

WHO IS JESUS?



IPHC KIDS CURRICULUM
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WHO IS JESUS?

YEAR 3, UNIT 2

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WHO IS JESUS!

MONTHLY PREPARATION GUIDE

YEAR 3, UNIT 02 - ELEMENTARY

This month's lessons continues to ask the question, *Who is Jesus?* We are committed to helping children understand that Jesus is our great, big God. But we also want to make sure they understand that He is our personal savior and best friend. Together, we will discover that Jesus is our Creator, and He is the only Way to our Heavenly Father. We will encourage the children to say "yes" to Jesus, and we will teach them that He has made us part of God's family. 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), Playdough (4-8 Containers), Timer, *Ephesians 2:10* Activity Page (1 per child), Stickers (variety of Scripture Verses), Colored Pencils

WEEK 2

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), Personal Dry-Erase Boards (1 per child), Dry-Erase Markers (1 per child), Erasers (1 per child), Paper Plates (1 per child), *Arrow* Activity Page (1 Arrow per child), Markers, Brads (1 per child), Scissors

WEEK 3

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), Masking Tape, 1/2" Wooden Dowel Rods cut to 16" (1 per child), *Fish* Activity Page (2-3 copies per class), Scissors, Yarn (12" per child), Patterned Scrapbook Paper or Cardstock (1 page per child), Fine Point Markers, Hole Punch, Scotch Tape, Washable Markers, Plastic Straws (optional, 1 per child)

WEEK 4

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), Large Bag(s) of Skittles or M&Ms (see directions), Fun Size Bags of Skittles or M&Ms (1 per child), 3" x 3" x 3" Cardboard Boxes (1 per child), Notecards (3-4 per child), Stickers, Markers, Watercolor Paints (1 set per child), Paint Brushes (1 per child)

JESUS: THE CREATOR

BIBLE PASSAGE

Genesis 1:1-2, John 1:1-5, John 10:10

BIG IDEA

I was created to know, follow, and enjoy Jesus.

FOCUS VERSE

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way. And I am truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through me.’” John 14:6-7 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Playdough | Timer | *Ephesians 2:10* Activity Page | Stickers | Colored Pencils |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What’s the weirdest thing you’ve ever eaten?
- How would you like to spend a rainy day?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, “In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul preached in Athens, Greece – a city that still exists today. Paul noticed that the people who lived there worshiped a god whose name they did not even know. So, Paul took that opportunity to tell the people about Jesus, declaring, ‘in Him we live and move and have our being.’ [Acts 17:28a] What do you think that verse means? [Give the children a chance to share their thoughts.] Well, Jesus most definitely is the reason we can sing and move! Without Him, we would not exist! And I’m so glad Jesus does not hide from us. We know His name and so many wonderful things about Him, that we can’t help but worship Him. Let’s do that now.”

We recommend “Made for This” by Lifetree Kids as a theme song for this unit. Other suggestions include “He Knows My Name” by Lifetree Kids, “I Am Who You Say I Am” by Hillsong, and “Nothing is Missing” by Elevation Worship Kids.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Pray that the Holy Spirit will give the children eyes to see and ears to hear the message that Jesus is the Creator.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “God, thank You for giving us a place to worship You. We pray that You will be glorified in

everything we do today. In Jesus' name. Amen."

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, "This month, we will be 'Walking with Jesus' as we learn to follow Christ and get to know Him better along the way. Today's lesson teaches us that Jesus is our Creator, so we're going to begin with an activity that allows us to build our own creations! First though, who would like to post this week's puzzle piece?" (Add this month's puzzle piece to your wall.)



WE INCLUDE A PUZZLE PIECE IN EACH LESSON TO HELP THE CHILDREN UNDERSTAND THAT ALL SCRIPTURE FITS PERFECTLY IN A STORY THAT TELLS US THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST. PAUSE TODAY TO WONDER AT THAT MIRACLE. HOW DID IT HAPPEN THAT ALL THE SEPARATE STORIES WE READ ABOUT IN THE BIBLE (GIVE EXAMPLES) WORK TOGETHER TO TELL GOD'S GREAT BIG STORY? THE ONLY EXPLANATION IS THAT GOD IS ALL-POWERFUL! HE IS THE ALL-POWERFUL CREATOR WHO CONTINUES TO WORK OUT HIS PLANS AND ALWAYS WILL. THANK GOD!

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Playdough (4-8 Containers) | Timer |

Say, "To play, I will call a few students at a time, and each person will receive two containers of playdough. Then, I will set a timer, and when I say "Go," you will have three minutes to create the best-looking person, place, or thing you can build. You get to choose what you make. When the time is up, you will whisper to me what you were creating, and the rest of the class will try to guess what you've created. Then the class will vote on which one they like most. Who is ready to play?"

GAME GOAL: To use playdough to create your best person, place, or thing.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Choose 3-4 students to participate in each round.
2. Give each student two containers of playdough and set a timer for three minutes.
3. When the leader says "Go!" students will create something from playdough.
4. When the time is up, the leader will ask the children what they created, and the class will vote on which "sculpture" they like best.
5. Play as many rounds as time allows or until everyone has a turn.



GIVE MORE DIRECTION TO THE GAME BY CHOOSING A CATEGORY FOR EACH ROUND. FOR EXAMPLE, THE FIRST ROUND COULD BE "ANIMALS," THE SECOND ROUND COULD BE "WINTER," AND THE THIRD ROUND COULD BE "SPORTS," ETC.

TRANSITION: Congratulate the winners. Say, "At this time, we will read from God's Word. If you have your Bible, please turn with me to the first page of the Bible, Genesis Chapter 1."

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, "Have you ever asked questions like, 'Where did I come from?' 'Who gets to say what is right and what is wrong?' 'Who created the earth?' I know I have! These are essential questions, and God knows they matter to us. He gave us the Bible to help answer these questions. As we read His Word, we find a clear answer to these questions: Jesus is our Creator.

"Let's start our journey at the very beginning in Genesis 1." Read Genesis 1:1-2 (ICB).

¹ In the beginning God created the sky and the earth. ² The earth was empty and had no form. Darkness covered the ocean, and God's Spirit was moving over the water.

Say, "Before the beginning of time, God was. Before the world was formed, God was working. This is hard for our minds to imagine because we connect things with WHEN they happened. We think in terms of time - time of day, day of the week, year, decade, or century. However, God has ALWAYS existed.

"The Bible says, 'in the beginning,' God did what? [Wait for responses.] He created! If we were to continue reading about the seven days of creation, we would see God created many wonderful things, but there was only one thing He called VERY good. What was that? [Pause for answers] That's right! God called us, people, very good! We are God's special creation! We are going to be talking more about that later this month. For now, it's important to understand that God made us, and we are very special to Him.

"Now let's read John 1:1-5 [ICB] and see if we can learn more about our God who created us. Listen and see if you hear any repeated words from Genesis chapter 1."

¹ Before 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. ⁴ In him there was life. That life was light for the people of the world. ⁵ The Light shines in the darkness. And the darkness has not overpowered the Light.

Ask, "What words did you hear in both Genesis and John? [Pause for answers.] John tells us that God made all things. He also tells us that 'before the world began, there was the Word.' John was a disciple of Jesus and called Jesus 'the Word' because He believed Jesus was God's most important way of 'speaking' to us. God used prophets, judges, priests, and kings to speak to His people throughout the years. However, Jesus was the Perfect Word given to us.

"Let me read Colossians 1:15-17 [ICB] to you now."

¹⁵ No one has seen God, but Jesus is exactly like him. Christ ranks higher than all the things that have been made. ¹⁶ Through his power all things were made—things in heaven and on earth, things seen and unseen, all powers, authorities, lords, and rulers. All things were made through Christ and for Christ. ¹⁷ Christ was there before anything was made. And all things continue because of him.

Say, "If all things were created through and for Jesus, that means WE were made through Jesus and for Jesus. He gives us breath, and the ability to move, think, and play. He created us to live a joyful life. It's

not always easy to do that, though, is it? Let's find out why." Read John 10:10 (ICB).

A thief comes to steal and kill and destroy. But I came to give life-life in its fullness.

Ask, "Who do you think the thief is? [Pause for answers] That's right, the devil. He doesn't want us to believe that we are special to God. He wants us to settle for less than God's best for us. However, Jesus came to show us that He created us. He came so we could know Him and be close to Him. Our sin separates us from God, and He hated that so much that He sent His only Son, Jesus, to die on the Cross for us. God created us physically, and when our souls became broken with sin, He came to make us new spiritually too! That's good news!"

TRANSITION: Say, "Jesus calls us His special creation, and, He came to show us the way to life and hope and joy. Jesus is our Creator."

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

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

1. In the beginning, what did God do?

Response: He created us.

2. Which part of His creation did God call VERY good?

Response: He called us, His people, very good!

3. John believed Jesus was God's Perfect...?

Response: Word.

4. The Bible says God calls us to live a full life. What does that mean?

Response: We have a "full life" when we know Jesus and His love more and more.

5. What does it mean that we are created for Jesus?

Response: We love Jesus when we give our lives to Him, thank Him, worship Him, love others, put Him first, etc.

6. What does this lesson teach us about God?

Response: Jesus is our Creator. We are special to God. God called people "very good." Jesus came to give us life, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Thank you for a great discussion! Now that we have looked at God's Word and discovered the truth that Jesus is our Creator, let's create a page that reminds us that we are God's special creation."

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Ephesians 2:10* Activity Page (1 per child) | Stickers (variety of Scripture Verses) | Colored Pencils |

Say, "We have learned that it is God who created us. When He created us, He called us VERY good because we are His special creation. *Ephesians 2:10* says that we are God's masterpiece. At the top of our page, it says, 'I am God's special creation.' If God calls you His special creation, what do you think He

sees when He looks at you? What thoughts and feelings does He have about you? Let's take a moment to draw, write, and express our answers to these questions."

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a *Ephesians 2:10* Activity Page.
2. Encourage the children to use stickers and colored pencils or markers to express what they think God thinks and feels when He calls them His special creation.



PROVIDE STICKERS WITH SCRIPTURE VERSES AND ENCOURAGING WORDS.

TRANSITION: Say, "It is easy to get discouraged and forget that God has created us and that we are special to Him. This page can be a reminder of both of those truths. You can hang it in your room or somewhere else in your house to remember you are God's special creation."

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "This month, our memory verse comes from John 14:6. We can follow Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life. I will read the verse and show you the motions, and then we will do 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)'"

John 14:6 (ICB)

Challenge: Pair the children. Have them face each other and work together to say and do the motions simultaneously. The object is for them to be mirror images of one another.

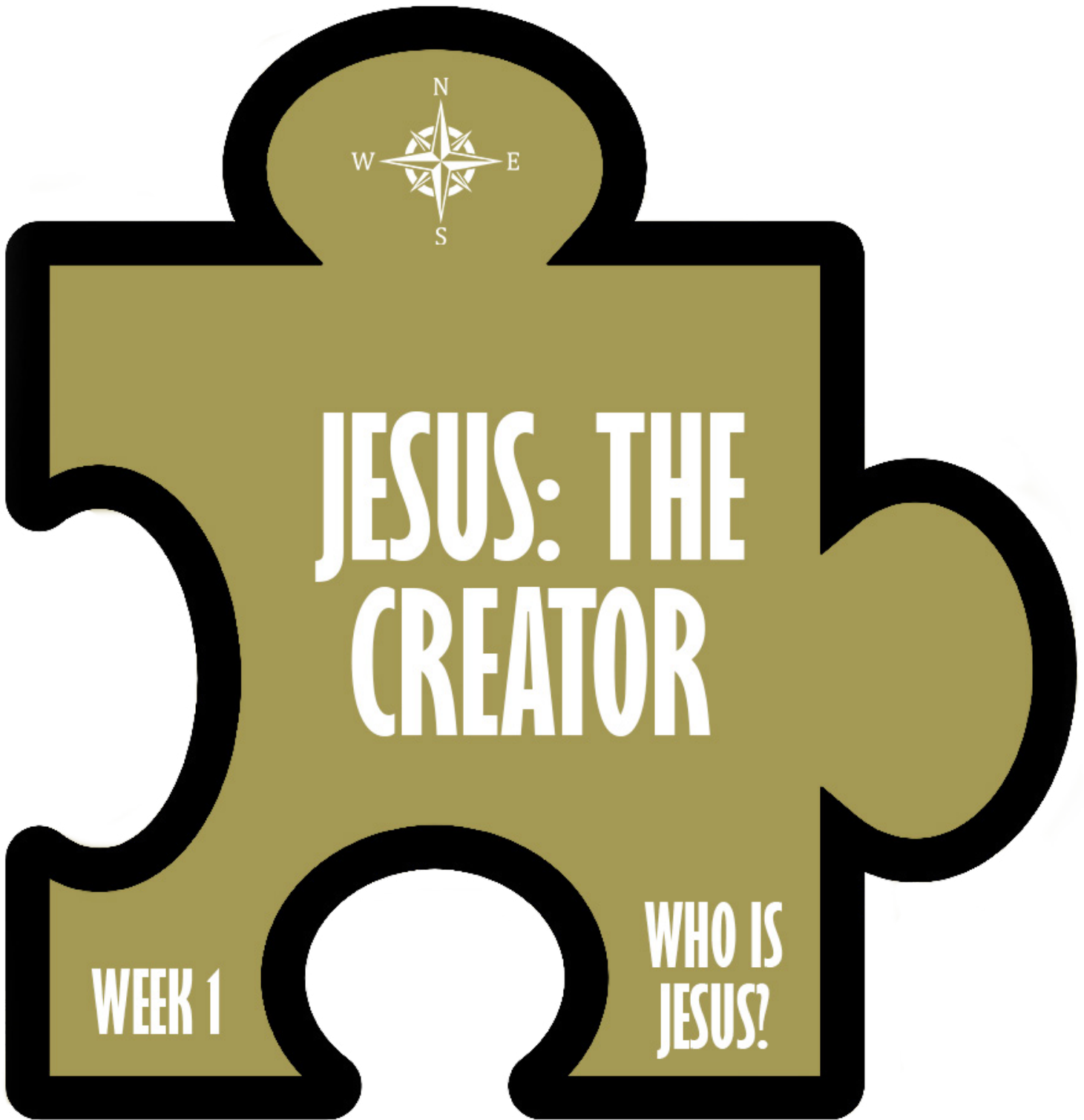
REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, "Jesus is our Creator. He not only created our bodies, but He also gives us new life from sin. The enemy would love to convince us not to follow Christ. However, today we learned that God alone invites us on a journey to discover the only true and wonderful life. Let's pray and thank Jesus that He is our Creator."

SAMPLE PRAYER: "God, thank You for giving us life. Sometimes we forget that this life is all about You. Today we take a moment to remember that You created us to bring You glory and live life with You. Thank You for inviting us on this wonderful journey. In Jesus' name, Amen."

RELEASE —

Have the children share their worksheets with the class if there is extra time. Remind them that they are all God's special creations. Please provide parents with a copy of the monthly Parent Guide (downloadable) as they arrive.



I AM GOD'S SPECIAL CREATION

'GOD HAS MADE US WHAT WE ARE. IN CHRIST JESUS, GOD MADE US NEW PEOPLE SO THAT WE WOULD DO GOOD WORKS. GOD HAS PLANNED IN ADVANCE THOSE GOOD WORKS FOR US. HE HAD PLANNED FOR US TO LIVE OUR LIVES DOING THEM.'

EPHESIANS 2:10 (ICB)

WHO IS JESUS?



JESUS: THE WAY

BIBLE PASSAGE

John 6:66-69

BIG IDEA

I was created to know, follow, and enjoy Jesus.

FOCUS VERSE

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way. And I am truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through me.’” John 14:6 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Personal Dry-Erase Boards | Dry-Erase Markers | Erasers | Paper Plates | Arrow Activity Page | Markers | Brads | Scissors |

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, “In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul wrote about Jesus in the Book of Colossians: ‘For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.’ [Colossians 1:16-17] Jesus is worthy of our worship. Let’s worship Him today!

We recommend “Made for This” by Lifetree Kids as a theme song to play throughout this unit. Other suggestions for songs include “He Knows My Name” by Lifetree Kids, “I Am Who You Say I Am” by Hillsong, and “Nothing is Missing” by Elevation Worship Kids.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Pray that the Holy Spirit will give the children spiritual eyes to see and ears to hear that Jesus is the Way.

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“God, thank You for the opportunity to worship You. May Your Kingdom come, and Your will be done in our time together. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”*

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

BACKGROUND: Say, “Last week, we learned that Jesus is our Creator. He is the Creator of the whole universe, and He created us! We discovered that God made us different from the rest of creation, and He even said we were VERY good. We also learned that we have an enemy, the devil, who wants to destroy us. However, Jesus came to give us life!

Today, we are going to talk about how Jesus is the Way. This month, we are asking the question, ‘Who is Jesus?’ We are learning about becoming a Christ-follower. Before we go any further, though, who would like to put up our newest puzzle piece?” Remind the children that all Bible stories fit together perfectly into one big story about God.

TRANSITION: Say, “Before we talk about how Jesus is the Way, we are going to play a game!

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES**MATERIALS:** | Personal Dry-Erase Boards (1 per child) | Dry-Erase Markers (1 per child) | Erasers (1 per child) |

PERSONAL DRY-ERASE BOARDS WITH MARKERS AND ERASERS ARE FANTASTIC ITEMS TO STOCK IN YOUR CLASSROOM. THESE MATERIALS ENHANCE MANY GAMES OR ACTIVITIES WHERE WRITING OR DRAWING ARE REQUIRED. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE PERSONAL DRY-ERASE BOARDS, YOU CAN STILL DO THIS ACTIVITY WITH PAPER AND PENS.

Say, “Today, we are going to play a game where we must guess which statements are true and which are false. I will say a statement out loud to the class. If you think it’s true, write ‘T’ for ‘true’ on your board. If you think I am being silly, and what I’m saying isn’t true, write ‘F’ for ‘false.’ If you answer incorrectly, you are out of the round and should place your board facedown. The last person remaining wins the round.” Repeat the game until you are ready to move to the next activity.

GAME GOAL: To correctly answer as many true/false statements as possible.

True or False Statements:

1. George Washington was the first president of the United States. (T)
2. Joshua is the first book of the Bible. (F)
3. $2 + 2$ equals 4. (T)
4. Orange is one of the colors in a rainbow. (T)
5. Abraham Lincoln is on the \$100 bill. (F)
6. An apple has seeds on the inside. (T)
7. The Apostle Paul was originally called Saul. (T)
8. 1,000 is a smaller number than 900. (F)
9. Ice is formed when water gets too hot. (F)
10. When driving, a green light means go. (T)
11. The Atlantic is the largest ocean. (F)

12. Sharks are mammals. (F)
13. You cannot cry in space. (T)
14. "A" is the most used letter in the English alphabet. (F)
15. 5 + 9 equals 14. (T)
16. Australia is a country and a continent. (T)
17. Nemo is a pufferfish. (F)
18. Cows sleep standing up. (T)
19. You hear with your nose. (F)
20. A penguin is not a bird. (F)



GOOGLE "TRUE/FALSE QUESTIONS FOR KIDS" FOR MORE GAME QUESTIONS."

TRANSITION: Say, "Awesome job, everyone! Weren't those interesting questions? Who learned something new? Great! What did you learn? [Give the children a chance to share from the questions you read.] Now, I invite you to turn with me in your Bibles to John chapter 6, so we can read about a truth we need to learn and believe: Jesus is the Way.

LEARN – 15 MINUTES

Read the following passages from John 6:66-69 (ICB).

After Jesus said this, many of his followers left him. They stopped following him. ⁶⁷ Jesus asked the 12 followers, "Do you want to leave, too?" ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered Jesus, "Lord, who would we go to? You have the words that give eternal life. ⁶⁹ We believe in you. We know that you are the Holy One from God."

Read John 14:6 (ICB).

Jesus answered, "I am the way. And I am the truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through me. – John 14:6

Say, "When today's story begins, Jesus had been performing miracles and teaching with powerful words. Some of the things He said offended His followers, especially when He claimed to be God. Many of those people turned and abandoned Jesus. After they left, Jesus asked his twelve disciples if they would leave Him too; Simon Peter spoke up because he knew something about Jesus was extraordinary. Peter said, 'Lord, to whom shall we go?' Peter believed Jesus had the words of eternal life. He was starting to understand that Jesus is God!

"Last week we talked about one of Jesus' disciples named John. He understood that Jesus was His Creator. In today's passage, another disciple, Simon Peter, said to Jesus, 'You are the Holy One of God!' Does anyone know what 'holy' means? The word holy means 'to set apart for a purpose.' Peter recognized that Jesus was different. He was 'set apart.' Peter knew Jesus was the answer God had sent into the world, and Jesus didn't hide from this truth. In John 14:6, Jesus said, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.' Jesus acknowledged that He is the ONLY way to God. That means one of two things: Either Jesus was telling the truth, or He was lying. Does that remind you of our game? Either 2 + 2 is 4, or it is not. It can't be true and false.

"If Jesus was lying, Christianity isn't necessary. Some say Jesus was just a teacher with some cool ideas, but worst case, He was a liar and was fooling everyone. However, I believe – and other Christians all over the world have believed for thousands of years that - Jesus was telling the truth! We believe Jesus died on the Cross and rose again! Why do we think that? Because His disciples saw Him after He rose from the dead, and they shared their testimony [or experiences] with friends. They wrote their stories down, and those words remain with us. [This is why we have the Gospels.] We also have reports of people like Saul who hated Christians until he met Jesus, and then his whole life changed! He went on to write most of the New Testament!

"This leads us to our last point. Peter said, 'We have come to believe and know...'. Like Peter and the other disciples, we have a choice to make. We can believe in the God who created us or say, 'no, I do not believe.' I pray that you will say 'Yes' to Jesus. He is the Way to God and to the best life you can imagine. He is the Way to a personal relationship with God now and forever."

TRANSITION: Say, "Jesus did many wonderful things, but not everyone believed in Him. Peter's words remind us that Jesus is the only one with the words of eternal life. He is holy (set apart) and different. Jesus is the Way."

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Isn't it amazing to know that Jesus is the Way? Let's talk more about it."

1. When Jesus asked his twelve disciples if they would leave too, who responded?

Response: Simon Peter

2. What does the word "holy" mean?

Response: To be set apart for a purpose.

3. In John 14:6, Jesus claims to be three things. What are they?

Response: The way, the truth, and the life.

4. What is one of the reasons we believe Jesus died and rose again?

Response: We believe because of the testimony (personal stories) of people who knew Jesus, others who were changed by Jesus, and our own experiences of knowing Jesus.

5. Peter said, "We have come to believe and to know..." What does that mean for us today?

Response: We choose whether or not to follow Jesus.

6. What does this lesson teach us about God?

Response: Jesus is the Way. God forgives all those who ask. Jesus is holy and came to Earth for a purpose. God loves you.



STAY SENSITIVE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT AND FOLLOW HIS LEADING.
THIS DISCUSSION MAY PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO
LEAD CHILDREN TO CHRIST.

TRANSITION: Say, "Thank you for a great discussion! May we always remember the truth that Jesus is the Way!"

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Paper Plates (1 per child) | Arrow Activity Page (1 Arrow per child) | Markers | Brads (1 per child) | Scissors |

Say, "Our lesson today has centered on a simple truth: Can you name that truth? [Pause for answers] That's right, Jesus is the Way. Today we will make a compass to remind us that Jesus is the Way."



BEFORE CLASS, CUT OUT ENOUGH ARROWS FOR EACH CHILD TO HAVE 1.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a paper plate, an arrow cutout, a marker, and a brad.
2. Have the children write N, E, S, and West on their plates to resemble a compass.
3. Near the bottom of the plate, have each child write, "Jesus is the Way."
4. Then, instruct the children to fold the plate in half and cut a small slit in the center back.
5. Have the children place the arrow on the front side of the plate. Use the brad to stick through the arrow and hole in the plate. Fasten the brad.
6. Finally, encourage children to decorate their plates/compasses.

TRANSITION: Say, "The world will sometimes try to convince us that there are other ways to God. Our compass is a reminder that only Jesus is the Way."

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "This month's memory verse comes from John 14:6. Let's practice it as a group, and then we will divide up for a bit of competition between the boys and the girls to see who can recite it the best!"

"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)'"
John 14:6 (ICB)

CHALLENGE: Have the girls say the verse aloud and then have the boys recite it. Declare a winner!

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

THIS LESSON TALKS ABOUT JESUS BEING "THE WAY" TO THE FATHER, BUT A SECONDARY THEME IS THE TRUTHFULNESS OF CHRIST. WE CAN 100% TRUST GOD BECAUSE HE IS PERFECTLY TRUE. USE THESE NEXT FEW MOMENTS TO EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FICTIONAL STORIES, LIKE FAIRY TALES, AND GOD AND HIS WORD. HELP THEM MAKE THIS DISTINCTION NOW; GOD CAN USE IT TO CREATE A FOUNDATION OF BELIEF EVEN AT A YOUNG AGE.

Say, "Believing in Jesus isn't like believing in a fairy tale. Wait a minute, what is a fairy tale?" [Allow the children to describe fairy tales. Help them understand that fairy tales are wonderful, magical stories that we can enjoy but know are not real – or true.] What is your favorite fairy tale? [If they need help getting started, suggest stories like 'The Three Bears, "Cinderella," or "Rumpelstiltskin."'] It's important to know that, unlike fairy tales, the Bible is true, which means Jesus is real and true too. We can trust everything God says. Can you name something wonderful that God says is true? Yes! Let's thank Him for those amazing and true words right now!"

SAMPLE PRAYER: *"God, thank You for being true and sending Your Son, Jesus, to be the Way. I am so glad we can trust everything You say. Help us to believe that truth and follow You forever. Amen."*

RELEASE —

If there is extra time, have the kids take turns showing the class their "Jesus is the Way" pictures. Then, have everyone share one way they will tell their friends about Jesus.



JESUS: THE WAY

WEEK 2

WHO IS
JESUS?



WHO IS JESUS?



JESUS: SAY YES TO HIM

BIBLE PASSAGE

Matthew 4:18-22, Matthew 28:18-20

BIG IDEA

I was created to know, follow, and enjoy Jesus.

FOCUS VERSE

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way. And I am truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through me.’” John 14:6 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Masking Tape | 1/2" Wooden Dowel Rods cut to 16" | *Fish* Activity Page | Scissors
| Yarn | Patterned Scrapbook Paper or Cardstock | Fine Point Markers | Hole Punch | Scotch Tape | Washable Markers | Plastic Straws (optional) |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Have you ever been fishing? If so, what was it like?
- What is your middle name?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, “This month has been great so far! We have talked about how Christ is our Creator and our Way to God. I can’t wait to talk more about Jesus today! But first, let’s begin by worshiping our Lord!”

We recommend “Made for This” by Lifetree Kids as a theme song to play throughout this unit. Other suggestions for songs include “He Knows My Name” by Lifetree Kids, “I Am Who You Say I Am” by Hillsong, and “Nothing is Missing” by Elevation Worship Kids.



BEFORE YOU MOVE INTO YOUR PRAYER TIME, ASK THE CHILDREN TO TELL YOU WHAT TODAY’S SONGS TELL US ABOUT GOD. HELP THE KIDS RECOGNIZE SOME OF THE IMPORTANT ATTRIBUTES OF GOD MENTIONED IN THE LYRICS. FOR EXAMPLE, “HE KNOWS MY NAME” REMINDS US THAT GOD IS ALWAYS WITH US (OMNIPRESENT).”

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Pray that the Holy Spirit will give the children the ability to know the great love of Christ and to say “yes” to following Him.

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“God, we are excited to be together. We are even more excited that You are with us. Teach us about Yourself and what it means to follow You. We love You, Jesus. Amen.”*

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “Last week, we learned about how Jesus is the Way. He is God’s Way of taking care of the sin in our lives, and He is the only way we can have eternal life. I pray that you will grow to see that He is different from anything or anyone else this world offers us.

“Today, we will learn what it means to say ‘yes’ to Jesus from a time when Jesus called two sets of brothers to follow Him. Before we go any further, though, who would like to put up this month’s third puzzle piece?” Remind the children that all Bible stories fit together perfectly into one big story about God.

TRANSITION: Say, “Before we look at God’s Word and learn about saying ‘yes’ to Jesus, we are going to do an activity where you get to choose ‘yes’ or ‘no.’”

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Masking Tape |

Say, “In today’s game, you get to tell us what you think about all kinds of things! Let’s go!

GAME GOAL: To express an opinion on a topic



IF NEEDED, CHANGE THE STATEMENTS TO FIT THE KIDS’ INTERESTS IN YOUR GROUP.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Before you begin, use the tape to create a horizontal line on one side of the room.
2. Have the children begin by standing on the side of the room that is opposite from the horizontal line.
3. Read each statement out loud. Begin each phrase with “Touch the line if...”
4. If the children agree with the statement, they should run and touch the line and then run back to the starting area. If they disagree, they should remain standing where they are.

Statement:

1. Chocolate-chip cookie dough is the best ice cream flavor.
2. I like pineapple on my pizza.
3. I like summer more than winter.
4. I would rather swim in the ocean than in a swimming pool.
5. My favorite color is blue.
6. I like salty food more than sweet food.
7. Christmas is my favorite holiday.

8. I would choose vegetables over fruit.
9. Basketball is my favorite sport to play.
10. I like cats more than dogs.
11. I would rather wash the dishes than clean my room.
12. My favorite school subject is math.
13. I would rather eat rotten eggs than drink sour milk.
14. I would like to be the President of the United States.
15. My favorite type of music is Country music.

CHALLENGE: Use each statement as a conversation starter. Have a few volunteers “defend” their opinion. Focus on the importance of making a personal choice.

TRANSITION: Say, “Most of those choices seemed easy for you, and although your opinion is important, it probably doesn’t change your life all that much. Well, today we are going to talk about a decision that matters A LOT! First, though, can anyone name the books of the Bible we call the Gospels? [Pause for answers from multiple students.] That’s right, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. We are going to start our lesson today in Matthew Chapter 4. Let’s read together.”

LEARN – 10 MINUTES

Encourage the children to follow along as you read Matthew 4:18-22 (ICB).



KEEP CHILDREN ENGAGED IN SCRIPTURE READING BY HAVING THEM FOLLOW ALONG WITH YOU. STORE EXTRA BIBLES IN THE CLASSROOM SO THE KIDS ALWAYS HAVE ONE TO USE AND NO ONE FEELS LEFT OUT.

¹⁸ Jesus was walking by Lake Galilee. He saw two brothers, Simon (called Peter) and Simon’s brother Andrew. The brothers were fishermen, and they were fishing in the lake with a net. ¹⁹ Jesus said, “Come follow me. I will make you fishermen for men.” ²⁰ At once Simon and Andrew left their nets and followed him.

²¹ Jesus continued walking by Lake Galilee. He saw two other brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets to catch fish. Jesus told them to come with him. ²² At once they left the boat and their father, and they followed Jesus.

Say, “Jesus called two sets of brothers to follow Him. Simon Peter and Andrew were the first pair, and John and James were the second. All of these men were fishermen. As far as we know, fishing is the only job they had ever learned. Yet Jesus called them to stop working and follow Him. He had a great purpose planned for them, but they had to say ‘yes’ to Jesus.

“To us, this decision may seem easy. Of course, they should follow Jesus! However, these men had to leave everything they knew to obey Christ. [Explain that by leaving everything, these men would walk away from jobs, family, friends, their homes, etc.] What do you think that was like? [Pause for answers] You’re right; it was probably scary, confusing, and exciting all at the same time!

"Jesus told them, '...I will send you out to fish for people.' Jesus was taking something that Simon Peter, Andrew, John, and James understood [fishing] and connecting it to this new life He was giving them."

Ask, "Peter, Andrew, James, and John had been catching fish, but now they were going to be 'fishing for people.' What do you think Jesus meant by that? [Pause for answers.] That's right, they were going to tell others about Jesus and ask those people if they wanted to join them in following Him. Jesus invites us on the same journey of following Him. So, who can tell me why Jesus called it "'fishing for people?' [Give the children time to explain, in their own words, what they think Jesus meant with this metaphor. Assist as needed.]

"Following Jesus will not always be easy. In fact, we should prepare for people not to like us simply because we love and follow Christ. However, it is worth it! Jesus is the way to eternal life! And do you know what else? God promises to be with us no matter what! He never leaves us, even in the most challenging times. Jesus explained this in some of His last words He told his disciples found in Matthew 28:18-20 (ICB)."

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All power in heaven and on earth is given to me. ¹⁹ So go and make followers of all people in the world. Baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Teach them to obey everything that I have told you. You can be sure that I will be with you always. I will continue with you until the end of the world.

Say, "Following Jesus means telling others about Him and obeying His commandments. Just like He did with the disciples, Christ calls us on purpose, with a purpose. It is no accident that He is inviting YOU to follow Him. God wants you to be a 'fisher of men' too! [Remind the children that "fishers of men" means all people - men, women, girls, and boys - not just men.] Following Jesus isn't always easy, but the Lord will ALWAYS be with you. Say 'yes' to Jesus today."

TRANSITION: Say, "Even after you begin to follow Jesus, there will be days when you wake up and don't feel like following Him. That's normal. Everyone feels like that sometimes. Following Jesus isn't about how we feel; it is about a decision we make."

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "It's great to know that we can say 'yes' to Jesus. Let's talk more about it!

1. What are the names of the two sets of brothers Jesus called to be His disciples?

Response: James and John, Simon Peter and Andrew.

2. How do you think these disciples felt when Jesus called them to follow Him?

Response: Answers will vary.

3. What did Jesus mean when He said they would "fish" for people?

Response: They would be sharing the Good News about Jesus.

4. What does it mean to say "yes" to Jesus?

Response: Saying "yes" to Jesus means asking Him to forgive our sins and living a life in which we obey, follow, and honor Christ.

5. Following Jesus isn't easy, but it is worth it. Why is it worth it?

Response: When we follow Christ, we receive His forgiveness and gain eternal life. We also receive the Holy Spirit to help, strengthen, and comfort us.

6. What does this lesson teach us about God?

Response: God invites us to say “yes” to following Him. God sacrificed His Son, Jesus, so we could receive forgiveness and be in His family. God calls His people to be “fishers of men.” God loves us very much, etc.



THIS DISCUSSION COULD PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO LEAD A CHILD (OR CHILDREN) TO CHRIST. STAY SENSITIVE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT AND FOLLOW HIS LEADING.

TRANSITION: Say, “Thank you for a great discussion! I’m so glad we can say ‘yes’ to Jesus and be His followers!”

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | 1/2” Wooden Dowel Rods cut to 16” (1 per child) | *Fish* Activity Page (2-3 copies for the class) | Scissors | Yarn (12” per child) | Patterned Scrapbook Paper or Cardstock | Fine Point Markers | Hole Punch | Scotch Tape | Washable Markers |

Say, “Today, we learned that Jesus invites us to say ‘yes’ to Him. This isn’t always easy, but it is always worth it, and He promises to be with us every step of the way. Today, we will make a ‘Fishers of Men’ fishing pole to remind us that Jesus is choosing us for a purpose: to tell others about Him!”

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Have the children use the markers to write “Fishers of Men” on their rods.
2. Next, have each child cut a piece of yarn about twelve inches long and tie it around the end of the rod. Reinforce the yarn with scotch tape.
3. Then, have the children use the fish template to trace three fish onto the scrapbook or cardstock paper.
4. Next, have the children cut out their fish and punch a hole in each one.
5. Finally, the children should tie their fish on the end of their yarn so they are hanging from their fishing poles.

TRANSITION: Say, “I hope this fishing pole will help you remember to share the Good News of Jesus with your friends and family!”

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, “This month, our memory verse comes from John 14:6. Jesus is ‘the way, the truth, and the life.’ We will review the verse as a group, and then I will divide you into pairs to practice it with a partner.”

“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) ’”

John 14:6 (ICB)

CHALLENGE: Pair the children to work on the memory verse together.

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

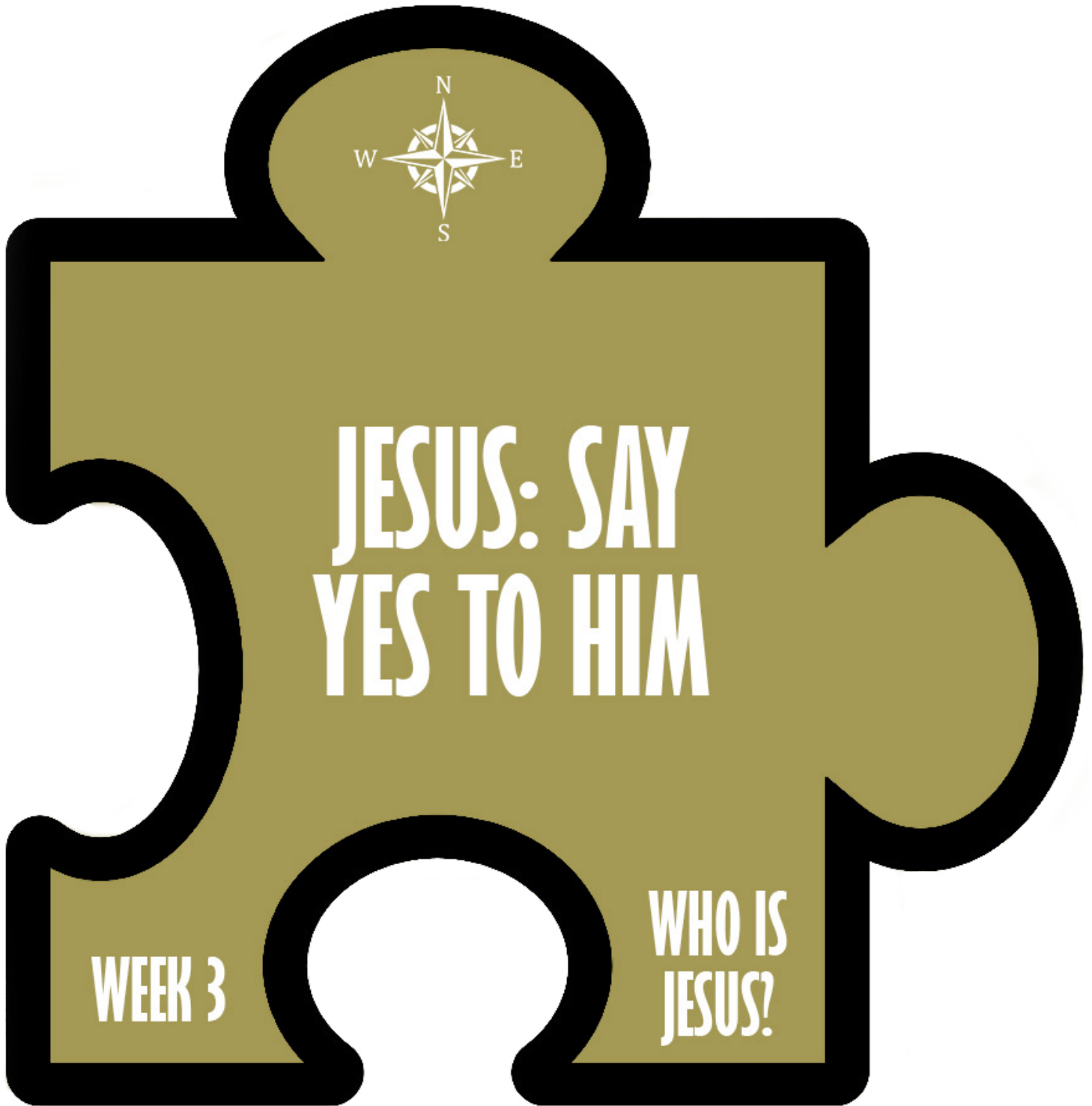
Say, “Jesus is calling each of us to follow Him. We must listen to His voice and respond to His calling. Is it always going to be easy? No. Will all of our problems disappear? No. However, God promises to be with us, and He promises to guide us. [Pause and ask if any of the children would like you to pray that they will be able to follow Jesus even when it is hard.] Let’s pray together.”

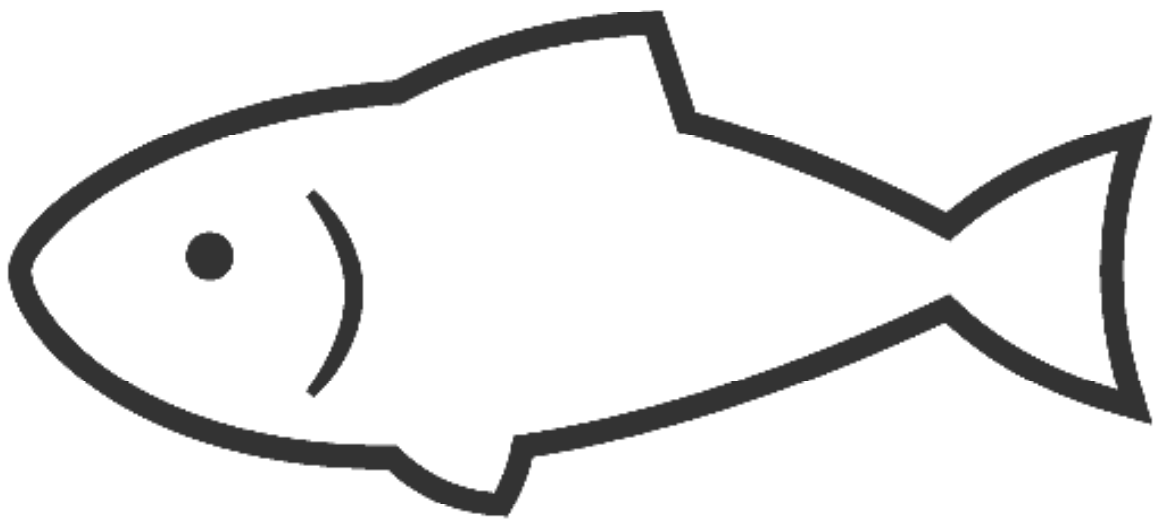
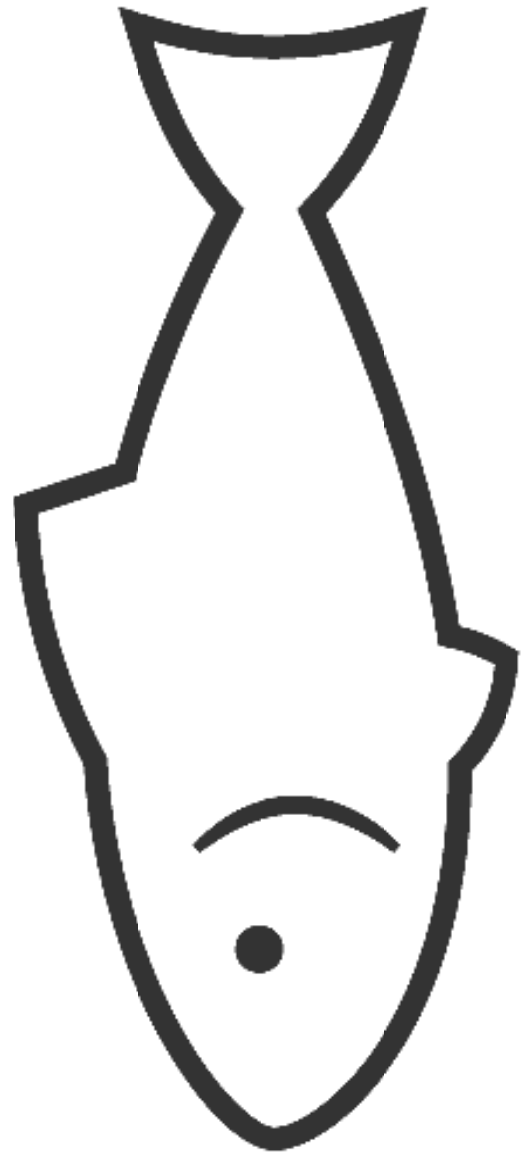
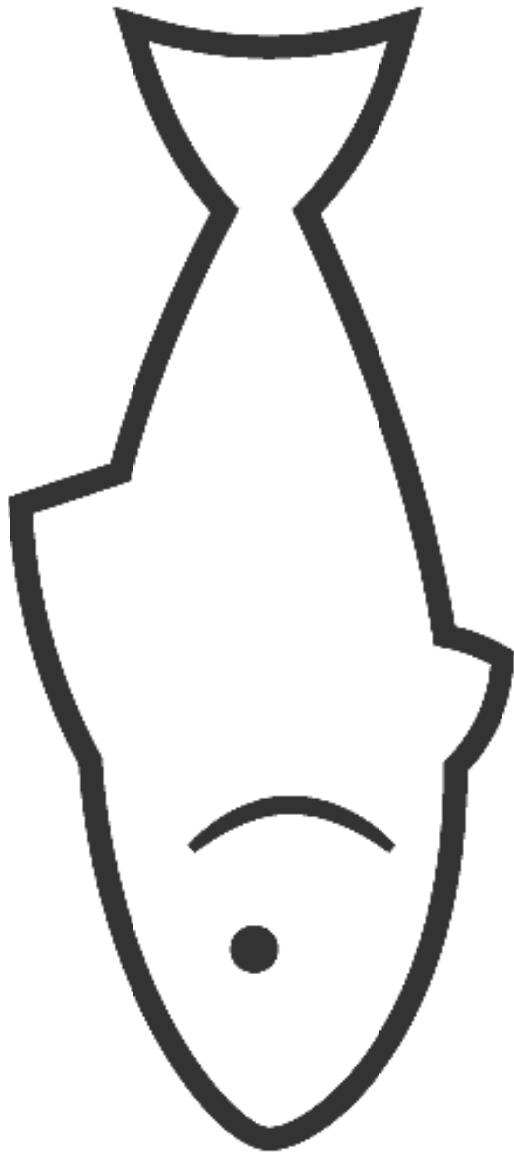
SAMPLE PRAYER: *“God, thank You for this invitation to follow You. I’m so glad it doesn’t matter who we are or what we’ve done. I’m also grateful that Your invitation is a gift, because I know I could never be good enough to earn it. Today we want to respond to You. [Invite students to say ‘yes’ to Jesus personally. Allow them a moment of quiet.] Jesus, we thank You for your love and grace. In Christ’s name, Amen.”*

RELEASE —

MATERIALS: | Plastic Straws (optional, 1 per child) | Fish Templates (optional) |

If there is extra time, sing your favorite songs from this unit or use the Fish Templates (leftover from today’s RESPOND Activity) and straws to play a relay game where the children use the straw to suck up the fish and move them from one point in the room to another.





WHO IS JESUS?



JESUS: HE CALLS ME FAMILY

BIBLE PASSAGE

Romans 8:15-17, Ephesians 2:10

BIG IDEA

I was created to know, follow, and enjoy Jesus.

FOCUS VERSE

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way. And I am truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through me.’” John 14:6 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Skittles or M&M's | 3" x 3" x 3" Cardboard Boxes | Notecards | Stickers | Markers | Watercolor Paints | Paint Brushes |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Which restaurant has the best french fries?
- What is something you are afraid of?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, “This unit’s memory verse is John 14:6. What three things does that verse tell us about Jesus? [Wait for responses.] That’s right. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life! Jesus is amazing! Let’s worship Him today!”

We recommend “Made for This” by Lifetree Kids as a unit theme song. Other suggestions for songs include “He Knows My Name” by Lifetree Kids, “I Am Who You Say I Am” by Hillsong, and “Nothing is Missing” by Elevation Worship Kids.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Pray that the Holy Spirit would give the children a greater understanding of who Jesus is and how much He loves them.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “God, today is all about You. Help us remember that we gather to bring You glory. We are open to whatever You want to do in our lives. Thank you for being our Savior. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “Last week, we talked about what it means to say ‘yes’ to Jesus. We learned that following and obeying Jesus isn’t always easy, but it is always worth it!”

“Today we are going to hear about who Jesus says we are. We become God’s children when we decide to follow Christ, but that is just the beginning, and I cannot wait to share God’s Word with you. However, before we go any further, who would like to put up the last puzzle piece for this series?” Remind the children that all Bible stories fit together perfectly into one big story about God.

TRANSITION: Say, “Before we read today’s Scripture, let’s play a game together!”

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Large Bag(s) of Skittles or M&M’s | Fun Size Bags of Skittles or M&Ms (1 per child)



BE SURE TO DO AN ALLERGY CHECK ANYTIME YOU PLAN TO OFFER STUDENTS FOOD. TEACHERS SHOULD HAVE AN EASILY ACCESSIBLE RECORD OF EMERGENCY INFO ON THE CHILDREN, INCLUDING FOOD ALLERGIES, NAMES OF FAMILY MEMBERS, ETC.

Say, “Today, we are going to play a game involving candy! Yum! Teams will compete to see who can sort their candy into different colors first. Let’s go!”

GAME GOAL: To be the first team to sort their candy into separate colors.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Divide the students into teams of 3-5 students.
2. Provide each group with an even portion of M&Ms or Skittles (50-100 pieces each).
3. When the leader says “go,” each team must sort the candy into colors.
4. The winner will be the first team to get all their candy into color-coordinated piles.
5. Play multiple rounds if time and supplies allow.



GIVE EACH CHILD A FUN-SIZE M&M OR SKITTLES PACK TO TAKE HOME FOR EXTRA FUN. (IF YOU AREN’T SURE ABOUT FOOD ALLERGIES, AVOID EATING DURING YOUR TIME TOGETHER.)

TRANSITION: Congratulate the children on a job well done. Say, “To win the game we just played, you had to follow a plan, right? Today, we will see what wonderful things happen when we follow God’s plan for our lives. We’re also going to learn about ourselves and God. To do that, let’s turn in our Bibles to Romans chapter 8.”

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, “This month, we have talked about how Jesus created us, that He is our guide [the Way], and how important it is that we say ‘yes’ to following Him. Today we are going to talk about what God thinks of us! Are you curious? Great!”

“What is something you love to do? [Pause for answers and give your own example.] The God of the Universe invites us to enjoy a relationship with Him that is better than any activity, day, or person we can

imagine. That might be hard to believe, but let's look at God's Word and see some ways we can enjoy God because of who we are to Him." Read Romans 8:15-17 (ICB).

15 The Spirit that we received is not a spirit that makes us slaves again to fear. The Spirit that we have makes us children of God. And with that Spirit we say, "Father, dear Father." 16 And the Spirit himself joins with our spirits to say that we are God's children. 17 If we are God's children, then we will receive the blessings God has for us...

Say, "When we ask Jesus to be the Lord of our lives, He adopts us as sons and daughters. Before we become His children, we are slaves to sin. What do you think that means? [We can only do wrong things] But when God adopts us, He gives us His Holy Spirit to remind us that God is a good Father who loves us and takes care of us. The Holy Spirit is patient and kind and helps us obey and enjoy our Heavenly Father. That's one reason the Bible calls the Holy Spirit 'the Helper.' He helps us love and obey God. I need help, don't you?"

"The Bible also says we will 'receive God's blessings for us...' What are some blessings we get from being God's children? [Pause and let the children share.] Yes! Those are incredible blessings! In 2 Timothy 2:11-13, God's Word tells us that His children have another blessing too. Did you know that if you are a Christian, if Jesus is your King, then you will one day reign with Him? Isn't that incredible? When we become children of God, we are entering the eternal, royal family of Christ!"

"There's one more verse I want us to read together. Please turn with me in your Bibles to Ephesians 2:10 [NIV]." Read the verse aloud.

"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Ask, "What does handiwork mean? [Wait for responses.] Yes! It is something someone makes with their hands. When God looks at you, He sees someone He loves very much whom He made uniquely with His own hands. If you are a Christian, your identity [who you are] has changed. You are a child of God, a co-heir with Christ, and God's handiwork with good things to do! Wow, that's a lot of awesome things! You can call God your Father! That's incredible! And now that He's our Father, we get to live for Him and do the 'good works' He has prepared us to do. God gives us a purpose!"

TRANSITION: Say, "From the very beginning, God has called us His special creation. Then, He proved that by dying on the cross for us. We become God's children when we say 'yes' to following Christ. That is good news!"

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Let's talk more about what we just heard."

1. What do you think it means to be God's children?

Response: Answers will vary, but remind the children that this impacts our lives now and in the future when we live and reign with Christ.

2. Why did God give us the Holy Spirit?

Response: The Holy Spirit lives inside all of God's children. He helps us know and obey God. We need the Holy Spirit's help to love Jesus.

3. How do you feel knowing that you will live and reign with Jesus one day (if you're a Christian)?

Response: Answers will vary.

4. What do you think it means that God is our good Father?

Response: Answers will vary.

5. The Bible says we are God's handiwork and that He has good works for us to do. What are some of the good works we should be doing?

Response: Worshiping God, honoring our parents, telling others about Jesus, serving our church and community, loving and being kind to others, etc.

6. What does this lesson teach us about God?

Response: God wants us to be His children. God made us with His own hands. God loves us. God has good work for us to do, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Thank you for a great discussion! What a joy it is to know that as followers of Jesus, we are God's children, and He is our Father!"

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | 3" x 3" x 3" Cardboard Boxes (1 per child) | Notecards (3-4 per child) | Stickers | Markers | Watercolor Paints (1 set per child) | Paint Brushes (1 per child) |

Say, "We have been created to enjoy God. Have you ever thought about that? As His children, He wants us to enjoy knowing Him. What do you enjoy about God? [Wait for answers.] There are many awesome and wonderful things about God, but it is easy to get distracted by the things He gives us and not focus on Him. So, today we are going to create an 'Enjoyment Box.' This box will help us remember what we enjoy about God and remind us to give Him thanks."



BE SURE TO PURCHASE SMALL SQUARE GIFT BOXES AT A CRAFT STORE OR AMAZON.COM EARLIER IN THE MONTH. BEFORE THE CHILDREN ARRIVE, PRE-FOLD THE BOXES AND CUT OUT THE PICTURE SQUARES.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a box, notecard, stickers, and markers.
2. Have the children write "Enjoyment Box" on the top of their box.
3. Then, encourage everyone to decorate their boxes with the provided supplies.
4. Next, have the children write or draw at least one thing they enjoy about God on their notecards. (You can get them started by sharing some of the things you enjoy about God, such as specifics about His character or other things you appreciate about your relationship with Him.)
5. Finally, have the kids place their notecards in their boxes. Please encourage them to add more notecards as they think of new things. If you have extra notecards, send them home with the children so they can continue adding to their boxes.



HELPING CHILDREN UNDERSTAND THAT GOD IS A PERSONAL GOD IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS FOR THEM TO LEARN. AS YOU HELP THE CHILDREN WORK ON TODAY'S CRAFT, EMPHASIZE THAT CHRISTIANS CAN KNOW AND HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR HEAVENLY FATHER. GIVE THE CHILDREN EXAMPLES OF HOW THEY CAN SEEK GOD AND GET TO KNOW HIM. IF YOU HAVE A STORY ABOUT YOUR FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD, INCORPORATE THAT INTO THE CONVERSATION.

TRANSITION: Say, "Let your 'Enjoyment Box' serve as a reminder that we have been created to enjoy and worship God."

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "This month, our memory verse comes from John 14:6. Jesus is 'the way, the truth, and the life.' This is our last week practicing this verse. Who would like to try and lead us in the words and motions?" Allow a volunteer to lead the recitation. Congratulate them on leading, no matter how they do!

"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)'"
John 14:6 (ICB)

CHALLENGE: If some children are still learning this month's verse, write it on a whiteboard and read it together. Then, erase three words and repeat the verse filling in the missing words as you go. Repeat the process until the group is saying the entire verse from memory.

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, "Jesus adopts us as His children when we follow Him, and He gives us the Holy Spirit to lead and help us. This journey with Jesus also allows us to enjoy God, who fills us with His love, goodness, peace, and joy! Let's pray and thank God for being so good to us."



HAVE ONE OF YOUR OLDER STUDENTS READ THE SAMPLE PRAYER. THIS IS A GREAT WAY TO ENCOURAGE SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP AMONG YOUR CHILDREN.

SAMPLE PRAYER: "God, thank You for being SO good. There is no one like you. We delight in You and take a moment to enjoy Your presence. [Pause for a moment.] Help us listen to You and look for You each day, knowing that You call us your children and Your handiwork. We love You, Jesus. Amen."

RELEASE —

Have the children share one thing they enjoy about God. You can also sing your favorite songs from this unit.

