

# PAINTING A PICTURE OF JESUS

8 Colors That Illustrate the “I AM”  
Word Pictures of Jesus for Children



**Printable Ebook**



# Painting a Picture of Jesus



## 8 Colors That Illustrate the “I AM” Word Pictures of Jesus for Children

**Children’s lessons that coordinate with the Painting the Portrait of Jesus Bible Study  
for adults**

MELANIE NEWTON

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We are so grateful to Ron Newton for suggesting the idea of using paint colors in a portrait to represent the “I Am’s” of Jesus. That has been enjoyed by both the children and the adults who have used these lessons and the adult Bible Study for women, *Painting the Portrait of Jesus*.

Cover design and study layout by Melanie Newton. The paint palette graphic on the cover and in the lessons is adapted from Microsoft Clip Gallery image j0410869.wmf. Graphics and illustrations throughout this lesson series are taken from public domain websites or developed by the author.

Information used in this book regarding color symbolism and color meaning in the Bible can be found at [ridingthebeast.com/articles/colors](http://ridingthebeast.com/articles/colors).

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Melanie Newton is the author of “Graceful Beginnings” books for anyone new to the Bible and “Joyful Walk Bible Studies” for established Christians. These are grace-based studies for women of all ages. Each study guide follows the inductive method of Bible study (observation, interpretation, application) in a warm and inviting format. Melanie’s ministry mission is to help women learn to study the Bible for themselves and to grow their Bible-teaching skills to lead others.

We pray that you will find *Painting a Picture of Jesus* to be a resource that God will use to strengthen the children you teach in their faith walk with Him.

*Christ-Focused • Bible-Rich • Grace-Based*





## MELANIE NEWTON

Melanie Newton is a Louisiana girl who made the choice to follow Jesus while attending LSU. She and her husband Ron married and moved to Texas for him to attend Dallas Theological Seminary. They stayed in Texas where Ron led a wilderness camping ministry for troubled youth for many years. Ron then helped corporations with their challenging employees. From his experiences, he wrote the top-rated business book, *No Jerks on the Job*. Ron is currently focused on ministering to blue collar workers through [bluecollarmanstuff.com](http://bluecollarmanstuff.com).

Melanie jumped into raising three Texas-born children and serving in ministry to women at her church. Through the years, the Lord has given her opportunity to do Bible teaching and to write grace-based Bible studies for women that are now available from her website ([melaniemnewton.com](http://melaniemnewton.com)) and on [Bible.org](http://Bible.org). *Graceful Beginnings* books are for anyone new to the Bible. *Joyful Walk Bible Studies* are for maturing Christians.

Melanie Newton is an everyday kind of woman who loves the Lord and His Word. As an adult, she has taught the Bible for more than 40 years through writing and teaching women's Bible studies as well as speaking at women's retreats and events.

Melanie and her husband Ron have 3 children who are now adults. Through the process of homeschooling their 3 children, Melanie had the opportunity to teach science labs to other homeschooled students and write a geology field guide. Whenever possible, she has combined her love for teaching the Bible and science. In recent years, Melanie has written curriculum for children's Sunday School and childcare classes. This series of lessons is one of those.

*Painting a Picture of Jesus* is for elementary-aged children. The lessons in this book have been adapted from Melanie's similar Bible Study for adults, *Painting a Portrait of Jesus*.

I am just an everyday kind of woman who loves the Lord and His Word. I hope these lessons bring as much joy to you and your students as I have received while teaching them to children through the years. Enjoy!

*Melanie*

## **OTHER BOOKS BY MELANIE NEWTON**

### **Graceful Beginnings Series books for anyone new to the Bible:**

- A Fresh Start (basics for new Christians)
- Painting the Portrait of Jesus (the Gospel of John)
- The God You Can Know (the character of God)
- Grace Overflowing (an overview of Paul's 13 letters)
- The Walk from Fear to Faith (7 Old Testament women)
- Satisfied by His Love (women who knew Jesus)
- Seek the Treasure (study of Ephesians)
- Pathways to a Joyful Walk (6 pathways to a joy-filled life)

### **Joyful Walk Bible Studies for growing Christians:**

- Graceful Living (the essentials for a grace-based Christian life)
- Everyday Women, Ever Faithful God (Old Testament women, also in Spanish)
- Profiles of Perseverance (Old Testament men, also in Spanish)
- Reboot, Renew, Rejoice (1 and 2 Chronicles)
- Live Out His Love (New Testament women)
- Heartbreak to Hope (the Gospel of Mark)
- Radical Acts (Acts)
- The God-Dependent Woman (2 Corinthians)
- Knowing Jesus, Knowing Joy (Philippians, also in Spanish)
- Healthy Living (Colossians and Philemon)
- Adorn Yourself with Godliness (1 Timothy and Titus, also in Spanish)
- Perspective (1 and 2 Thessalonians)
- To Be Found Faithful (2 Timothy)
- Connecting Faith to Life on Planet Earth (Genesis 1-11; Revelation)
- Graceful Living Today (a devotional journal for a joyful life)
- Identity: Sticking to Your Faith in a Pull-Apart World (Ezra thru Malachi)

### **Resources for leading others**

- Be a Christ-Focused Small Group Leader
- Leap into Lifestyle Disciplemaking
- Bible Study Leadership Made Easy (online video course)

### **Resources for teaching children**

- Painting a Picture of Jesus (the "I Am's" of Jesus in the book of John)

Download our catalogue and get resources for your spiritual growth at [melanienevton.com](http://melanienevton.com)

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## Introduction

### PAINTING A PICTURE OF JESUS LESSONS

The *Painting a Picture of Jesus* lessons for children focus on the “I am” statements Jesus made in the gospel of John to “paint” Himself as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person. As one who lived as a man among us, He understands the spiritual needs of humanity. Those “I am” declarations are like colors Jesus used for the canvas of His self-portrait so His followers could know Him better and understand His significance in their lives. These “colors” reveal the Jesus that we follow. And studying them is in a sense *Painting the Portrait of Jesus*.

Through the eight lessons, children will become familiar with Jesus as the “I am” (white); bread of life (purple); light of the world (yellow); gate for the sheep (orange); good shepherd (green); resurrection and the life (blue); way, truth, and life (red); and vine (brown).

*These lessons coordinate with the *Painting the Portrait of Jesus Bible Study* for adults.*

### HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The lessons in this book are designed to be completely user-friendly. The lesson is written as a script so that anyone can take it into a classroom and teach the lesson with minimal preparation. Even a substitute teacher or one who has no knowledge of the Bible can easily teach the lesson.

Each lesson includes these:

- ✓ **SCRIPTURE:** The verses directly read or referenced in the lesson. Most are from the New International Readers Version (NIRV). Other translations included are likewise noted. In the lesson, the students are asked to read the scripture verses.
- ✓ **OBJECTIVE:** What you want the students “To Know” and “To Do” as a result of going through this lesson and the associated activity. These are your desired results as you teach the lesson.
- ✓ **PREPARATION:** What the teacher needs to do before the students arrive in the class. This would include visuals and handouts to be printed ahead of time. (found at the end of this book)..
- ✓ **MEMORY VERSE:** This is the main verse(s) for the lesson.
- ✓ **BIBLE LESSON:** The Bible-teaching lessons are about 15 minutes long and begin with a review of the concepts learned from previous lessons. When questions are asked, ... *expected or possible responses* ... are clearly marked as indicated. Specific directions to the teacher are ***italicized***.
- ✓ **STUDENT HANDOUTS:** Colorful illustrations associated with the lessons and student handouts are found in the back of this book. Print them for each lesson.
- ✓ **PRAYER:** These are suggested prayers for the teacher to use that incorporates the objectives of the lesson, asking God to do that in the students’ lives.

See the next page for the ***Painting a Picture of Jesus Parent Page*** containing the list of “I Am’s” covered by the lessons. Permission is granted to copy this page and give to parents.

## "Painting a Picture of Jesus" Overview

The *Painting a Picture of Jesus* lessons for children focus on the "I am" statements Jesus made in the gospel of John to "paint" Himself as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person. These "I am" declarations are like colors Jesus used for the canvas of His self-portrait so His followers could know Him better and understand His significance in their lives. These "colors" reveal the Jesus that we follow. Studying them is in a sense *Painting a Picture of Jesus*.



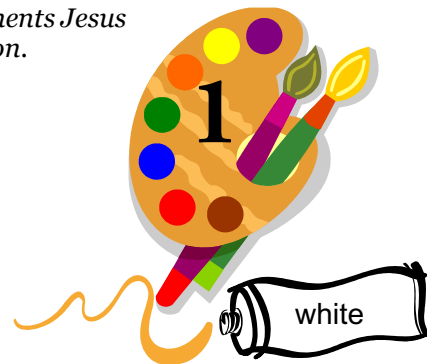
Below are the "I Am's" and the associated memory verses, colors, and meanings. Make it fun by encouraging children to dress according to the color of the week.

### 8 Colors That Illustrate the "I AM" Word Pictures of Jesus for Children

1. Jesus is the "I AM" (white): He is the answer to the spiritual needs of every person. *"What I'm about to tell you is true," Jesus answered. "Before Abraham was born, I AM!" (John 8:58 NIRV)*
2. Jesus is the BREAD OF LIFE (purple): His abundant love satisfies our hunger for a relationship with God. *"I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me will ever go hungry. And no one who believes in me will ever be thirsty." (John 6:35 NIRV)*
3. Jesus is the LIGHT OF THE WORLD (yellow): Jesus' light directs us to follow Him. *"I am the light of the world. Those who follow me will never walk in darkness. They will have the light that leads to life." (John 8:12 NIRV)*
4. Jesus is the GATE FOR THE SHEEP (orange): There is safety in following Jesus and doing life His way. *"What I'm about to tell you is true. I am like a gate for the sheep... Anyone who enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out. And he will find plenty of food." (John 10:7, 9 NIRV)*
5. Jesus is the GOOD SHEPHERD (green): You can enjoy a forever relationship with Him. *"I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep, and my sheep know me." (John 10:14 NIRV)*
6. Jesus is the RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE (blue): To His followers, He gives eternal spiritual life now and eternal physical life in a new body after death. *"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even if he dies.'" (John 11:25 NIRV)*
7. Jesus is the WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE (red): Jesus gives us His life so that we are totally loved and accepted by God our Father. Celebrate! *"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" (John 14:6 NIRV)*
8. Jesus is the VINE (brown): He nourishes us with His life so we bear fruit in our lives that represents our connection with Him. *"I am the VINE. You are the branches. If anyone remains joined to Me, and I to him, he will bear a lot of fruit. You can't do anything without Me. (John 15:5 NIRV)*

*Painting a Picture of Jesus lessons for children focus on the "I am" statements Jesus used to "paint" Himself as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.*

## Jesus Is the "I Am"



### SCRIPTURE

- ✓ John 20:31; Exodus 3:14; John 4:26; 8:58-59

### OBJECTIVE

- ✓ To know that **Jesus is the "I am."** As He reveals God to us, He is the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.
- ✓ That the children will long for a close relationship with Jesus, the one to whom we belong and follow.

### PREPARATION

- ✓ Before the lesson, write "I AM," "YHWH," and "YAHWEH" on a board or paper to show the children.
- ✓ Download and print a few color-by-number pictures to show.
- ✓ Find a picture of Jesus wearing white to show to children.
- ✓ Print the prism visual and the "Jesus is the I Am" handout for each child (found at the end of this book).
- ✓ Adjust lesson to age group—shorten for younger children.

### MEMORY VERSE

*"What I'm about to tell you is true," Jesus answered. "Before Abraham was born, I am!"*  
(John 8:58 NIRV)

### BIBLE LESSON

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, please teach us through this lesson.

Our lessons are focusing on what we will call the "I Am" statements made by Jesus in the gospel of John. They are called the "I Am's" because each one of them starts with the same 2 words, "I am." So Jesus started with the words "I am" then used a word picture to describe Himself to those who are listening.

Have you ever worked on a paint-by-number or color-by-number picture? (*Probably yes*) How easy is it to tell what the picture is before you paint or color it? (*Sometimes easy, sometimes hard*)

### Show a few color-by-number pages.

These are color-by-number pictures. For some, you can look at it and guess what the picture might be. For others, you can't really tell what it is. (*Let the children guess what the pictures might be.*)

So, what do you need to do to start finding out what the picture will really look like? *(Start with one number that represents one color and fill in all the spaces having that number with the appropriate color. Then, do the same with the other colors.)*

After adding each color to the picture, you can finally recognize what the picture represents. Let's do that with words.

Think about 3 words true about you that you could use to describe yourself. You might have already used them in the game we played. Now let's say, "I am..." followed by those three words. I'll start. *(Give your own example, "I am \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_." Encourage the children to do this.)*

We just each painted a picture of ourselves with those words. That's similar to what Jesus did with His "I Am" statements. Just like adding each color to a paint-by-number picture enables you to recognize the picture, Jesus used the "I Am" descriptions to paint His own portrait.

What is a portrait? *(A painting, drawing, or photograph of a person, supposed to be a true likeness of that person)*

When you look in a mirror, do you see a likeness of yourself? *(Yes)* In a sense that's a portrait.

Jesus's portrait does not reveal His physical appearance. Instead, Jesus did what I asked you to do a while ago—describe yourself with a few words to sort of paint a portrait of yourself. Jesus painted Himself with words that reveal a "picture" of who He is, how He meets our needs, and why we can trust Him enough to follow Him.

Here's what you are going to learn in these lessons: **Jesus is the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.** What are you going to learn? *(Jesus is the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.)*

He is the answer to every inner need that you have. And you will see that His self-portrait describes that.

Just as we could tell what the hidden picture in a color-by-number picture is by beginning to fill in the colors, we will learn more about Jesus as we study the "I am's" in the book of John.

## **White**

Today's color is **WHITE** since white is really a mixture of all colors. Have you seen a rainbow? *(Most will have)* What colors do you see in a rainbow? *(red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple)*

A rainbow forms when sunlight shines through water droplets in the sky after a rain. The white sunlight is separated into different colors. That happens when light shines through special kinds of glass also.

## **Show the picture of a prism separating white light into colors**

Have you ever seen white light shining through a prism? *(Some will have.)* A prism is a kind of glass that causes white light to break up into all the different colors of a rainbow. All those colors are mixed together to form white light. So white represents all the colors Jesus used to paint His portrait.

But white has a special meaning in the Bible. The color white often represents the presence of God. What does the color white represent? *(The presence of God)*

We find the "I am" statements in the book of John. Who wrote the book of John? *(John did)* Which John was it—John the Baptist or Jesus's disciple named John? *(Jesus's disciple named John)*

The book of John is also called the gospel of John. The word "gospel" means "good news" so the book of John contains the good news about Jesus—who He is, why He came, and what He offers to those who trust in Him. In it, John emphasizes repeatedly that Jesus is God in human flesh. He says so in the key verse for the book of John found at the end in chapter 20.

**Have students turn to John 20:31. Ask for a volunteer to read the verse aloud or read it yourself. Ask:**

What did John say was his purpose in writing his gospel? (So that everyone would be absolutely sure that Jesus is God's Son.)

And once you know and believe this, what will happen? (*You will have life because you belong to Him.*)

That means you will have a relationship with Him. It's great to belong to someone who loves you, isn't it? (*Yes*) And once you belong to Him, you also get life from Him, eternal life. We'll learn a lot about both of these special things that come to those who know Jesus is God's Son and believe that to be true.

Let's talk about the two words "I am." To us, they are just part of our English language. To the Jewish people of Jesus's time, those words were part of God's name. Did you know that? (*Probably not*) Years and years before Jesus was born, God spoke to a man named Moses and told Moses to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt. Moses said to God, "What if I go to them, and they want to know your name, what shall I tell them?" We read God's answer in Exodus chapter 3

**Have students turn to Exodus 3:13-14. Ask for a volunteer to read the verses aloud or read them yourself. Ask:**

What name did God give Himself? (*I am*)

That's what our English Bibles say. The Old Testament where Exodus is found was written in the Hebrew language. *Point to what you have written on the board.* The Hebrew word is spelled Y-H-W-H. We think the name was pronounced Yahweh (*ya-way*). Say that with me. (*Yahweh*) This was God's personal name. Jesus knew this name for God. And He frequently claimed that name for Himself.

One time, Jesus was talking to a woman at a well. She said that one day the promised leader known as the Messiah would come. Let's see how Jesus answered her.

**Have students turn to John 4:26. Ask for a volunteer to read the verse or read it yourself. Ask:**

How did Jesus answer her? (*"I, the one speaking to you, am he."*)

Since Jesus spoke Hebrew, what He originally said would have been, "Yahweh, the one speaking to you." That's what Jesus actually said. What was Jesus communicating to the woman about Himself? (*He is God.*)

Another time, He was talking to some Jewish leaders and told them He knew Abraham. They said, "You are not even 50 years old. How could you have seen Abraham?" Let's see how Jesus answered them.

**Have students turn to John 8:58-59. Ask for a volunteer to read the verses or read them yourself. Ask:**

What was Jesus's answer? (*Before Abraham was, I am*) This is our memory verse for today.

What happened next? (*The leaders wanted to throw stones at Him to kill him. But Jesus got away.*)

Why do you think the Jewish leaders became so angry with Jesus? (*He was claiming to be God*)

So this is what I want you to know. When Jesus said, "I am," He is revealing something about Himself. He is God. He did the things that God does. He healed people and forgave them of their sins. He told people that He was God. **Jesus is the "I am."** He is God. We don't think of God's name as Yahweh anymore. We think of God's name as Jesus, don't we?

**Show picture of Jesus in white clothes. Say:**

Remember that I told you the color white represents the presence of God. One day, when Jesus was on a mountain with His disciples, His clothes became dazzlingly white, whiter than any bleach could ever make them. His disciples saw that and knew it meant they were in God's presence. Then, His disciples heard a voice from heaven say, "This is my Son. Listen to Him." So, not only is Jesus God, He is more specifically the Son of God. He knows God as His very own Father.

Jesus obeyed His Father and lived His life as a God-man among people. That way, He knows every need that we have—every need, both physical and spiritual. He knows what it is like to be hungry and thirsty, to know fear, to be alone, and to long to know God. Jesus knows that He is the answer to every need, especially the need to know God.

**Show "Jesus is the I Am" handout.**

- ✓ What is our color for the day? (*white*)
- ✓ What does it represent? (*presence of God*)
- ✓ Jesus said that He is what? (*the I Am*)
- ✓ What does that mean for us? (*He is the answer to the spiritual needs of every person, especially the need to know God, to belong to someone who loves us dearly*)

Isn't it great to know that we can belong to someone so wonderful as Jesus? (*Yes*) Let's thank Him right now for that.

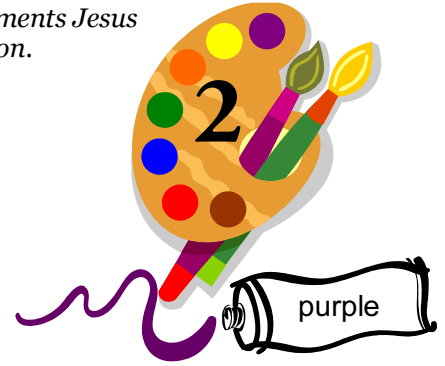
## **PRAYER**

Thank You, Jesus, for coming to earth and living among us so we can find out what God is like by learning from you. Thank you that when we believe in you, we can have a relationship with you. Give us a longing in our hearts this week to know you closely.

**Give each child the "Jesus is the I Am" handout. Announce that next lesson's color is purple.**

*Painting a Picture of Jesus lessons for children focus on the “I am” statements Jesus used to “paint” Himself as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.*

## Jesus Is the Bread of Life



### SCRIPTURE

- ✓ John 6:5-37

### OBJECTIVE

- ✓ To know that **Jesus is the bread of life**. His *abundant* love *satisfies* our hunger for a relationship with God.
- ✓ For children to go to Jesus for spiritual food by trusting in Him, reading the Bible, and talking to Him through prayer.

### PREPARATION

- ✓ Print the “Jesus is the Bread of Life” handout for each child (found at the end of this book).
- ✓ Adjust lesson to age group—shorten for younger children.

### MEMORY VERSE

*“Then Jesus said, **“I am the bread of life.** No one who comes to me will ever go hungry. And no one who believes in me will ever be thirsty.” (John 6:35 NIRV)*

### BIBLE LESSON

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, please teach us through this lesson.

We’re doing a series of lessons on the “I am” statements Jesus made in the gospel of John. These are called the “I am’s” because each one of them starts with the same 2 words. What are they? (“*I am.*”)

Just like adding each color to a color-by-number picture enables you to recognize the picture, Jesus used those “I am” descriptions to paint His own portrait as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.

Remember that a portrait is a painting, drawing, or photograph that is a true representation of that person. Each one of those “I am” statements is like another paint color being added to Jesus’s portrait so we can get a better “picture” of who He is and how we can trust Him enough to follow Him.

The last lesson covered what Jesus meant when He said the words, “I am.”

**Review: Use the “Painting a Picture of Jesus” handouts already covered and ask questions to draw out the following:**

- ✓ **White** represents the presence of God. Jesus is the “I AM” — John 8:58. He is the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.

## Purple

Today, we are painting with the color “purple.” How many of you like purple as your favorite color? *(Some should like purple)* Is anyone wearing purple today? *(Point out children wearing purple)*

Throughout history, purple has usually been associated with kings and queens and other very rich people. Kings and emperors dressed in purple clothing to display their importance. That is because purple dye was very, very expensive. Only the very wealthy could afford to have clothes dyed with purple.

So, purple as a color represents **abundance**—having plenty of everything, including food so that your hunger was always **satisfied**. What does it mean to feel satisfied? *(Feel full, not wanting anything)*

Purple represents **abundance** and **satisfied** What does purple represent? *(Abundance and satisfied)*

One day Jesus saw a huge crowd of people coming towards Him as He was teaching. He knew they would be hungry so His disciples found a boy with 5 small loaves of bread and 2 small fish. That’s all Jesus needed to feed the crowd of more than 5000.

Do you remember what happened? *(Allow those who know the story to finish it.)*

Yes, Jesus fed every one of those people as much as they wanted to eat so that they were **satisfied**. Do you think they got hungry again the next day? *(Yes)*

The next day, the crowd was hungry again so they searched for Jesus. When they found Him, Jesus fussed at them because they were only looking for Him to give them more food, not to believe in Him as the Son of God. He said they should not be hungry just for physical food but for the bread that comes down from heaven to give life to the world. The people thought He was talking about some special kind of bread that would float down from the sky each day so they said, “That sounds great. Give us that bread.”

How do you think Jesus answered?

## Have students turn to John 6:35. Ask for a volunteer to read the verse or read it yourself. Ask:

What did Jesus say He is? *(I am the bread of life.)* This is our memory verse for today.

Have you ever gone without eating for a whole day? What was that like? *(Some may remember being sick with a virus or having surgery)* Without food, your body begins to get weak. Food is one of our basic needs; we all must eat to live.

In most of the countries of the world, the main food source for people is bread made from some kind of flour. That’s been true for the past 4000 years or so. People eat bread for breakfast, lunch, and dinner along with some other things like cheese and fruit. To them, bread means life. Without it, they starve. When their grain crops fail because of drought or disease, they have no bread. That was true for the people in Jesus’s crowd. There were no grocery stores.

Today, we don’t depend on just bread in America because we have so many different kinds of food. But we still need food to live, whether bread or not, so food gives us life. Jesus was telling the crowd that He is even more important to them than their daily meals.

What does Jesus promise to those who come to Him? *(They will never go hungry, never be thirsty.)*



Does that mean you don't have to eat every day or drink water every day? *(No)*

Jesus must have meant something else. During this story in John chapter 6, Jesus says 6 times that He is the bread who came down from heaven to give life to the world. Is bread usually eaten? *(Yes)*

To eat bread means you must personally take it into your body so that it nourishes you for life. That's physical bread giving physical life. Jesus refers to Himself as spiritual bread that gives spiritual life through a relationship with God.

God creates every human being with a hunger for a relationship with Him. Sometimes people try to satisfy that hunger by staying very busy or doing good works or following a set of rules. The Jewish people followed many rules.

But did Jesus say, "I am the bread of life. He who completely follows the rules will never go hungry again?" *(No!)* What must we do? *(Come to Him)*

That's an invitation to have a relationship with God because Jesus is God. It's not through just following rules. And Jesus promised that no one who comes to Him would ever go hungry. The food He gives will never spoil. He will never run out of it. That's **abundance**.

Look at this promise He makes to everyone who comes to Him.

**Have students look at John 6:36. Ask a volunteer to read the verse or read it yourself. Ask:**

What does Jesus say He will never do? *(Never send away anyone from Him)*

Wow! Isn't that wonderful? He wants you to be close to Him, and He will never reject you. Never push you away. He wants to be your "bff"—best friend forever. That's eternal life. Knowing Jesus as your best friend. And His love for you is **abundant** and **satisfies**.

**Show "Jesus is the Bread of Life" handout.**

- ✓ What is our color for the day? *(Purple)*
- ✓ What does it represent? *(Abundance, satisfied)*
- ✓ Jesus said "I am" what? *(the bread of life.)*
- ✓ What does that mean for us? *(His abundant love satisfies our hunger for a relationship with God.)*
- ✓ What does it mean to be satisfied? *(You will not feel hungry for God's love because you will have it constantly.)*

**Jesus is our bread of life. His abundant love satisfies our hunger for a relationship with God.**

When you go home and have lunch or dinner, think about how that never lasts long. You always get hungry again. But Jesus said if you come to Him for your spiritual food, He will satisfy the hunger in your heart for a relationship with the God who made you.

How do you go to Jesus for spiritual food? *(Trusting in Him to take away your sins. Follow Him every day by reading your Bible and obeying what it says, talk to Him through prayer just like you would talk to your mom and dad or a friend)*

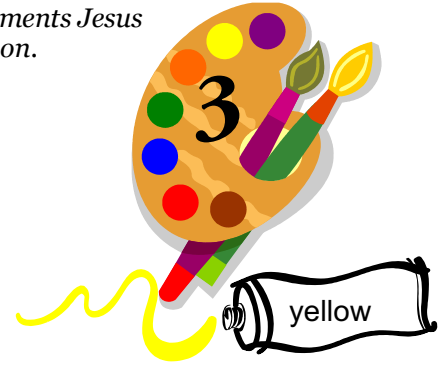
## **PRAYER**

Pray for them to recognize their hunger for a relationship with God and to answer Jesus's invitation to come to Him for that relationship. Pray for them to begin to experience being satisfied by Jesus's abundant love He gives to those who come to Him and follow Him.

**Give each child the "Jesus is the Bread of Life" handout. Announce that next lesson's color is yellow.**

*Painting a Picture of Jesus lessons for children focus on the “I am” statements Jesus used to “paint” Himself as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.*

## Jesus Is the Light of the World



### SCRIPTURE

- ✓ John 8:12; 9:1-39

### OBJECTIVE

- ✓ To know that **Jesus is the light of the world**. Jesus’s light directs us to follow Him.
- ✓ For children to trust Jesus as the **light** of their lives.

### PREPARATION

- ✓ Print the temple lights visual and “Jesus is the Light of the World” handout for each child (found at the end of this book).
- ✓ Adjust lesson to age group—shorten for younger children.
- ✓ A strong flashlight.

### MEMORY VERSE

*Jesus spoke to the people again. He said, “**I am the light of the world**. Those who follow me will never walk in darkness. They will have the light that leads to life.” (John 8:12 NIRV)*

### BIBLE LESSON

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, please teach us through this lesson.

#### Have the flashlight near you.

We’re doing a series of lessons on the “I am” statements Jesus made in the gospel of John. Each one of them starts with the same 2 words. What are they? (“I am.”)

Jesus used those descriptions to paint His own portrait as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person. Each one of those “I am” statements is like another paint color being added to Jesus’s portrait so we can get a better “picture” of who He is and how we can trust Him enough to follow Him.

#### Review: Use the “Painting a Picture of Jesus” handouts already covered and ask questions to draw out the following:

- ✓ **White** represents the presence of God. **Jesus is the “I am”** — John 8:58. He is the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.
- ✓ **Purple** represents abundance, being satisfied. **Jesus is the Bread of Life** — John 6:35. His abundant love satisfies our hunger for a relationship with God.

## **Yellow**

Today's paint color is yellow since we'll be talking about light. What is the biggest yellow object you know? (*The sun*)

Bright sunlight warms us up and helps us to see the world around us. At night, the sun is shining on the other side of the earth so it is dark here. When it's dark, do you feel scared? (*Maybe*) Do you feel alone? (*Probably*) Do you feel confused because you can't see where to go? (*Most of the time*)

You can stumble and fall without light to guide you. Light helps us to see where we are going so we can keep going in the right direction and not get lost. Think of how a light at the end of a dark hallway directs you to the doorway so you don't keep bumping into the walls.

The color yellow represents light and direction. What does the color yellow represent? (*Light and direction*)

In our world, we depend on electricity to give us light in the dark. Just turn on a lamp or a switch and get instant light. When Jesus lived on the earth, there was no electricity. People depended on candles and oil lamps for light at night. Imagine what it would have been like to look out your window at night without any streetlights—anywhere! Do you think it would have been pretty dark? (*Yes*) Would you like to live in a dark place without any light? (*No*)

Jesus understood how much we need light to direct us in the darkness. One day He was attending a big festival in Jerusalem during the fall.

### **Show temple lamps visual.**

A major part of that festival was the lighting of huge lamps that illuminated the entire temple area. Those weren't the small oil lamps most people owned. Those were really big ones that shone light all over the temple building. The people would gather together in that light to sing praises to God and dance. Right in the middle of that time of singing and dancing, Jesus told the crowd something about Himself.

### **Have children turn to John 8:12. Ask for a volunteer to read the verse or read it yourself. Ask:**

What does Jesus call himself? (*The light of the world*)

What is the promise to those who follow Jesus? (*They will never walk in darkness; they will have light that leads to life.*)

We already talked about darkness and how it makes us feel. Sometimes scared, sometimes confused, sometimes lonely. When there's darkness all around us, light gives us direction to follow the right path, gives us security, makes us feel less lonely, helps us to see clearly.

### **Turn on the flashlight and point it at various objects in the room and ask, "What do you see?" After several objects, say:**

How did you know what I wanted you to see? (*The light directed their eyes; the light helped them to see each object better.*)

What did Jesus say He was for the world? (*The light of the world*) So, what do you think Jesus means when He says that? (*Allow various answers, draw out that He directs the way to God like the flashlight pointed the way to what you wanted them to see.*)

Darkness in the Bible usually means not knowing God and His love. But Jesus promises His light leads to life. Life in the Bible means spiritual life — knowing God and His wonderful love for us and living a life that pleases God. Light gives us direction. So, yellow represents both light and direction. What does the color yellow represent? (*Light, direction*)

Not too long after that festival, Jesus was in Jerusalem walking around. As Jesus went along, He saw a man who was born blind. He had never seen the sun or the sky. You might know someone who is blind. Most of the time people who are blind can't see any light at all. They are always in the dark. If you couldn't see with your eyes, what would you miss the most? (*Allow various answers.*)

**Have students turn to John 9:1-7. Ask for volunteers to read or read the verses yourself. Ask:**

What did Jesus's disciples think was the reason the man had been born blind? (*Because his mom and dad had done something wrong before he was born. Or they thought the man himself had done something bad before he was born so that God made him blind as a punishment.*) That's what many people of Jesus's day thought.

What was Jesus's answer? (*The man "didn't sin. His parents didn't sin against God. This happened so that God's work could be shown in his life.*)

Was God angry with the man and punishing him? (*No!*) Jesus said it wasn't his fault. God allowed this man to be born blind for a special purpose.

Then Jesus said these words again, "**I am the light of the world.**" What do you think He was going to do? (*Heal the man*)

What did Jesus do next? (*He spit on the ground and made some mud with the spit. Then Jesus put the mud on the man's eyes and told him to go wash in the local pool.*)

What happened then? (*The man went and washed away the mud from his eyes. And he went home able to see.*)

How do you think the man felt to finally be able to see through his eyes? (*Excited, relieved, joyful*)

His neighbors could hardly believe it. They kept saying, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" Some said, "Yes." Others said, "No. He only looks like him." But the man who had been blind, let's call him the ex-blind man, kept saying, "I am the man. The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go...and wash. So I went and washed. Then I could see." But the ex-blind man didn't know what Jesus looked like or where He was.

Some of the Jewish leaders who didn't believe in Jesus found out what happened to the man. Instead of praising God for the healing, they refused to believe that Jesus was God. And they got angry with the ex-blind man and threw him out of their church building. Can you believe that!

**Have students turn to John 9:35-39. Ask for volunteers to read the verses or read them yourself. Ask:**

When Jesus heard that the Jewish leaders had thrown the ex-blind man out, what did he do? (*He went looking for him.*) Wasn't that kind of Jesus? (*Yes*) Jesus loved this man He had healed.

When Jesus found him, what did he ask? (*Do you believe in the Son of Man?*) "Son of Man" was something Jesus called Himself.

How did the ex-blind man answer? (*Who is he, sir? Tell me, so I can believe in him.*)

When Jesus revealed Himself, how did the ex-blind man respond? (*Lord, I believe. And he worshiped Jesus.*)

How did Jesus as light of the world give light to the blind man? (*Healed him of his blindness so he could see, he wasn't in the dark any longer; he could see God because Jesus was God in human form*)

How do you think the man's life changed after this? (*He wouldn't have to beg, he could work, he could have a family, he could enjoy seeing people, and he could follow Jesus as one of His disciples*)

We don't know for sure, but perhaps the ex-blind man became a follower of Jesus.

**Show "Jesus is the Light of the World" handout.**

- ✓ What is our color for the day? (*Yellow*)
- ✓ What does it represent? (*Light, direction*)
- ✓ Jesus said "I am" what? (*the light of the world.*)
- ✓ What does that mean for us? (*His light directs us to follow Him.*)
- ✓ What does it mean to follow Jesus? (*Believe in Him, trust what He says, trust what He tells us to do*)
- ✓ Did the blind man do that? (*Yes*)
- ✓ Are you a follower of Jesus? (*Hopefully, yes*)

**Jesus is the light of the world. His light directs us to follow Him.** And when you follow Jesus, you are never alone because He is always with you just like turning on a lamp in a dark room makes you feel less lonely. No one can put out the light that Jesus brings into the world. Aren't you glad that Jesus promises to be light for everyone who follows Him?

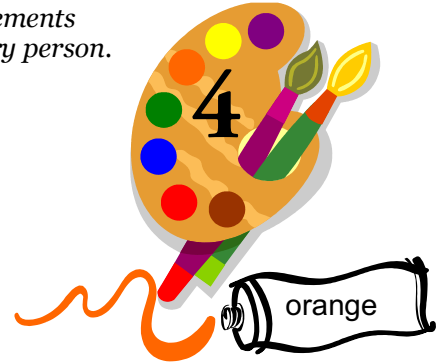
**PRAYER**

Pray for the children to follow Jesus as their light each and every day. When looking for direction about how to live their lives each day, pray that they would look to Jesus, trust His way, and follow Him.

**Give each child the "Jesus is the Light of the World" handout. Announce that next lesson's color is orange.**

*Painting a Picture of Jesus lessons for children focus on the “I am” statements Jesus used to “paint” Himself as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.*

## Jesus Is the Gate for the Sheep



### SCRIPTURE

- ✓ John 10:1-10

### OBJECTIVE

- ✓ To know that **Jesus is the Gate for the sheep**. There is safety in following Jesus and doing life His way.
- ✓ For children to trust Jesus for salvation if they have not already done so. Once they have trusted Him, to follow Jesus as their shepherd every day rather than anyone who tries to keep them from following Jesus.

### PREPARATION

- ✓ Print the sheep pen visuals and the “Jesus is the Gate for the Sheep” handout for each child (found at the end of this book).
- ✓ Adjust lesson to age group—shorten for younger children.

### MEMORY VERSE

*“What I’m about to tell you is true. **I am like a gate for the sheep.** ... Anyone who enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out. And he will find plenty of food. (John 10:7, 9 NIRV)*

### BIBLE LESSON

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, please teach us through this lesson.

We’re doing a series of lessons on the “I am” statements Jesus made in the gospel of John. Jesus used those descriptions to paint His own portrait as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person. Each one of those “I am” statements is like another paint color being added to Jesus’s portrait so we can get a better “picture” of who He is and how we can trust Him enough to follow Him.

**Review: Use the “Painting a Picture of Jesus” handouts already covered and ask questions to draw out the following:**

- ✓ **White** represents the presence of God. **Jesus is the “I am”** — John 8:58. He is the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.
- ✓ **Purple** represents abundance, being satisfied. **Jesus is the Bread of Life** — John 6:35. His abundant love satisfies our hunger for a relationship with God.
- ✓ **Yellow** represents light, guidance. Jesus is the Light of the World — John 8:12. His light directs us to follow Him.

## Orange

Today, the lesson color is orange—a color often associated with safety. What does the color orange represent? (*Safety*)

Have you seen a highway construction worker wearing an orange vest? (*Some may have*) Highways also use orange cones and barrels to tell the driver which lanes are open and which are closed for repairs. In fact, the shade of orange used is called “Safety Orange.” The United States government requires that certain construction equipment must be painted “safety orange.”

So what does “Safety Orange” have to do with Jesus?

In John chapter 10, Jesus described Himself as a shepherd for sheep. It is common in the Bible for kings and priests and other leaders to consider themselves shepherds of the people, their sheep. This week we’ll learn what it means when Jesus called Himself a gate for the sheep. Next lesson, we’ll cover Jesus as the Good Shepherd.

### **Have students turn to John 10:1-10. Ask for volunteers to read the verses or read them yourself. Ask:**

What does Jesus say He is like in verse 7? (*A gate for the sheep*) This is the memory verse for today.

You might be thinking, “That sounds weird. Why does Jesus call Himself a gate? What does a gate have to do with being a shepherd?” Actually, it made a lot of sense to the people living 2000 years ago.

### **Show sheep pen visuals. Say:**

Every community would have a sheep pen with high walls and one doorway. Several flocks of sheep would go in the sheep pen at night to keep them from wandering and getting lost. The walls also kept the sheep safe from wolves and thieves who tried to steal them. A watchman would guard the opening all night long.

Here’s what happened every day if you were a sheep (*be dramatic*):

In the morning, you and your sheep friends see the shepherds come through the doorway to get their sheep. As the shepherds are calling out to their sheep, you hear your own shepherd’s voice calling the special name he’s given to you. Yay! You run on your little sheep legs to where he is. He leads you and your flock mates out of the sheep pen. Then, he leads the flock to the pastures. You follow close behind him.

Once you get to the pastures, you see a small fenced area. The shepherd takes his place in the doorway or entrance and functions as a door or gate. You can safely go out and munch on grass for as long as you want because your shepherd is watching over you. But if you get tired or frightened, you can go into the fenced area where it is safe and secure. Your shepherd is still watching over you. He is the gate.

**Optional for younger children:** Act out what the shepherd and sheep would do. Have the children gather in one place as sheep in the community pen. Teacher is the shepherd; if two teachers are present, have each be a shepherd and divide the flock into two. Call out their names to come out of the pen and follow you as the shepherd to the hillside. Prepare a hillside pen with chairs. Show them the hillside pen. Have them pretend to munch grass while you watch. Call out a danger signal so they can go to the hillside pen. You sit across the opening like the shepherd would do. Everyone sit down again.



Let's look again at what Jesus said He does as the gate in John 10:9. What does Jesus promise to anyone who enters through him as the gate? (*Will be saved, will have plenty of food*)

See that phrase "will be saved?" The Bible teaches that every person needs to be saved because of sin. Remember that God loves every boy and girl very much. But every person has done bad things called sin.

God says that sin separates us from Him forever. He didn't want that to happen so He sent His Son Jesus to take the punishment for your sin and my sin so we don't have to be separated from God forever.

When you trust in Jesus and what He did to take away your sin, you are saved. You are saved from being separated from God, and you are saved from being punished for your sin.

That's what it means to be saved. When Jesus says, "Anyone who enters through me will be saved," He was telling the people that anyone who trusts in Him will be saved from being separated from God forever.

The phrase "will be saved" can also be translated "be kept safe." To those who already trust in Jesus and are already following Jesus like sheep follow their shepherd, Jesus promises to keep you safe.

We know that people are not really sheep. But every person needs to feel safe. There are enemies out there who want to hurt Jesus's sheep.

Look at verse 10. What do the enemies want to do to the sheep? (*Steal, kill and destroy*) YIKES!!! That's not good for sheep, is it?! What does Jesus promise His sheep? (*Life, in the fullest possible way*)

That means life that is so satisfying that it is like a cup overflowing. That means life that is better than any sheep could ever dream about.

As a follower of Jesus, He promises you life that is wonderful. The Bible calls it eternal life. We sometimes think it only starts when we die and go to be with Jesus in heaven. But you have eternal life while you are here on earth too.

This life that Jesus provides for you is good and satisfying. You only need to follow Him to enjoy it here. You can feel safe in Jesus's loving arms knowing He cares so much for you and is watching over you.

Following Jesus's way of doing life can help to keep you safe from enemies in your life.

**Show "Jesus is the Gate for the Sheep" handout.**

- ✓ What is our color for the day? *Orange*
- ✓ What does it represent? (*Safety*)
- ✓ Jesus said "I am" what? (*the gate for the sheep.*)
- ✓ What does that mean for us? (*There is safety in following Jesus and doing life His way.*)

**Jesus is the gate for the sheep. There is safety in following Jesus and doing life His way.**

## **PRAYER**

Thank Jesus for being the gate for the sheep—for protecting those who have trusted in Him to live the kind of satisfying life that Jesus wants for them. Pray for any child who has not trusted in Christ to want to do so today and then talk to someone about it.

**Give each child the “Jesus is the Gate for the Sheep” handout. Announce that next lesson’s color is green.**

*Painting a Picture of Jesus lessons for children focus on the “I am” statements Jesus used to “paint” Himself as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.*

## Jesus Is the Good Shepherd



### SCRIPTURE

- ✓ John 10:3-30

### OBJECTIVE

- ✓ To know that **Jesus is the Good Shepherd**. We can enjoy a forever relationship with Him because we belong to Jesus our shepherd. He knows us.
- ✓ To learn to listen for His voice with your heart and follow Jesus as your shepherd by reading His words in the Bible and obeying Him as Jesus obeyed His Father.

### PREPARATION

- ✓ Print the “Jesus is the Good Shepherd” handout for each child (found at the end of this book).
- ✓ Adjust lesson to age group—shorten for younger children.

### MEMORY VERSE

***“I am the good shepherd.** The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep ... I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep, and my sheep know me. (John 10:11, 14 NIRV)*

### BIBLE LESSON

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, please teach us through this lesson.

What are our lessons about this month? (*The “I am” statements Jesus made in the gospel of John*) Each one of them starts with the same 2 words. What are they? (*I am*)

How is learning these “I am’s” like painting a portrait of Jesus? (Jesus used those descriptions to paint His own portrait as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person. Each one of those “I am” statements is like another paint color being added to Jesus’s portrait so we can get a better “picture” of who He is and how we can trust Him enough to follow Him.

**Review: Use the “Painting a Picture of Jesus” handouts already covered and ask questions to draw out the following:**

- ✓ **White** represents the presence of God. **Jesus is the “I am”** — John 8:58. He is the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.
- ✓ **Purple** represents abundance, being satisfied. **Jesus is the Bread of Life** — John 6:35. His abundant love satisfies our hunger for a relationship with God.
- ✓ **Yellow** represents light, guidance. Jesus is the Light of the World — John 8:12. His light directs us to follow Him.

- ✓ **Orange** represents safety. Jesus is the Gate for the Sheep — John 10:7, 9. There is safety in following Jesus and doing life His way.

### **Green**

Our color for today is **green**. We're going to talk about Jesus as a shepherd again. It makes sense to choose green to represent all the good grass the shepherd provides for the sheep to eat. But green also is associated with peacefulness and rest. Jesus told His followers, "Come to me and I will give you rest." So, green will represent relationship. What does the color green represent? (*Relationship*) We can enjoy a relationship with Jesus as our shepherd; we can know and belong to Him as His sheep.

Last lesson, we learned that Jesus told His followers that He was a gate of protection for His sheep. Let's find out more about Jesus as a shepherd.

### **Have children turn to John 10:11-15. Ask for volunteers to read the verses or read them yourself. Ask:**

What does Jesus call himself? (*The good shepherd*)

Do you think every sheep wanted a good shepherd? (Yes)

Jesus described Himself as the good shepherd who does what for the sheep? (*He gives His life for the sheep, knows his sheep, sheep know him*)

What do you think it means for a shepherd to give his life for his sheep? (*He does whatever he needs to do to take care of His sheep; fighting the sheep's enemies—wolves, lions, and thieves. He puts himself in danger to take care of his sheep.*)

Jesus was talking to His followers who knew that their greatest enemy was being separated from God because of sin in their lives. Jesus gave His life for us, His sheep, when He took the punishment for sin by dying on the cross. He did this so that anyone who trusts in Him will have all of their sins forgiven, will receive eternal life, and will never be separated from God again.

But that's not the only way **Jesus is the Good Shepherd**. Look at what else He says. "*I know my sheep, and my sheep know me.*" That's all about relationship. **Jesus wants us to enjoy a personal relationship with Him.**

Shepherds of Jesus's time were devoted to their sheep. They talked to them and even sang to them. Did you know that? (*Some might have heard that*) The shepherd cared so much for every sheep in his flock that he gave a special name to each one. So, if you were a sheep in the sheep pen, not only would you hear the sound of the shepherd's voice, you would also hear him calling your name. Remember last week's lesson?

### **Have students read John 10:3-4. Ask for volunteers to read the verses or read them yourself. Ask:**

How many of you have a pet? (*Show of hands*) Does your pet have a name? (Yes) How does your pet respond when it hears your voice calling its name? (*Allow responses*) You probably want your pet to come to you or to follow you, don't you?

The shepherd calls out to the sheep. What is the responsibility of the sheep? (*To listen to the shepherd's voice, to follow the shepherd*)

The shepherd calls those sheep who belong to Him. Jesus knows every one of us who have believed in Him and trusted in Him to take away our sins. He knows each one of His followers by name. We each have a personal relationship with Jesus, our shepherd.

Not only do we have a relationship with Jesus, it's a forever relationship. One we can never lose. He will never turn His back on His sheep. We belong to Him, and He belongs to us. Read with me what He says about our security with Him

**Have children turn to John 10:27-30. Ask for volunteers to read the verses or read them yourself. Ask:**

What does Jesus give His followers? (*Eternal life*) Do you remember what eternal life is? (*Our spirits live forever with God in heaven*)

When Jesus says, "they will never die," does Jesus mean your body will not grow old and die? (*No, your body may die, but your spirit continues to live forever in heaven after you physically die*)

Remember that we said in the last lesson that you don't have to wait until you die to get eternal life. Eternal life begins the moment you trust in Jesus to take away your sins.

If you are Jesus's sheep, who can steal you out of His hand? (*No one.*) So, does that mean you will always belong to Him? (*Yes!*) Can there be a time in the future when you don't belong to Him? (*No!*)

That is great news, isn't it? There isn't anything that can make you not belong to Jesus any more. You are in a forever relationship with Him as His sheep.

When Jesus talks about His father, He is talking about God. The Bible teaches that there is one God who exists in three persons. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. When Jesus says, "My Father," He's talking about God the Father. Jesus is His Son, so Jesus is God the Son.

According to Jesus's words, who is greater than anyone? (*God the Father*) Can someone take you out of God the Father's hands? (*No!*) Is anyone stronger or more powerful than God? (*No!*) Are you more powerful than God? (*No!*) So, once you trust in Jesus to take away your sin and become one of Jesus's followers, one of Jesus's sheep, is there anything you can do to make yourself not belong to God any longer? (*No!*)

Remember this. It's not the sheep that are holding onto the shepherd. Have you ever seen a sheep? (*Most will say yes*) They are not very strong creatures, are they? (*No*)

It is the power of the shepherd holding onto the sheep. Jesus knows that His followers are not as strong as He is. You belong to Jesus forever because of His powerful grip holding onto you. Does that make you feel safe? (*Hopefully yes*)

The Bible teaches that nothing that happens during your lifetime, nothing that happens after you die, nothing that you do right now, and nothing that you do in the future can separate you from Jesus. If you are already one of Jesus's sheep, **you are in a forever relationship with Him.** God continually loves you until the day your body dies, and then God continually loves you afterwards as you live in heaven with Him.

So, if someone at school says, "You are not perfect. I saw you do something wrong. I bet God doesn't love you anymore." How do you answer that? (*You're wrong; God still loves me. The Bible says so.*)

If you trusted Christ to take away your sin last year, and someone says to you, "Well, you've done some bad things since then. You are not Jesus's sheep anymore." How do you answer that? (*You're*

*wrong; I am Jesus's sheep forever. Jesus says so.)*

You have a bad dream about something evil taking you away from Jesus. Of what should you remind yourself? *(Nothing and no one can snatch me out of Jesus's hand. Jesus says so.)*

**Show "Jesus is the Good Shepherd" handout.**

- ✓ What is our color for the day? *(Green)*
- ✓ What does it represent? *(Relationship)*
- ✓ Jesus said "I am" what? *(the good shepherd)*
- ✓ What does that mean for us? *(We can enjoy a forever relationship with Him.)*

**Jesus is the good shepherd. We can enjoy a forever relationship with Him.**

When you leave here, I want you to remember that once you trust in Christ to take away your sins and give you eternal life, you belong to Jesus forever. What do I want you to remember? *(Once you trust in Christ to take away your sins and give you eternal life, you belong to Jesus forever.)*

Forever never ends. And **JESUS WANTS YOU TO ENJOY YOUR FOREVER RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.** He knows you by name. He calls to you, not so that you hear it in your ears, but so that you hear it in your heart. He speaks to you as you read the Bible. The words in the Bible are His words to you. The sheep hear the Good Shepherd's voice and know it is true. Our hearts tell us to listen to Jesus and follow Him because He can be trusted.

Is this your response to Jesus as your shepherd? *(Let them think about it)* Do you want this to be your response? *(Hopefully yes)* Let's pray for that in your life.

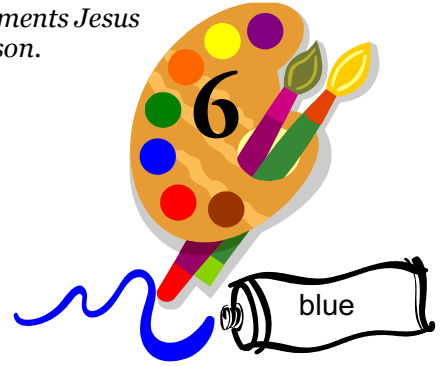
**PRAYER**

Pray for the children to be confident that Jesus's sheep are His forever. Pray that they will desire that personal relationship with Jesus that He wants to have with each of them. Pray that they will listen to their shepherd's voice every day and follow Jesus for the rest of their earthly lives.

**Give each child the "Jesus is the Good Shepherd" handout. Announce that next lesson's color is blue.**

*Painting a Picture of Jesus lessons for children focus on the “I am” statements Jesus used to “paint” Himself as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.*

## Jesus Is the Resurrection & the Life



### SCRIPTURE

- ✓ John 11:1-44: Psalm 30:11-12

### OBJECTIVE

- ✓ To know that **Jesus is the resurrection and the life**. He gives to His followers eternal spiritual life now and eternal physical life in a new body after death.
- ✓ To answer Jesus’s question, “Do you believe this?” with a “yes.” To feel confident that death for a believer is like going to sleep on earth and waking up in heaven with Jesus nearby.

### PREPARATION

- ✓ Print the “Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life” handout for each child (found at the end of this book).
- ✓ Adjust lesson to age group—shorten for younger children.

### MEMORY VERSE

*Jesus said to her, “**I am the resurrection and the life**. Anyone who believes in me will live, even if he dies. And those who live and believe in me will never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:25-26, NIRV)*

### BIBLE LESSON

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, please teach us through this lesson.

What are we learning in these lessons? (*The “I am” statements Jesus made in the gospel of John, using them to paint the portrait of Jesus so we can get a better “picture” of who He is and how we can trust Him enough to follow Him.*)

**Review: Use the “Painting a Picture of Jesus” handouts already covered and ask questions to draw out the following:**

- ✓ **White** represents the presence of God. **Jesus is the “I am”** — John 8:58. He is the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.
- ✓ **Purple** represents abundance, being satisfied. **Jesus is the Bread of Life** — John 6:35. His abundant love satisfies our hunger for a relationship with God.
- ✓ **Yellow** represents light, guidance. Jesus is the Light of the World — John 8:12. His light directs us to follow Him.
- ✓ **Orange** represents safety. Jesus is the Gate for the Sheep — John 10:7, 9. There is safety in following Jesus and doing life His way.

- ✓ **Green** represents relationship. Jesus is the Good Shepherd — John 10:11, 14. You can enjoy a forever relationship with Him.

## **Blue**

Our color for today is blue. When you think of things that are blue, what comes to mind? *(Allow various answers, probably ocean and sky)*

Blue sometimes refers to a feeling of sadness. Have you ever heard someone say, “I’m feeling blue today?” *(Maybe)* The phrase “feeling blue” goes back to a custom on sailing ships. When a captain or other important crewmember died during the ocean voyage, the ship would fly blue flags and paint a blue stripe along the outside wall as it sailed home. When the families saw that blue flag, many wondered if it was their loved one who died.

Blue has a happier meaning, though. In the Bible, the color blue is a heavenly color. God told His people to make the curtains in both the Tabernacle and the Temple out of blue material. When the prophet Ezekiel had a vision of God in heaven, he saw God sitting on a blue colored throne. Did you know that? *(Probably not)*

So blue reminds us of being with God in heaven. As we have already learned, our life with God is called eternal life. So, the color blue will represent for us “the hope of eternal life.” What does the color blue represent? *(The hope of eternal life)*

When do we go to live with God in heaven? *(After we die)*

Has someone very close to you become sick and died? How did that make you feel? *(Allow various ones to share)*

When you hear about someone dying, does that make you afraid about what might happen to you when you die? *(Fear is a common response to death)*

Jesus understands the hurt we feel when someone close to us dies. He also understands our fears about death itself. He makes a wonderful promise to His followers about life and death. Let’s find out what that is.

Jesus had 3 special friends—Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha. One day Lazarus became sick. By the time Jesus arrived in Bethany, Lazarus had already been dead and in the tomb for four days. He was very definitely dead, not just sleeping.

### **Have students turn to John 11:17-27. Ask for volunteers to read the verses or read them yourself. Ask:**

When Martha discovered that Jesus was close by, what did she do and say? *(She went out to meet Him. “Lord,” she said, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that God will do whatever you ask.”)*

How did Jesus answer her? *(Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even if he dies. And those who live and believe in me will never die. Do you believe this?”)*

How did Martha answer—yes or no? *(Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God.)*

### **Have students turn to John 11:28-33. Ask for volunteers to read the verses or read**



**them yourself. Ask:**

What happened next? (*Martha then went home and told her sister Mary that Jesus wanted to see her. Mary rushed out to see Him.*)

How did Jesus respond when he saw how sad Mary felt? (*Jesus cried when He saw Mary and her friends crying.*) Death of someone you love is a very sad thing, isn't it? Jesus cried alongside His friend Mary. He understands how much that hurts, doesn't He?!

**Have students turn to John 11:38-44. Ask for volunteers to read the verses or read them yourself. Say:**

Mary and Martha took Jesus to Lazarus's tomb. What did Jesus do and say? (*Jesus said, "Roll away the stone that covers the opening." Jesus looked up to heaven and prayed to His Father. Then Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"*)

What happened to Lazarus? (*He came out alive. His hands and feet were wrapped with strips of cloth. Another cloth was around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the clothes he was buried in and let him go."*)

Imagine the joy that followed that event. How do you think Mary and Martha felt? (*Happy*) What about Lazarus? (*Happy, stunned*) Do you think they might have thrown a big party to celebrate this wonderful miracle? (*Yes!*)

One thing we know, everyone in that town was talking about it. As a result of this incredible miracle, many people started believing in Jesus.

**What happens at the death of a believer**

Let's go back to what Jesus told Martha about Himself. Finish the sentence. Jesus said, "I am ..." (*the resurrection and the life*)

What does He promise to anyone who believes in Him? (*They will live, even if they die.*)

When Jesus promised life, He was referring to eternal life. The Bible tells us that your soul goes to heaven to live with Jesus instantly after your body dies. That's what Jesus means. Who you are on the inside will continue to live on with God in heaven.

When a Christian dies, it's as though you go to sleep in this body and wake up in heaven with Jesus. Is anyone here afraid of sleep? (*Hopefully not*) Then, if you believe in Jesus, do not be afraid of death either.

The word "resurrection" always refers to a dead person receiving a new physical body that will never die again. Lazarus was not resurrected because he was given a healed body but not a new body that would never die again. Lazarus' body died later on, just like everyone else who lives on earth.

Jesus was the first person ever resurrected from the dead. On the third day after His body died, God raised Him up from the dead and gave Him a new body that would never die again. His new body was the same in many ways as His old body—it was human, could be seen and touched, could walk and talk, and could eat food. Jesus's body was also different in that he didn't look exactly the same, he could appear and disappear in rooms without going through the doors, and he could not be hurt or sick anymore.

After Jesus spent 40 days on earth in His new resurrected human body, He left the earth to live in

heaven. Today, He is sitting in heaven next to God the Father in His perfect human body. Did you know that? When you go to heaven and see Jesus, He will be human just like you and me. He has two arms to hold you. He has two eyes to see you. Isn't that delightful?

Jesus goes on to say that after your body dies you will be very much alive and can never die again. That's because God will give you a new resurrected body just like Jesus's new resurrected body that can never ever die again. It's a promise.

**Show "Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life" handout.**

- ✓ What is our color for the day? (*Blue*)
- ✓ What does it represent? (*The hope of eternal life*)
- ✓ Jesus said "I am" what? (*the resurrection and the life.*)
- ✓ What does that mean for us? (*He gives to His followers eternal spiritual life now and eternal physical life in a new body after death.*)

**Jesus is the resurrection and the life.** Those two words Resurrection and life go together. **He gives to His followers eternal spiritual life now** from the moment we believe that Jesus is the Son of God and trust in Him to take away our sins. **He gives us eternal physical life in a new resurrected body after death.**

This is the hope of our future. Isn't that a wonderful promise? (*Yes!*) Nothing is too difficult for God to do!

At the end of the promise, Jesus asked a question to Martha, "Do you believe this?" Martha said, "Yes." What answer would you give to Jesus? *Hopefully yes.*

**PRAYER**

Pray for the children to be confident in their spiritual life now and their future eternal physical life in their new resurrected bodies. Be joyful now about this hope. Look forward to dancing with joy one day in heaven. Thank God for His wonderful plan that takes away the fear of death.

**Give each child the "Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life" handout. Announce that next lesson's color is red.**

*Painting a Picture of Jesus lessons for children focus on the “I am” statements Jesus used to “paint” Himself as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.*

## Jesus Is the Way, the Truth, and the Life

### SCRIPTURE

- ✓ John 14:1-21; 8:31-32; Acts 4:12

### OBJECTIVE

- ✓ To know that **Jesus is the way, the truth and the life**. Jesus gives us His life so that we are totally loved and accepted by God our Father. Celebrate!
- ✓ To hold firm to Jesus as the only way to know God and live a life that pleases Him.

### PREPARATION

- ✓ Print the “Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life” handout for each child (found at the end of this book).
- ✓ Adjust lesson to age group—shorten for younger children.

### MEMORY VERSE

*Jesus answered, “**I am the way and the truth and the life**. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6 NIRV)*

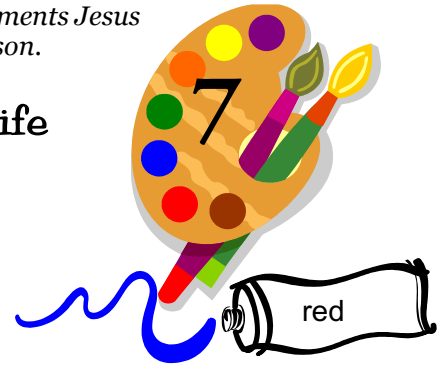
### BIBLE LESSON

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, please teach us through this lesson.

What have our lessons been about this month? (*The “I am” statements Jesus made in the gospel of John, using them to paint the portrait of Jesus so we can get a better “picture” of who He is and how we can trust Him enough to follow Him.*)

**Review: Use the “Painting a Picture of Jesus” handouts already covered and ask questions to draw out the following:**

- ✓ **White** represents the presence of God. **Jesus is the “I am”** — John 8:58. He is the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.
- ✓ **Purple** represents abundance, being satisfied. **Jesus is the Bread of Life** — John 6:35. His abundant love satisfies our hunger for a relationship with God.
- ✓ **Yellow** represents light, guidance. Jesus is the Light of the World — John 8:12. His light directs us to follow Him.
- ✓ **Orange** represents safety. Jesus is the Gate for the Sheep — John 10:7, 9. There is safety in following Jesus and doing life His way.
- ✓ **Green** represents relationship. Jesus is the Good Shepherd — John 10:11, 14. You can enjoy



a forever relationship with Him.

- ✓ **Blue** represents the hope of eternal life. Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life — John 11:25. To His followers He gives eternal spiritual life now and eternal physical life in a new body after death.

## Red

Our color for today is **red**. How many of you like red as a favorite color? (*Show of hands*)

Many people especially like red. It's a bright color. Red is the color that alerts you to danger. Flashing red lights at railroad crossings, red stoplights, and red stop signs all signal that the setting could be dangerous if you don't watch out. You need to stop whatever you are doing to avoid the danger. Sometimes in the Bible, red is used for the color of sin. That's God's way of saying sin is dangerous.

Red also has some positive meanings. It is the color of love. What do you see around Valentines' Day? (*Red hearts everywhere*) Red hearts represent love.

Red is also the color of life. Why is that? (*Blood is red*)

Blood represents life. Without blood, we die. Have you ever heard of the American Red Cross? (*Yes, no*) It's an organization that helps people during disasters. In fact, it is the largest supplier of blood and blood products in the United States. Its symbol is a red cross representing blood as the gift of life.

In the Bible, the color red often connects love and life as it represents God's promise to His people to forgive their sins when a blood sacrifice was made. God made the promise because He loves us and wants to give us spiritual life that lasts forever.

Red is also the color of celebration. Sometimes a red carpet is rolled out on special occasions so the people walking along it feel special and important. So, we'll say that red represents love, life, and celebration. What does the color red represent? (*Love, life and celebration*)

Knowing how much we are embraced by God's love for us and receiving Jesus's life given to us now is certainly cause for celebration, isn't it? (*Yes!*) Do you think there will also be great celebration in heaven when we get there one day? (*Yes!*)

Jesus spent some time talking with His disciples about heaven.

## **Have the students turn to John 14:1-6. Ask for volunteers to read the verses or read them yourself. Ask:**

What did Jesus tell His disciples about where He was going? (*He was going to prepare a place for them; he would come back and take them to be with Him*)

He told them that He was going there soon, and they could follow because they knew the way to get there. Who wasn't so sure about this? (*Thomas*) What did Thomas ask Jesus? (*"Lord, we don't know where you are going. So how can we know the way?"*)

What was Jesus's answer to Thomas and everyone else? (*Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*)

In this "I Am" statement, Jesus said He was three things. What are they? (*The way, the truth, the life*)

What do you think Jesus means by that statement? (*Allow various responses; emphasize those that fit the lesson.*)

Jesus is the way to know God as Father because He shows us the Truth about God in His life, and He gives His life to anyone who believes in Him. Knowing Jesus is the only way to have a relationship with God. That's the way to heaven. Let's look at each one of those words—WAY, TRUTH, and LIFE.

### **Jesus is THE WAY**

Jesus is the way. The question to ask is, "What way?" For the answer, look at what verse 6 says. (*"No one comes to the Father except through me." It's the way to the Father.*)

Jesus says He is the only way for any person to have a relationship with God the Heavenly Father. How? By believing in Jesus.

### **Have students keep their place in John 14 while turning to Acts 4:12. Ask for a volunteer to read the verse or read it yourself. Ask:**

What did Jesus's disciple Peter say about Jesus as the way to know God? (*You can't be saved by believing in anyone else. God has given us no other name under heaven that will save us.*) What name was Peter talking about? (*Jesus*)

The first Christians were so convinced of Jesus being the only Way to know God and taught this truth everywhere so they were called "Followers of the Way." As a "Follower of the Way," the apostle Paul traveled all over his world preaching that Jesus is the Way to know God, the Way to receive forgiveness for your sins, and the Way to live a life that pleases God. Anyone who asked him, "How can I know God?" Paul would answer, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ." He's the way. Are you a "Follower of the Way?" (*Many will say yes*)

Your friends or someone on television may try to tell you that there are many ways to get to heaven. Not just one way. Or, they might say there are other gods out there besides the God of the Bible. But you can tell them only one man died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. Who is that? (*Jesus!*)

Only one man was ever resurrected from the dead with a new body that will never die again. Who is that? (*Jesus!*)

Only Jesus was truly God. Anyone who believes in Jesus can now have forgiveness of their sins and a relationship with God. No other religious leader has ever been resurrected from the dead. They are all in their graves. Is Jesus in His grave? (*No!*) He was resurrected from the grave, given a new body, and is sitting in heaven on His throne as king of planet earth ready to welcome you and me when we trust in Him.

Jesus is the only way for any person to have a relationship with God. You have to start with that and believe that. Jesus said He is the way. Jesus said He is also the truth.

### **Jesus is THE TRUTH**

After Jesus told His disciples that He was the way, the truth, and the life, the very next thing He said was very important.

### **Have students turn back to John 14:7. Ask for a volunteer to read the verse or read it yourself. Ask:**

What did Jesus tell the disciples? (*"If you really knew me, you would know my Father also. From now on, you do know him. And you have seen him."*) Who is His Father? (*The Father refers to Jesus's heavenly Father, God Himself*)

Jesus goes on to say that anyone who has seen Him (Jesus) has seen God the Father. When Jesus was on earth, He showed everyone what God was like. Jesus was loving and kind, showing us God is loving and kind. Jesus was always good showing us that God is always good. Jesus showed us that God answers prayer and that God hates sin. Jesus was the living truth of God. Who is the living truth of God? (*Jesus*)

Because Jesus is God, believing in Him is the way to have a relationship with God. You can't believe in any other famous name or any other religious person to have a relationship with the God of the Bible, the one true God. Only through believing in Jesus. Jesus was the truth of God back then and is still the truth of God. Truth never changes. Jesus is the truth. Jesus is also the life.

### **Jesus is the LIFE**

Anyone who believes in Jesus not only has a relationship with God but also receives eternal life. Remember that we said eternal life starts the moment you believe in Jesus and lasts forever. It can never end, and no one can take it away from you. Is that good news? (*Yes*)

Even though your body dies, your soul lives on in heaven where you will one day receive a new body just like Jesus's new body, one that will never ever die again. That's eternal life. But when Jesus said He is the life, He meant even more than that.

As part of God's family, God's Spirit comes to live inside you. God's Holy Spirit gives to every believer the joyful life of Jesus. What does God's Spirit give to every believer? (*The joyful life of Jesus*) God's Spirit enables us to live a life that pleases God our Father. He changes the way we think and feel to be more like the way Jesus thought and felt when He was on earth. It's as though Jesus's life just bubbles up from inside of us so that everyone can see that we love Him.

You become a child of God the Father, totally loved and accepted by Him. Isn't it a great thing to be totally loved and accepted by the God who made you? (*Yes*)

### **Show "Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life" handout.**

- ✓ What is our color for the day? (*Red*)
- ✓ What does it represent? (*Life, love, and celebration*)
- ✓ Jesus said "I am" what? (*the way, the truth, and the life.*)
- ✓ What does that mean for us? (*Jesus gives us His life so that we are totally loved and accepted by God our Father. Celebrate!*)

**Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.** Jesus gives us His life so that we are totally loved and accepted by God our Father. Celebrate!

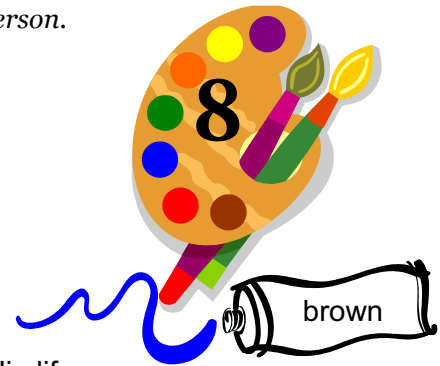
### **PRAYER**

How absolutely amazing is your loving plan, oh God, that takes care of our need to know you! Help us to hold onto the truth that Jesus is the only way to have a relationship with God as our Father. Help us to believe that we are truly your children, totally loved and accepted by you the moment we trust in Jesus. Fill our hearts with joy and celebration because Jesus's life is inside us. Amen.

**Give each child the "Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life" handout. Announce that next lesson's color is brown.**

*Painting a Picture of Jesus lessons for children focus on the “I am” statements Jesus used to “paint” Himself as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.*

## Jesus Is the Vine



### SCRIPTURE

- ✓ John 15:1-5; Galatians 5:22-23

### OBJECTIVE

- ✓ To know that **Jesus is the Vine**. He nourishes us with His life so we can bear fruit in our lives that represents our connection with Him.
- ✓ To admit you can do nothing to please God without relying on Jesus to nourish you with His life and produce Jesus fruit in you.

### PREPARATION

- ✓ Print the vineyard visual and the “Jesus is the Vine” handout for each child (found at the end of this book).
- ✓ Adjust lesson to age group—shorten for younger children.

### MEMORY VERSE

***“I am the vine.** You are the branches. If anyone remains joined to me, and I to him, he will bear a lot of fruit. You can’t do anything without Me. (John 15:5 NIRV)*

### BIBLE LESSON

**Pray:** Lord Jesus, please teach us through this lesson.

What are our lessons about this month? (*The “I am” statements Jesus made in the gospel of John, using them to paint the portrait of Jesus so we can get a better “picture” of whom He is and how we can trust Him enough to follow Him.*)

### Review: Use the “Painting a Picture of Jesus” handouts already covered and ask questions to draw out the following:

- ✓ **White** represents the presence of God. **Jesus is the “I am”** — John 8:58. He is the answer to the spiritual needs of every person.
- ✓ **Purple** represents abundance, being satisfied. **Jesus is the Bread of Life** — John 6:35. His abundant love satisfies our hunger for a relationship with God.
- ✓ **Yellow** represents light, guidance. Jesus is the Light of the World — John 8:12. His light directs us to follow Him.
- ✓ **Orange** represents safety. Jesus is the Gate for the Sheep — John 10:7, 9. There is safety in following Jesus and doing life His way.

- ✓ **Green** represents relationship. Jesus is the Good Shepherd — John 10:11, 14. You can enjoy a forever relationship with Him.
- ✓ **Blue** represents the hope of eternal life. Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life — John 11:25. He gives eternal spiritual life now and eternal physical life in a new body after death.
- ✓ **Red** represents love, life, and celebration. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life — John 14:6. He gives us His life so that we are totally loved and accepted by God our Father. Celebrate!

## **Brown**

Our last color is brown. What things in nature are brown? (*Dirt, tree trunks, dead leaves, some animals*)

Good healthy dirt for growing lots of vegetables and flowers is usually a nice dark brown—sort of crumbly and not too hard. Great garden soil combines regular dirt plus stuff called compost. Who knows what compost is? (*Some may know, decomposed organic matter like leaves, grass clippings, or cow manure*)

Some call compost “brown gold.” It is so valuable because it transforms the dirt in your garden into a “plant-growing machine.” Suddenly your tomato plants are producing so many tomatoes you can’t pick them fast enough. Flowers bloom continuously, and grapevines produce lots of grapes. When it comes to growing things, brown represents nourishment to bear fruit. What does brown represent? (*Nourishment to bear fruit*)

## **Have students turn to John 15:1-5. Ask for volunteers to read the verses or read them yourself. Ask:**

What does Jesus call himself in today’s “I am” statement? (*The true vine, the vine*)

How does He describe His followers? (*As branches*)

Jesus talks about Himself as a vine and His followers as connected branches that bear fruit. Have you ever thought of yourself as a branch of a vine producing fruit? (*Probably not*)

Who is the vine? (*Jesus*) Who are the branches of the vine? (*Jesus’s followers*)

What were the branches supposed to do? (*Remain joined to Jesus the vine, bear fruit*)

We’ve learned that Jesus used images to describe Himself that the people listening to Him could readily understand—bread, light, shepherd, and now a vine. The Jews were familiar with vines. There were grapevines everywhere planted in rows on farms called vineyards. Have any of you seen a vineyard? (*Yes, no*)

## **Show vineyard visual. Say:**

At a vineyard, the vine keeper trims the branches or props them up off the ground so they will bear more fruit. If any branch gets bent or broken off from the vine, the vine wouldn’t be able to produce grapes through that branch.

When you think about a vine and branches, the vine has its roots in the ground. It gets the nutrients it needs from the dirt and carries them to the branches connected to the vine. The vine nourishes or



feeds the branches. It's easy to understand this image of Jesus giving life to His followers. Jesus is referring to the spiritual life He gives to believers now while they are alive on earth. That life inside of us should bear Jesus fruit in our lives. The purpose of the vine is to bear fruit through its branches. Jesus chooses to bear fruit through His followers.

Think about how fruit is produced on a vine. In the spring, the vine wakes up from its winter's sleep and first grows new leaves on its branches. Pretty soon, flowers appear on those branches. Then, in a wonderful way, the flowers are transformed into tiny fruit that keep growing all lessons long until they are ripe for picking. The vine has done what it is supposed to do—give nourishment to all its branches so they can bear the fruit the vine wants to produce on them.

How do you know what kind of vine is growing? (*By its fruit*) So, what kind of fruit would you pluck from a grapevine? (*Grapes*) What about a kiwi vine? (*Kiwi*) A blackberry vine? (*Blackberries*)

So the fruit should match the vine, right? (*Yes*) That's what Jesus is saying about His followers also. Their lives should match the kind of vine they are attached to—a Jesus vine.

What do you think is the fruit that a Jesus follower would produce in their lives? (*Allow them to brainstorm; anything that looks like what Jesus did when He was here on earth*)

Jesus produces fruit through those who trust in Him and are His followers—the branches of His vine. Let's talk about what Jesus fruit would look like.

Draw out the following, appropriate to the age of your class:

- ✓ Jesus loved people. What would that kind of Jesus fruit in you look like? (*Loving people as He does—your mom and dad, your brother and sister, your friend, and that classmate who isn't easy to like*)
- ✓ Jesus talked to God His Father in prayer often, asking God to do whatever God wanted in His life. What would that kind of Jesus fruit in you look like? (*Spending time talking to God about things in your life and asking God to do things His way rather than just yours*)
- ✓ Jesus spent time reading and studying God's word in the Bible He had, believing it and obeying it. What would that kind of Jesus fruit in you look like? (*Spending time reading and studying God's word in the Bible you have, believing it and obeying it*)

Jesus fruit in you is you looking more like Him in how you live your life every day. Jesus lived His life to please God His Father; Jesus fruit in you can be seen as you live your life to please God your Father.

There's a key to doing this. Look at our verse again. *Reread John 15:5.*

What must we as Jesus followers do in order to bear Jesus fruit in our lives? (*Remain joined to Jesus*)

Why? (*We can't do anything without Jesus*)

The "anything" in this verse is the Jesus fruit—living your life so that whatever you do or say looks more like what Jesus would do or say. Then people could say, "Hey, I can see that you are attached to the Jesus vine."

The world will try to convince you that you've got power within yourself to do a lot of great things without relying on Jesus to do it through you. You can walk 30 miles on your two feet without being attached to the Jesus vine. You can do hundreds of math problems without Jesus. You can be a star soccer player without Jesus. But you can't love people as Jesus loved them. You can't trust in God

as Jesus trusted in God. You can't understand the Bible and obey it as Jesus did. You can't live your life to please God as Jesus did. You can do none of those things without receiving something from the Jesus vine. Jesus said to His followers, "You need something from me continually. You've got to remain joined to me." What could that mean—to remain joined?

First, let's talk about what it cannot mean. We have already learned that once you trust in Jesus to take away your sin, you have a forever relationship with Him that can never be taken away or lost. You have eternal life that begins now and continues forever that doesn't stop. And the Holy Spirit comes to live inside you forever. So, this doesn't refer to eternal life. You cannot become "unjoined" to Jesus and lose the life He's given to you.

The word "remain" in this verse means to "dwell" in a certain place, to "make one's home" in that certain place or with that certain person. To remain in Jesus is to "make our home" in Him, just as He also "makes His home" in us.

Think about your home. Why is it special to you? *(Allow various responses, emphasize it's where they are safe, loved, get fed before going out again, can rest, bring friends to enjoy playtime, where you learn how to handle life and people, where you learn right and wrong, where you learn how to obey)*

Home is where your family is, where you feel loved, and where all the things that are truly important to you are. Home is where you get nourished with food and sleep so that you have the strength and encouragement to make it through the next school day. It's where you learn how to grow up and live life that is worthwhile. Even when you are at school, you are still connected to your home. Your parents are still thinking about you and caring for you, aren't they? *(Yes)*

That's what Jesus wants to be for you as His follower—your home, your dwelling place. Not a building like a house. But a relationship like you have with a loving family at home. And it's in that relationship that we grow as branches and bear Jesus fruit in our lives.

Not by ourselves, of course. We have the Holy Spirit within us doing that. When you trust in Jesus Christ to take away your sins, His Spirit comes to live inside of you. You can't see Him but He is there from the moment you trust in Jesus. His job is to help us bear Jesus fruit so that we look more like Jesus in what we do and say every day. That's His job. The Bible says that the Holy Spirit transforms us to become more and more like Jesus. Just like the life of the vine transforms the flowers into fruit that represents the vine. We begin to look like we are attached to the Jesus vine, bearing Jesus fruit in our lives.

The Bible describes some of that Jesus fruit in Galatians 5.

**Have students turn to Galatians 5:22-23. Ask for a volunteer to read the verses or read them yourself.**

What kind of Jesus fruit does the Holy Spirit produce in your life? *(Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control)*

All of the fruit in that list were produced in Jesus's life when He was on earth. He wants to produce this same fruit in our lives. If you have these characteristics in your life, others will recognize that you are connected to the Jesus vine and that the Holy Spirit inside you is nourishing you with Jesus's life to transform you into someone who looks like Jesus in whatever you do and say.

One famous teacher put it this way:

“Jesus Christ laid down his life for you so that he could give his life to you so that he could live his life through you.” (Ian Thomas, *The Saving Life of Christ*)

**Show “Jesus is the Vine” handout.**

- ✓ What is our color for the day? (*Brown*)
- ✓ What does it represent? (*Nourishment to bear fruit*)
- ✓ Jesus said “I am” what? (*the vine.*)
- ✓ What does that mean for us? (*Jesus nourishes us with His life so we can bear fruit in our lives that represents our connection with Him.*)

In order to bear Jesus fruit in your life, you must do two things.

- 1) Recognize we can do nothing that pleases God apart from Jesus. Nothing on your own. You need nourishment from Jesus to live a life that pleases God and bear Jesus fruit.
- 2) Choose to stay closely connected to Jesus through depending on Him to live His life through you. To enable you to live a life that pleases God. You as a person always please God because you are His child. But what you do may not please God. Your life will please God every day as you bear Jesus fruit.

**Jesus is the vine. He nourishes us with His life so we can bear fruit** in our lives that represents our connection with Him.

**PRAYER**

Thank You, Jesus, that you nourish us with your life so that we can bear Jesus fruit in our lives. Remind us that apart from you, we can do nothing that pleases God. Help us to stay closely connected to You, Jesus, so that you can live your life through us. We want everyone to notice that we are bearing Jesus fruit. Amen.

**Give each child the “Jesus is the Vine” handout.**



## "Painting a Picture of Jesus" Parent Page

The *Painting a Picture of Jesus* lessons for children focus on the "I am" statements Jesus made in the gospel of John to "paint" Himself as the answer to the spiritual needs of every person. These "I am" declarations are like colors Jesus used for the canvas of His self-portrait so His followers could know Him better and understand His significance in their lives. These "colors" reveal the Jesus that we follow. Studying them is in a sense *Painting a Picture of Jesus*.



Below are the "I Am's" and the associated memory verses, colors, and meanings. Make it fun by encouraging children to dress according to the color of the week.

### 8 Colors That Illustrate the "I AM" Word Pictures of Jesus for Children

1. Jesus is the "I AM" (white): He is the answer to the spiritual needs of every person. *"What I'm about to tell you is true," Jesus answered. "Before Abraham was born, I AM!" (John 8:58 NIRV)*
2. Jesus is the BREAD OF LIFE (purple): His abundant love satisfies our hunger for a relationship with God. *"I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me will ever go hungry. And no one who believes in me will ever be thirsty." (John 6:35 NIRV)*
3. Jesus is the LIGHT OF THE WORLD (yellow): Jesus' light directs us to follow Him. *"I am the light of the world. Those who follow me will never walk in darkness. They will have the light that leads to life." (John 8:12 NIRV)*
4. Jesus is the GATE FOR THE SHEEP (orange): There is safety in following Jesus and doing life His way. *"What I'm about to tell you is true. I am like a gate for the sheep... Anyone who enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out. And he will find plenty of food." (John 10:7, 9 NIRV)*
5. Jesus is the GOOD SHEPHERD (green): You can enjoy a forever relationship with Him. *"I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep, and my sheep know me." (John 10:14 NIRV)*
6. Jesus is the RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE (blue): To His followers, He gives eternal spiritual life now and eternal physical life in a new body after death. *"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even if he dies.'" (John 11:25 NIRV)*
7. Jesus is the WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE (red): Jesus gives us His life so that we are totally loved and accepted by God our Father. Celebrate! *"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" (John 14:6 NIRV)*
8. Jesus is the VINE (brown): He nourishes us with His life so we bear fruit in our lives that represents our connection with Him. *"I am the VINE. You are the branches. If anyone remains joined to Me, and I to him, he will bear a lot of fruit. You can't do anything without Me. (John 15:5 NIRV)*

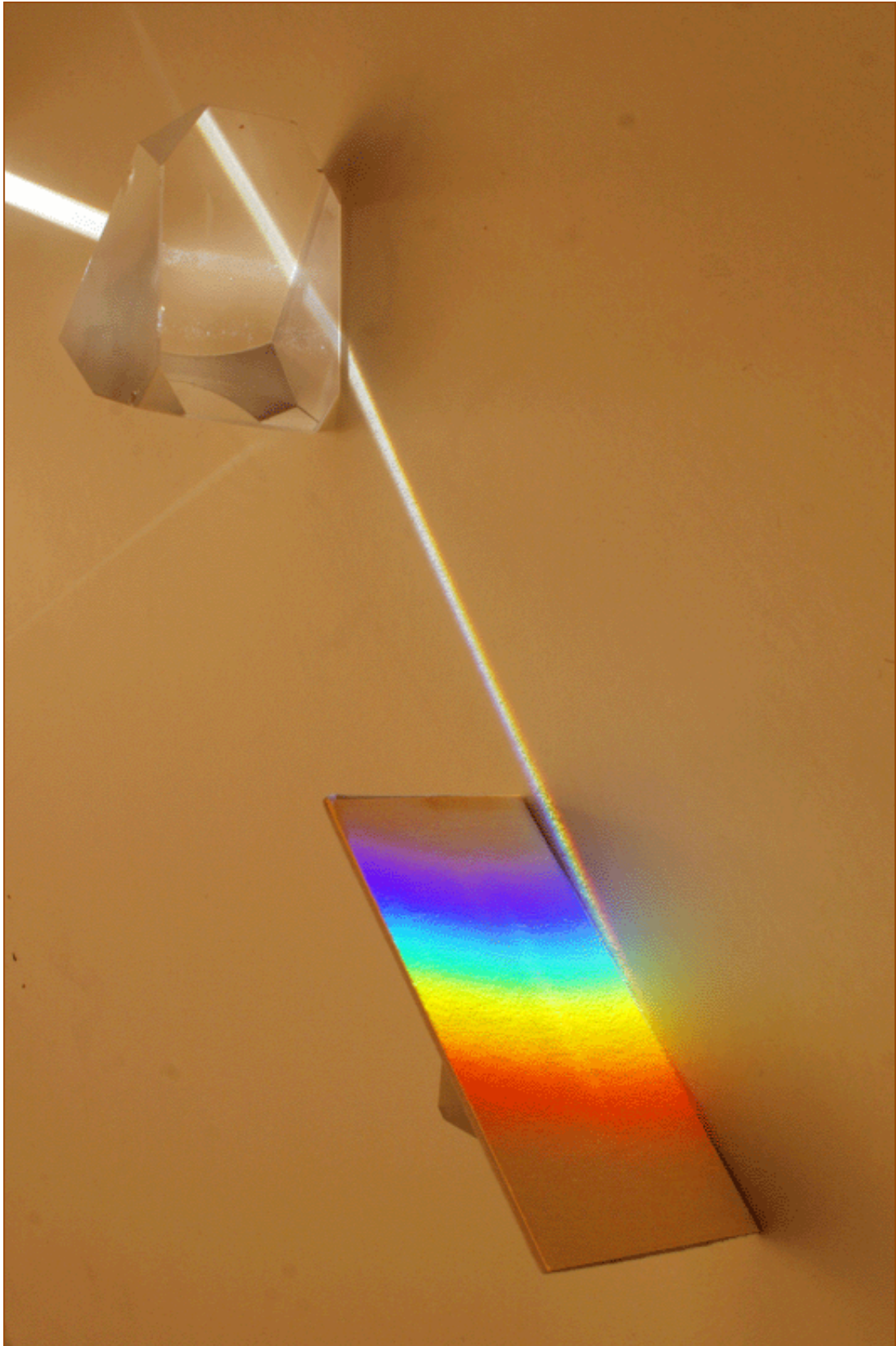
**White = "the presence of God"**



**Jesus is the "I AM."**

*"What I'm about to tell you is true,"  
Jesus answered. "Before Abraham  
was born, **I am!**" (John 8:58 NIRV)*

Jesus is the answer to the spiritual  
needs of every person.



**Purple = “abundance, satisfied”**



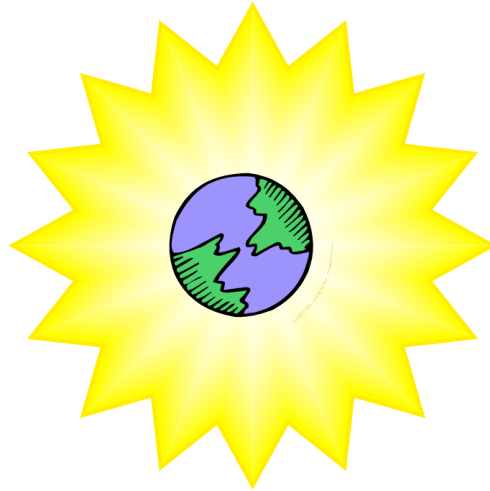
**Jesus is the BREAD OF LIFE.**

*“I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me will ever go hungry. And no one who believes in me will ever be thirsty.” (John 6:35 NIRV)*

His abundant love satisfies our hunger for a relationship with God.



**Yellow = “light, direction”**



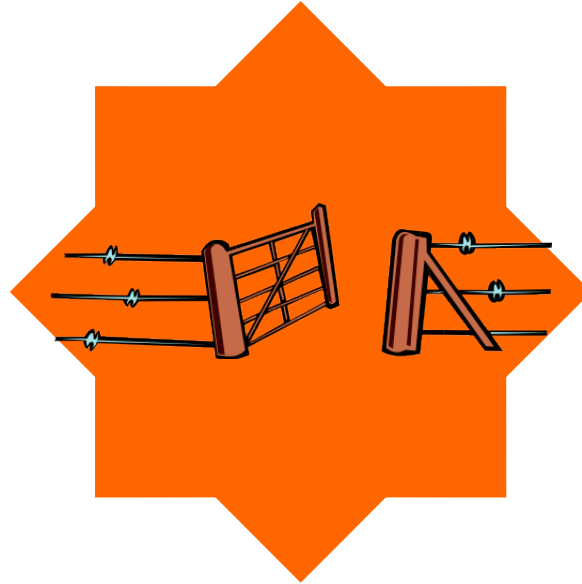
**Jesus is the LIGHT OF THE WORLD.**

***“I am the light of the world.  
Those who follow me will never  
walk in darkness. They will have  
the light that leads to life.” (John  
8:12 NIRV)***

**His light directs us to follow Him.**



**Orange = “safety”**



**Jesus is the GATE FOR THE SHEEP.**

*“I am like a gate for the sheep...  
Anyone who enters through me  
will be saved. He will come in and  
go out. And he will find plenty of  
food.” (John 10:7, 9 NIRV)*

There is safety in following Jesus and  
doing life His way.



**Community Sheep Pen**



**Hillside Sheep Pen**

**Green = “relationship”**



**Jesus is the GOOD SHEPHERD.**

*“I am the **good shepherd**. I know my sheep, and my sheep know me.” (John 10:14 NIRV)*

You can enjoy a forever relationship with Him.

**Blue = “hope of eternal life”**



**Jesus is the RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE.**

***“I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even if he dies.” (John 11:25 NIRV)***

He gives to His followers eternal spiritual life now and eternal physical life in a new body after death.

**Red = “love, life, celebration”**



**Jesus is the WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE.**

***“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6 NIRV)***

Jesus gives us His life so that we are totally loved and accepted by God our Father. Celebrate!

**Brown = “nourishment to bear fruit”**



**Jesus is the VINE.**

*"I am the vine. You are the branches. If anyone remains joined to me, and I to him, he will bear a lot of fruit. You can't do anything without Me." (John 15:5)*

He nourishes us with His life so we bear fruit that represents our connection with Him.





