free. He has sent me to tell the prisoners that they are released. ²He has sent me to announce the time when the Lord will show his kindness.

Now read how people responded to Jesus in this New Testament Scripture, Mark 8:27-29 (ICB).

²⁷Jesus and his followers went to the towns around Caesarea Phillipi, while they were traveling, Jesus asked them, "Who do people say I am?" ²⁸They answered, "Some people say you are John the Baptist. Others say you are Elijah. And others say that you are one of the prophets." ²⁹Then he asked them, "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ."

Say, "Wow! God's Word has so much to say about the Messiah. Over 700 years before Jesus was born the Old Testament describes Him as a great and powerful Prince that brings peace forever. In addition to being an extraordinary leader, the Messiah would show God's kindness by caring for the poor, comforting those with sad, broken hearts, and bringing freedom to prisoners. What beautiful promises for the Jewish people! No wonder they waited with hope for the Messiah to arrive.

"Even though Christ performed incredible miracles and healed many people, He was not always recognized as the Messiah. When Jesus asked His disciples, 'Who do people say I am?' they answered that most people thought of Him as a good teacher or a holy man. Others wanted Jesus to be a "soldier Messiah" who would fight the human enemies of Israel. Only a few people recognized Jesus as the Messiah who came to rescue us from sin.

"Jesus was anointed [chosen/set apart] by God, His Father, to save people. Would you believe that He even wants to save our enemies? Many of those who met Jesus did not understand this. But Jesus wanted them to know Him as their Messiah, and **Jesus wants you to know Him too!**"

TRANSITION: Say, "It's so awesome to think about how Jesus is our Messiah. He was the promise God gave to the Jewish people and the whole world—that includes you and me! When He was on Earth, Jesus wanted people to know Him as the Messiah who came to save them from sin, and Jesus wants you to know Him that way too!"

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Today's lesson is amazing! Let's talk about it."

1. Who wants you to know Him?

Response: **Jesus wants me to know Him!**

2. What does Jesus want me to know about Him?

Response: He is the Messiah!

3. What does "Messiah" mean?

Response: The Anointed One

4. Who was waiting for the Messiah?

Response: The Jewish people

5. How was the Messiah described in the Old Testament?

Response: Answers will vary, but review today's text for possible answers.

6. If Isaiah wrote about the Messiah 700 years before Jesus was born, how did He know what to say about Him?

Response: Isaiah knew these things about Jesus (the Messiah) because God told him.

7. Did everyone recognize Jesus as the Messiah?

Response: No, many people thought He was only a good teacher or a holy man.

8. What did you learn about God in today's lesson?

Response: **Jesus wants me to know Him.** Jesus is the Promised Messiah. Jesus is kind. Jesus can do miracles. Jesus is God, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great discussion! Let's work on a craft that will help us remember that **Jesus wants you to know Him!**"

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | White Cardstock | Glass Bowl | Olive oil or Fractionated Coconut Oil (½ cup) | Scented Perfume or Essential Oil(s) (several drops) | Cinnamon (1 tsp) | Cotton Swabs (1 per student) |

BEFORE CLASS, CUT THE WHITE CARDSTOCK INTO 4"X4" SQUARES. YOU'LL NEED ONE SQUARE PER CHILD.



ALSO, BE SURE TO VERIFY THAT THERE ARE NO ALLERGIES TO COCONUT OR CINNAMON. IF SO, BE SURE TO USE OLIVE OIL OR ANOTHER SAFE OIL ALTERNATIVE INSTEAD OF COCONUT OIL, AND SKIP THE CINNAMON. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A STUDENT INFORMATION FORM (WITH ALLERGY ALERTS) FOR YOUR STUDENTS, THIS IS A GREAT TIME TO COLLECT THOSE.

Say, "Today, we are learning that Jesus is our Messiah. Remember Messiah means 'Anointed One,' so we will work together to make anointing oil similar to what they used in the Old and New Testaments. Then each one of you will get to take a sample home."

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. As a group, mix the oil, perfume or scented essential oil drops, and cinnamon together in a bowl. (Allow students to help with each step, including mixing the ingredients.)
2. Let the children make observations about what the oil looks and smells like. Give each student a paper square and cotton swab.
3. Allow each student to dip their cotton swab into the bowl of "anointing oil" and transfer a sample onto their paper.
4. Optional: If they desire, you can place a small amount on their forehead to allow them to experience being anointed with oil. You can talk about the other purposes of anointing oil in the church today.



TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRAY OVER EACH OF YOUR CHILDREN WHEN YOU ANNOINT THEM WITH THE OIL. ALLOW THE HOLY SPIRIT TO SPEAK AND PRAY THROUGH YOU. REMEMBER, JUST AS JESUS WAS ANNOINTED TO DO GREAT THINGS, IF WE BELIEVE IN HIM THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL ANNOINT US TO DO EVEN GREATER THINGS (JOHN 14:12).

TRANSITION: Say, "Wow! Wasn't this a fun project to help us remember Jesus, our 'Anointed One?'"

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "This month, we are learning a verse about who Jesus is. I am going to read it first, and then we will say it together."

"Jesus answered, (touch the middle of each palm with your index finger) 'I am the way. (extend both arms out towards you a forward motion) And I am the truth (hold hands together like a book) and the life (bring your hands close to your heart). The only way to the Father is through me. (point to the sky) If you really knew me (touch your head with your index finger), then you would know my Father too (point to the sky).'" John 14:6-7 (ICB)

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, "We learned something extraordinary about Jesus today! He is our Messiah who came to save us from sin! We will keep learning even more things about Christ next week because **Jesus wants you to know Him!**"



GOD IS FAITHFUL. LONG BEFORE CHRIST WAS BORN, GOD PROMISED HE WOULD SEND THE MESSIAH AND HE DID. EVEN THOUGH MANY PEOPLE NEVER LIVED TO SEE JESUS, IT DIDN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT GOD DID WHAT HE SAID HE WOULD DO. REMIND THE CHILDREN THAT GOD IS STILL FAITHFUL (HE DOES WHAT HE SAYS HE WILL DO). ASK THEM IF THEY ALWAYS DO WHAT THEY SAY THEY WILL DO (CLEAN THEIR ROOMS, TELL THE TRUTH, BE KIND, ETC.) OF COURSE NOT! ONLY GOD IS PERFECTLY FAITHFUL.

SAMPLE PRAYER: *"Thank You, Father, for always doing what You say You will do. We are so glad we can trust You. And thank You for sending us Your Son, Jesus, to be our Messiah. We love You! Amen!"*

RELEASE —

If there is extra time, replay the game or recite the memory verse again.



**JESUS: WHY DO
WE CALL HIM
MESSIAH?**

WEEK 2

**WHO IS
JESUS?**

WHO IS JESUS?



JESUS: HOW CAN I BE FRIENDS WITH GOD?

BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 6:12-16, Luke 15:1-2, Luke 17:11-19, Luke 19:1-5

BIG IDEA

Jesus wants you to know Him.

FOCUS VERSE

“Jesus answered, I am the way. And I am the truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through me. If you really knew me, then you would know my Father too.” John 14:6-7 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | *Cloud Example Activity Page* | *Cloud Activity Page* | Rainbow Colored Construction Paper Strips | Markers | Glue Sticks |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- How do you show love to your friends?
- What kind of people are hard for you to be friends with?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, “This month we are focusing on knowing Jesus. We want you to understand WHO He is [His character] and HOW to have a growing relationship with Him. In this lesson, we will discuss what it means for Jesus to be our greatest friend! Singing together gives us a chance to reflect with thankfulness that Jesus makes it possible for us to have friendship with God!” Choose songs that fit the month’s theme, including our recommended unit song: “My Best Friend” by Hillsong Kids.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“Dear Jesus, thank You for being our Messiah and our friend. What a wonderful gift of grace this is to us. Help us to understand more every day who You are and how much You love us! Amen.”*

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “This month, we are focusing on who Jesus is. In our first lesson, we heard that Jesus is both completely God and completely man. Then, last week, we learned that He is our Messiah! Today we are going to discover another wonderful truth about Jesus! When Jesus became a human and began His ministry on Earth, He chose followers [or disciples], and He spent time living with them and

teaching them. He also spent time with other people – lots of people. Later today, we will read about those people and see what kind of friends Jesus chose and how He treated them. As we hear about Jesus today, remember **Jesus wants you to know Him!** Who wants to put up the puzzle piece for today's lesson?"

TRANSITION: Say, "Let's play a game together before we read our story!"

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

Gather the children in a large area. Say, "Today, we are going to play *Red Rover*."

GAME GOAL: Teams will work together to end the game with the most people on their team.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Divide the students into two teams. Teams will form two lines holding hands and facing each other. Team lines should be at least 30 feet apart.
2. The team chosen to go first calls for a runner from the other line, saying, "Red Rover, Red Rover, let (insert child's name, i.e., "Jessica") come over!" "Jessica" will run towards the opposing team and try to break through their line.
3. If the targeted players cannot maintain their grip and the runner breaks through, she chooses someone from that opposing team to take back with her to her team.
4. If she doesn't break through, she stays with the opposing team.
5. The game ends when everyone is in one line.

TRANSITION: Say, "You guys did a great job playing this game! Having a good friend is so important. Like we saw in today's game, as we held hands with one another, good friends give you the strength to do things you could never do on your own. Today we are talking about the best friend we can have—Jesus! And, like you chose someone from the other team during the game, Jesus chooses you! He wants to be your friend!"

LEARN — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Today, we are learning about what it means to be friends with Jesus. Let's read a few stories from the book of Luke, and as we do that, remember that Jesus wants you to know Him!" Read Luke 6:12-16 (ICB).

¹² At that time, Jesus went off to a mountain to pray. He stayed there all night, praying to God. ¹³ The next morning, Jesus called his followers to him. He chose 12 of them, whom he named "apostles." They were ¹⁴ Simon (Jesus named him Peter) and Andrew, Peter's brother; James and John, Philip and Bartholomew; ¹⁵ Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon (called the Zealot), ¹⁶ Judas son of James and Judas Iscariot. This Judas was the one who gave Jesus to his enemies.

Read Luke 15:1-2 (ICB).

¹ Many tax collectors and “sinners” came to listen to Jesus. ² The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to complain: “Look! This man welcomes sinners and even eats with them!”

Read Luke 17:11-19 (ICB).

¹¹ Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. Traveling from Galilee to Samaria, ¹² he came into a small town. Ten men met him there. These men did not come close to Jesus, because they all had a harmful skin disease. ¹³ But they called to him, “Jesus! Master! Please help us!”¹⁴ When Jesus saw the men, he said, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” While the ten men were going, they were healed. ¹⁵ When one of them saw that he was healed, he went back to Jesus. He praised God in a loud voice. ¹⁶ Then he bowed down at Jesus’ feet and thanked him. (This man was a Samaritan.)

Read Luke 19:1-5 (ICB).

¹ Jesus was going through the city of Jericho. ² In Jericho there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a wealthy, very important tax collector. ³ He wanted to see who Jesus was, but he was too short to see above the crowd. ⁴ He ran ahead to a

Ask, “Wow! The book of Luke has a lot to say about the kind of friend Jesus is and who He chose to spend time with. Let’s first talk about the men Jesus chose to be his closest friends. We read that Jesus chose disciples [or followers]. Do you remember how many there were? Right! There were twelve disciples.

“Jesus’ disciples were very different from one another. They had different jobs, opinions, and personalities. In other parts of the Bible, you can read about a time when Jesus had to stop their arguing with one another! Yet, Jesus chose these very different people to be His friends. Jesus didn’t make this decision quickly. Our story told us that Jesus chose these men after He prayed all night on a mountain—wow! That’s pretty amazing!

“In the other parts of Luke’s Gospel, we see that Jesus spent time with some surprising people. Can you think of some surprising people Jesus befriended? [Wait for responses.] Great answers! Yes, Jesus was friends with sinners [those who disobeyed God], lepers [those with diseases], Samaritans [those who acted and looked different], and tax collectors [those who did jobs others disapproved of].

“Jesus sought out people nobody wanted to be friends with. Many Jews were mean to Jesus’ friends. They were often ignored or bullied and mistreated. But Jesus was kind to them. He touched and healed them—He even asked to go home with them! Do you think it was ever hard for Jesus to love some of these people? Why or why not? [Give the kids time to respond.]

“Jesus was an amazing friend to many different kinds of people. Jesus was friends with those who needed a friend, and He made friends with people so they could learn more about Him. Jesus wants to be your friend too—**Jesus wants you to know Him!**”

TRANSITION: Say, "It's amazing to think that we can be friends with Jesus just like the people we read about today. He was a kind friend no matter what someone looked like or where they came from. Last week we learned that Jesus was the Messiah—the Anointed One. He had a special purpose on Earth—to save people from their sins. Before Jesus showed His love for all people on the Cross, He showed His love for all people in the way He treated them on ordinary days. **Jesus wants you to know Him**—and He wants to be your friend too!

"When we follow Jesus and He lives in our hearts, He wants us to rethink how we view friendship! We often choose friends who are similar to us, who think and look like us. But Jesus gives a different example. He was friends with people who were different and who others avoided or mistreated. Think about a kid you know in your neighborhood, school or church who needs a friend. Ask Jesus to give you love and courage to befriend and show them the love and kindness of Jesus!"

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Our lesson today was so good and yet so challenging. Let's talk about it."

1. Who wants you to know Him?

Response: **Jesus wants me to know Him!**

2. What does Jesus want me to know about Him?

Response: He is my Friend!

3. When Jesus lived on Earth, whom did He choose as closest friends?

Response: His twelve disciples

4. What kinds of people did Jesus spend time with?

Response: Many different types of people: lepers, outcasts, tax collectors, sinners, etc.

5. Why did He choose to do this?

Response: Jesus came as the Messiah to save people from their sins. He showed His love and kindness to them by how He treated them.

6. How can you be a friend like Jesus?

Response: Answers will vary.

7. What have you learned about God today?

Response: **Jesus wants us to know Him.** Jesus is my friend. Jesus is kind to everyone. Jesus loves everyone, etc.



ALTHOUGH THE BIBLE TEACHES US A LOT ABOUT PEOPLE (AND EVEN US), THE HERO AND MAIN CHARACTER OF SCRIPTURE IS ALWAYS GOD. BECAUSE OF THAT, A GREAT FIRST QUESTION TO ASK ANYTIME WE READ GOD'S WORD IS "WHAT DOES THIS TEACH ME ABOUT GOD?" YOU CAN GIVE THESE LITTLE ONES THAT SKILL EARLY IN THEIR LIVES BY INCORPORATING THIS CRUCIAL QUESTION INTO YOUR DISCUSSION EACH WEEK!

TRANSITION: Say, "Great discussion! Let's work on a craft that will help us remember that **Jesus wants you to know Him!**"

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Cloud Example* Activity Page (1 per class) | *Cloud* Activity Page (1 per child) | Rainbow Colored Construction Paper Strips (1 set per child) | Markers (1 per child) | Glue Sticks |



BEFORE CLASS, CUT STRIPS OF CONSTRUCTION PAPER (SEE IMAGE) SO THAT EACH CHILD WILL HAVE ONE STRIP OF THE FOLLOWING COLORS: RED, ORANGE, YELLOW, GREEN, LIGHT BLUE, INDIGO, AND PURPLE.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a *Cloud* Activity Page, a set of Rainbow Paper Strips, and a marker.
2. Tell the students to write one reason Jesus is a good friend on each paper strip.
3. Instruct them to glue the paper strips onto the cloud shape to form a rainbow craft.

TRANSITION: Say, “Jesus is a great friend for so many reasons! It’s amazing that He wants to be our friend and that He helps us be good friends to others.”

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, “This month, we are learning a verse about who Jesus is. I am going to read it first, and then we will say it together.”

“**Jesus answered,** (*touch the middle of each palm with your index finger*) **‘I am the way.** (*extend both arms out towards you a forward motion*) **And I am the truth** (*hold hands together like a book*) **and the life** (*bring your hands close to your heart*). **The only way to the Father is through me.** (*point to the sky*) **If you really knew me** (*touch your head with your index finger*), **then you would know my Father too** (*point to the sky*).” **John 14:6-7 (ICB)**

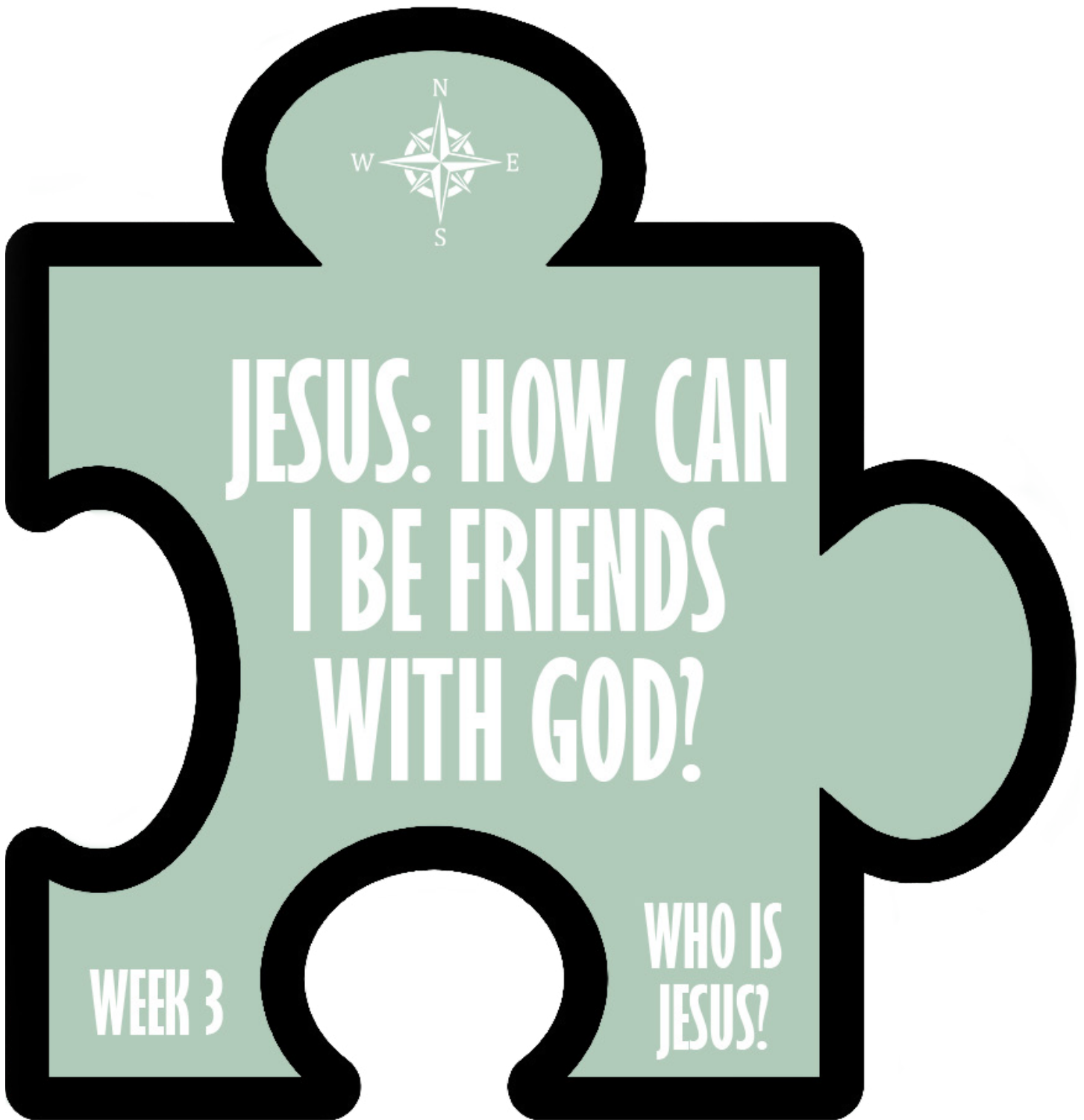
REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, “We have learned something incredible about Jesus today! He is our Friend who loves us and is kind to us. He also gives us an example of how we should love others. **Jesus wants you to know Him.** Jesus is your Friend!”

SAMPLE PRAYER: “*Thank you, Jesus, for helping us know more about You. We are amazed that You are God and Messiah, yet You also invite us to be Your friend. Please live in our hearts and help us follow You every day. Remind us often of how much You love us so we can love others. Amen.*”

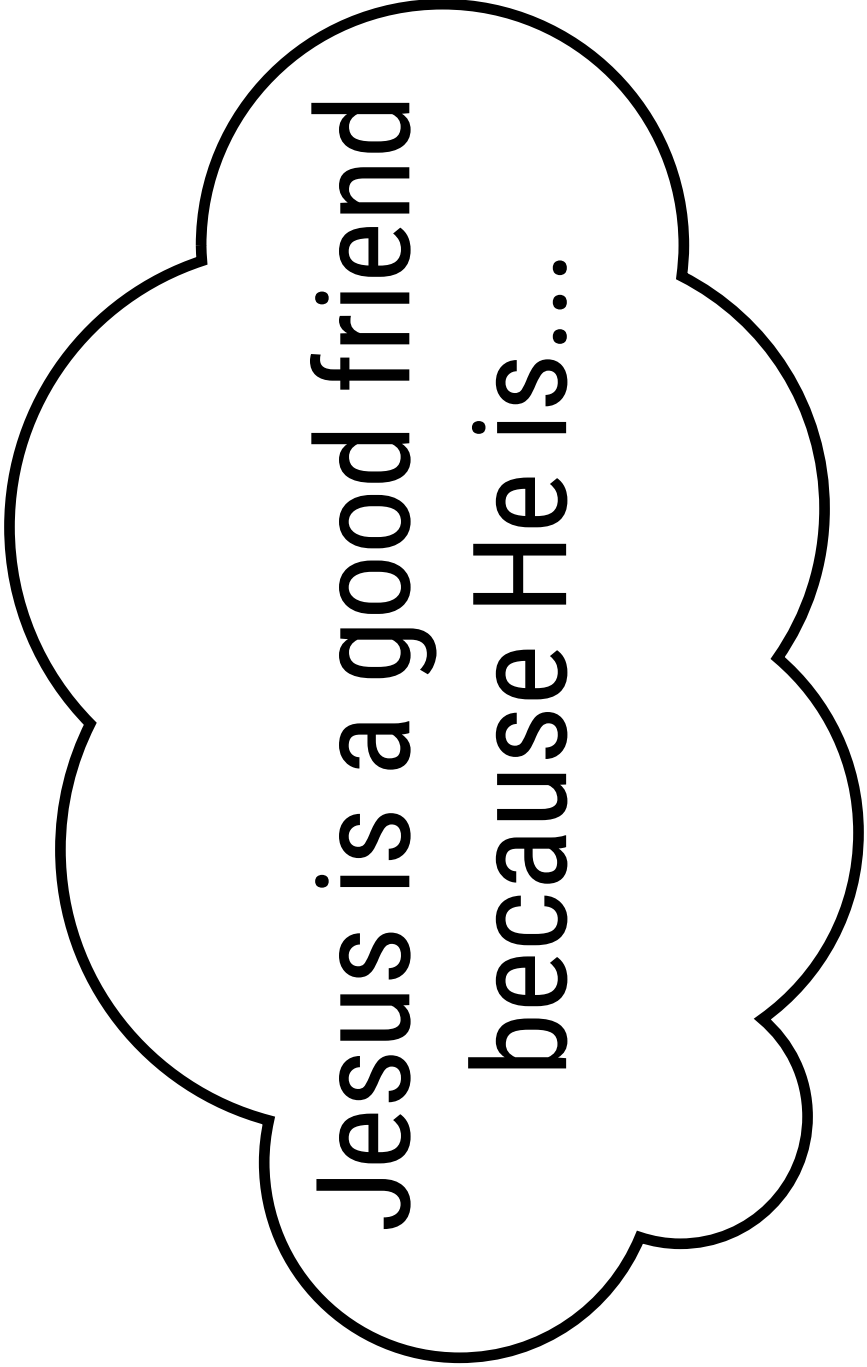
RELEASE —

If there is extra time, replay the game, finish the craft or recite the memory verse again.



Engage Activity Example





Jesus is a good friend
because He is...

WHO IS JESUS?



JESUS: WHY DO I NEED A REDEEMER?

BIBLE PASSAGE

Romans 5:12,18; 6:23, Galatians 4:4-5, Titus 2:14

BIG IDEA

Jesus wants you to know Him.

FOCUS VERSE

“Jesus answered, I am the way. And I am the truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through me. If you really knew me, then you would know my Father too.” John 14:6-7 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | *Hidden Pictures* Activity Page | Pencils | Crayons |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Do you enjoy finding new things?
- Have you ever lost something or someone important to you?
- How did that make you feel?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

This month we are getting to know Jesus better. In this lesson, we will learn that Jesus is our Redeemer! As you prepare, take time to reflect on how Jesus has redeemed your life. As you teach, include part of your testimony in the lesson. Share how Jesus has been your Redeemer. Never underestimate the impact your faith story can have on your students. Finally, during the worship time, incorporate songs that focus on Jesus, our Redeemer. Here are a few suggestions.

1. “This is Amazing Grace” by Capitol Kids!
2. “Amazing Love” by God’s Kids Worship Band
3. “There is a Redeemer” by Cedarhurst Kids

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

SAMPLE PRAYER: “Dear Jesus, You are so wonderful. Without You, we are lost. Thank You for being our God, our Messiah, our Friend, and our Redeemer. We are grateful for You. Amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, "This month, we are focusing on knowing Jesus. In our first lesson, we learned that Jesus is God. In our second lesson, we learned that Jesus is our Messiah, and last week we discovered that Jesus is our Friend! Today we will learn that Jesus came to be our Redeemer! A 'redeemer' is someone who finds something that has been lost and returns it to the original owner. We will learn more about how Jesus is our Redeemer and why we need a redeemer. **Jesus wants you to know Him!** Who wants to put up the puzzle piece for today's lesson?"



TODAY'S THEME MAY FEEL DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN TO CHILDREN, BUT DON'T SHY AWAY FROM IT. THE BIBLE (AND JESUS HIMSELF) CLEARLY TEACHES THAT ONLY CHRIST CAN SAVE US (REDEEM US), AND THIS TRUTH IS AT THE HEART OF OUR FAITH. (JOHN 14:6)

TRANSITION: Say, "Let's play a game together before we read our story!"

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

Gather the children in a large play area. Say, "Today, we're going to play a little game of *Hide and Seek*. Who's ready to play?"

GAME GOAL: Students will find their hiding classmates

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Choose one student to count for 30 seconds while other classmates hide.
2. After 30 seconds of counting, the student will have 3 minutes to find as many classmates as possible.
3. Play a few rounds alternating who gets to be the "seeker."

CHALLENGE: Play the game in reverse. One student hides while all other classmates count for 30 seconds. Every time a classmate finds the hiding one(s), they hide in the same place. When all students are hiding, the teacher goes to look for the group. You may need a bigger outdoor space for this challenge.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job finding your classmates! This game reminds us that Jesus always goes looking for His children who lose their way. Let's learn more about this!"

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, "Today, we are learning about Jesus as our Redeemer. Does anyone remember when we learned about 'The Fall?' [Give the kids hints as they try to remember details.]

"When we studied the book of Genesis, we learned that sin entered the world through Adam and Eve when they disobeyed God's command about eating the forbidden fruit. After they sinned, Adam and Eve realized they were naked. It was one of the many consequences of their sin. They hid from God and tried to cover their bodies with leaves. But the leaves did not provide a good hiding place, and they did not make good clothes. In His kindness, God saw Adam and Eve, and He gave them better clothes to cover their bodies. Even in their brokenness and sinfulness, God showed Adam and Eve mercy and began His plan of redemption. Let's read God's Word together to hear more about how Christ, our Redeemer, came to take care of the sin and brokenness Adam and Eve caused." Read Romans 5:12,18 (ICB).

12 Sin came into the world because of what one man did. And with sin came death. And this is why all men must die—because all men sinned.

18 So, one sin of Adam brought the punishment of death to all people. But in the same way, one good act that Christ did makes all people right with God. And that brings true life for all.

Ask, “What is the ‘one good act that Christ did?’ [Allow kids to respond.] Yes, Jesus Christ died on the Cross for our sins. Let’s read Romans 6:23 (ICB) and find why He had to do that.”

23 The payment for sin is death. But God gives us the free gift of life forever in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ask, “What is the payment for my sin and your sin? [Allow the kids to think through this concept.] That’s right. The cost for our sin is death. That is so hard to think about, isn’t it? Let’s talk about that a little more.

“Redeemer’ is an interesting word. Does anyone want to try and help me explain what it means? [Allow kids to respond.] Those are great answers! I want you to think about what it would be like if you were in prison for doing something bad. Now, imagine that someone came along and paid a lot of money to get you out, even though you didn’t deserve it. This would be called ‘redeeming.’ Well, Jesus is our Redeemer, because He paid the price for our sin even though we don’t deserve it. And only He could do that because He was perfect! He never disobeyed His Father [God]. We can be free from the punishment of sin, because Jesus died on the Cross. He redeems us! Let’s see how the Bible describes this.” Now, read Galatians 4:4-5 (ICB).

4 But when the right time came, God sent his Son. His Son was born of a woman and lived under the law. 5 God did this so that he could buy freedom for those who were under the law. His purpose was to make us his children.

Finally, read Titus 2:14 (ICB).

14 He gave himself for us; he died to free us from all evil. He died to make us pure people who belong only to him—people who are always wanting to do good things.

Say, “Just like Adam and Eve, we also disobey God [sin], and that separates us from Him. Sin breaks our relationship with God. The only way to make that relationship right, is to pay the price for our sin. God loves us so much that He sent his Son, Jesus, to pay that price and to be our Redeemer. Jesus can forgive us, take our sins, and make us God’s very own children [redeem us].

“When we sin, there is nothing we can do to save ourselves, and there’s nothing we can do to earn God’s forgiveness. Even after Adam and Eve sinned, God showed kindness and gave them animal skins to cover their bodies. The leaves they used for clothing was not good enough. Now, when Jesus finds us in sin, He gives us a different covering. We are covered by His perfect life and the love He showed when He died on the Cross. When Jesus covers us, God accepts us as His children, and we are redeemed.

“Sometimes when we sin we feel ashamed or afraid, we try to hide from God like Adam and Eve hid from God. But look at it from God’s perspective. Think about it this way; how do you feel when you lose

something so wonderful that was so special to you? I know I would do anything to find it. Now, imagine finally finding that wonderful thing! How would you feel then? [Wait for responses.] If Jesus loves you enough to leave Heaven and come to Earth to find you and die for you, how do you think He feels when He redeems you? Yes! God celebrates when His lost children come home. **Jesus wants you to know Him**— He is our wonderful Redeemer!”

TRANSITION: Say, “It’s so incredible to know Jesus finds us and forgives us. When you ask Him to forgive your sins [the bad things you’ve done], He is always willing. He is your Redeemer!”

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, “We learned something amazing about Jesus today! Let’s talk about it!”

1. Who wants you to know Him?

Response: **Jesus wants me to know Him!**

2. What does Jesus want me to know about Him?

Response: He is my Redeemer!

3. What is a Redeemer?

Response: A redeemer is someone who looks for something that is lost and returns it to its owner or someone who pays the cost of someone else’s freedom.

4. Why do we need a redeemer?

Response: Our sins make us lost (separate from God) and deserving of punishment.

5. How does Jesus redeem us?

Response: He died on the Cross to take our punishment and cover our sins.

6. Why does Jesus redeem us?

Response: Because God is our Creator and He is full of love, grace, and mercy!

7. What did you learn about Jesus this week?

Response: **Jesus wants me to know Him!** Jesus is our Redeemer. Jesus loves me. Jesus died on the Cross for us, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, “Great discussion! Let’s work on a craft that will help us remember that Jesus wants you to know Him!”

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Hidden Pictures* Activity Page (1 per 2 students) | Pencils | Crayons |

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each pair of children a *Hidden Pictures* Activity Page
2. Instruct them to work together to find the “hiding” images in the picture.
3. Have students circle or color the images as they find them.

TRANSITION: Say, “Wow! Great job working together to find what was hiding! This activity reminds us that Christ always comes for us when we lose our way! He will always search for us when we’re lost! What a great Redeemer we have in Jesus.”

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "This month, we are learning a verse about who Jesus is. I am going to read it first, and then we will say it together."

"Jesus answered, (touch the middle of each palm with your index finger) 'I am the way. (extend both arms out towards you a forward motion) And I am the truth (hold hands together like a book) and the life (bring your hands close to your heart). The only way to the Father is through me. (point to the sky) If you really knew me (touch your head with your index finger), then you would know my Father too (point to the sky).'" John 14:6-7 (ICB)

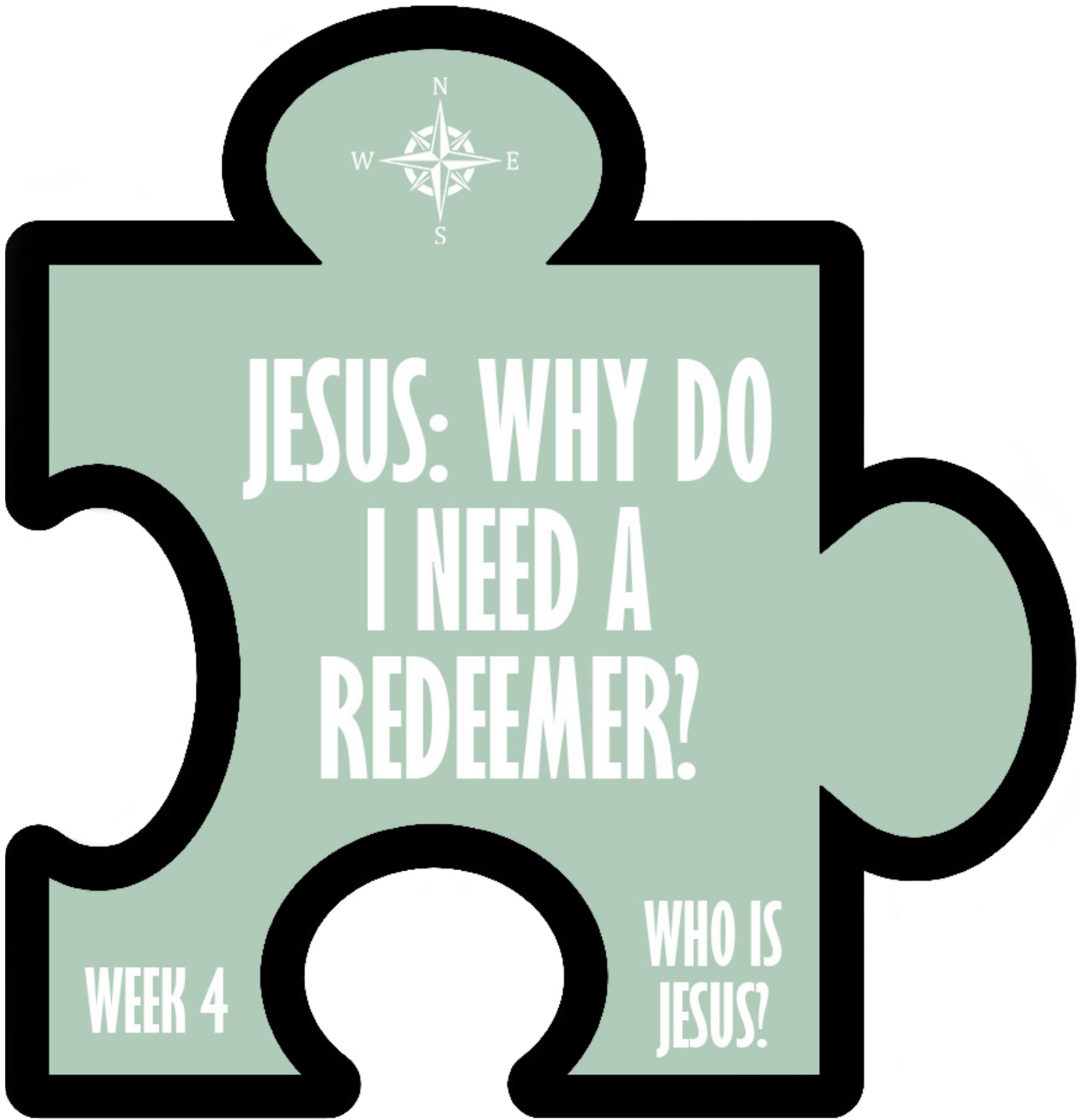
REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, "We have learned something extraordinary about Jesus today! He is our Redeemer who covers our sin and brings us back to God! **Jesus wants you to know Him**, and He is your amazing Redeemer! How do you feel about Jesus being your Redeemer? [Wait for responses.] Awesome! I'm so glad He is my Redeemer too!"

SAMPLE PRAYER: *"Thank You, Jesus, for helping us know more about You. We are grateful that You are our Redeemer—You died on the cross to cover our sin and bring us back to God. Thank You for Your love, mercy, and grace. Please help us share Your Good News with someone else we know who is lost. Amen."*

RELEASE —

If there is extra time, replay the game or sing this month's favorite worship songs.



Hidden Pictures

Can you find all of the hidden items in the picture?

