

## LESSON 2

# I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Is the Way to God

**SCRIPTURE:** John 14

**GOD'S BIG STORY:** Shortly before His death on the cross, Jesus prepares His disciples for what lies ahead, comforting them and teaching them that He is the way to God.

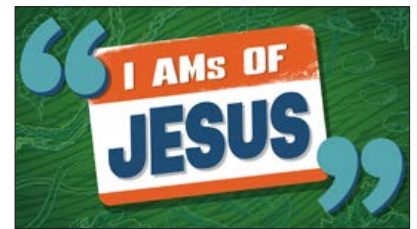
**WORD OF WONDER:** I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows me will never walk in darkness. They will have that light. They will have life. —John 8:12

## CURIOSITY

## BELIEF

## FAITH

- Welcome Question: Have you ever gotten lost? Tell about it.
- Curiosity Questions
- Discussion Questions for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time
- Word of Wonder: John 8:12
- Word of Wonder Activity
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: Prayer Walk



**Notes!** Use the Notes Pages on the back of the Coloring Sheet each week to help kids stay engaged and remember what they are learning. Encourage kids to make notes, draw pictures, and write questions throughout small group and large group. This also provides parents with resources to keep the conversation going throughout the week!



[I AMs of Jesus Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

### INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

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**WORD OF WONDER:** John 8:12

My teenage daughter had an appointment to get her hair done for prom, and she had recently heard that a popular map app was now the most reliable for directions. After driving in circles, she arrived late and flustered.

Believing it was just a fluke or her own error, my daughter used the app again to meet her friends for pre-prom pictures. However, it turned out that it wasn't a fluke or her error. She got lost again.

Getting lost twice in one day made her think maybe she needed to find a new way to get directions. She switched back to the app that had always worked for her before, and thankfully she arrived at the right location for her prom. On time too!

Not knowing how to get somewhere can fill us with anxiety. It gets worse when we can't rely on the directions given to us. Jesus' disciples had very similar fears. Take a moment to read John 14:1–7. In this passage, Jesus reveals to His disciples that there is one way that will get us where we want to be—to life, to truth, to the Father.

Can you think of a time when you chose to orient your life based on ill-advised guidance? How have you seen life and truth by choosing the way of Jesus?

Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.

—Jeff Stone

Associate Pastor and Professional Counselor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

LESSON 2 **FOR LEADERS**  
**I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE**

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS**

**WHO?**

Jesus is the embodiment of truth and the giver of life. He is the way to God, so closely identified with the Father that to know Jesus is to know the Father (John 14:7) and to see Jesus is to see the Father (John 14:9).

**WHAT?**

This passage is part of Jesus' final conversation with His disciples. Though He is going back to the Father, He declares that He is the way to God and promises His friends that they will see Him again. Until then, Jesus will give them the Holy Spirit to encourage them (John 14:15–17).

**WHERE?**

In the chapters leading up to this story, Jesus was anointed by Mary, the sister of Martha, in Bethany, about two miles west of Jerusalem. Then Jesus entered Jerusalem and stayed there the week leading up to His death.

**WHEN?**

This story takes place the night before Jesus' suffering and death. Jesus shared a meal with His disciples before the Passover Feast. He taught the disciples and prayed for them. Then they moved to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus was betrayed and arrested.

**CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY**

This story is part of the lead-up to the climactic moment of God's big story: the death and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus is the way to God and acted as such by defeating death, making the way for people to live forever with God.

### Small Group

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Jesus Is the Way to God

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### Pre-Service Connection (15-20 min)

**RESOURCES:** [Coloring Page](#), whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils  
Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have play stations with various board games, activities, or use games from the extra Games & Activities Guide to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them!

Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group. *Allow quieter kids who don't engage with the board games to color. Involve them in the curiosity questions.*

#### As kids arrive..

Invite them to write/draw the answer to the Welcome Question: on the designated board:

**“What kind of bread do you like to eat? What do you like to eat with bread?”** Set out sheets of paper and colored pencils.

#### While kids are playing in their opening activity groups..

Pose the following “I’m curious” questions. Say “I’m curious...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

- What is the purpose of a map? How do you use it?
- What helps you navigate (get around) a new place, such as a museum, a theme park, or an unfamiliar city?

### Small Group Begins

After the Opening Activity, Large Group Leader will begin small group time by reading the Welcome Question aloud and inviting everyone to open their Bibles and begin.

## Small Group Discussion: Younger Kids 5–8 min

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles (1 per kid); Bible Story Picture (1/SG)

Help kids use the table of contents in their Bibles to find the Gospel of John, the fourth book in the New Testament. Help kids navigate to the table of contents, find the book of John, then flip to the large chapter number 7.

**Read John 14:1–7 aloud. Then discuss the following:**

**Notes!** Have kids turn to the Notes Pages on the back of the Coloring Sheet and draw a picture of the story as you read.

- **Today's story took place when it was almost time for the Passover Feast. What is celebrated at Passover?** (God delivering His people from slavery in Egypt)
- **Where did Jesus tell His disciples He was going?** (His Father's House—the dwelling place of God)
- **What is the way to this wonderful place?** (Jesus Himself is the way.)
- **What was Jesus about to do?** (die on the cross)
- **How does what Jesus was about to do connect with the Passover celebration?** (By dying on the cross, Jesus would make the way for people to live with God the Father forever. He would free them from their sins like God freed His people from slavery in Egypt.)
- **Can anyone follow Jesus? How?**

**"Jesus is the way to God the Father. He told His disciples that all they needed to do was believe in Him. That is true for us too! Jesus made the way for us to be together with God forever! Let's pray and thank Jesus for being the way."**

### **Make It Inclusive!**

To make it possible for kids of varying abilities to participate in discussions, consider adjusting questions to yes/no format, allowing kids to write or draw their responses, and/or providing additional processing time for kids to think before answering.

## Prayer Time: Younger Kids

Encourage kids to share anything they would like prayer for—both praises and requests. Pray for each child by name, thanking God that Jesus has made the way for (child's name) to be with Him forever!

## Small Group Discussion: Older Kids 8–10 min

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles (1 per kid), Bible Story Picture (1/SG)

Help kids use the table of contents in their Bibles to find the Gospel of John, the fourth book in the New Testament. Help kids navigate to the table of contents, find the book of John, then flip to the large chapter number 7.

**Turn to Page 3 of this guide and help kids understand the context of this passage.**

**Invite a volunteer to read John 14:1–7. Then discuss the following:**

**Notes!** Have kids turn to the Notes Pages on the back of the Coloring Sheet and write the Scripture and any words that stand out to them.

- **Today's story took place when it was almost time for the Passover Feast. What is celebrated at Passover?** (God delivering His people from slavery in Egypt)
- **Where did Jesus tell His disciples He was going? How would He get there?** (His Father's House—the dwelling place of God. He would get there by dying on the cross.)
- **How could the disciples follow Jesus to this wonderful place?** (through believing in Jesus, who is the way)
- **How does what Jesus was about to do connect with the Passover celebration?** (By dying on the cross, Jesus would make the way for people to live with God the Father forever. He would free them from their sins like God freed His people from slavery in Egypt.)
- **If you had been in the room with Jesus, would you have understood what He was saying? Why or why not?**
- **Can anyone follow Jesus? How?**

"Jesus is the way to God. He told His disciples that all they needed to do was believe in Him. That is true for us too! Jesus made the way for us to be together with God forever! Let's pray and thank Jesus for being the way."

### Make It Inclusive!

To make it possible for kids of varying abilities to participate in discussions, consider adjusting questions to yes/no format, allowing kids to write or draw their responses, and/or providing additional processing time for kids to think before answering.

## Prayer Time: Older Kids

Invite kids to share anything they would like prayer for—both praises and requests. Pray for the group, inviting each kid to say her own name as you repeat the phrase, "Jesus, thank You for making the way for (child's name) to be with God forever."

## WORD OF WONDER

I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows me  
will never walk in darkness. They will have that light.  
They will have life.

—John 8:12 (NirV)

### Word of Wonder

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles (1 per kid)

"The Word of Wonder for the I AMs of Jesus series is John 8:12. Today we've heard how Jesus is the way to God the Father. Jesus shows us who God is and how God feels about us. This verse also shows us more about who Jesus is and what happens to us when we follow Him. Let's read the Word of Wonder together!"

Encourage kids to open their Bibles to John 8:12. Read the verse several times together, alternating who reads each sentence/phrase aloud (i.e., leader reads one sentence/phrase, kids read the next).

Discuss these questions:

- Jesus says He is “the way and the truth and the life” (John 14:6). What words in our Word of Wonder repeat this idea?
- What promise does our Word of Wonder give for those who choose to follow Jesus? How does that make you feel?

### Word of Wonder Activity

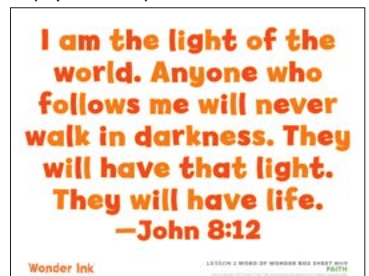
**SUPPLIES:** masking or painter's tape (prep only), large cardboard boxes (1 per small group), flashlights (1 per small group), scissors or boxcutter (prep only, optional), tables (optional)

**RESOURCES:** [Word of Wonder Box Sheet NirV \(1 per SG\)](#)

Ahead of time, print one copy of the Word of Wonder Box Sheet NirV for each small group. Tape each copy inside the bottom of a cardboard box with the text facing up, one per small group. (The deeper the boxes, the better!) Leave the boxes open at the top or, to make the activity more challenging, tape the top closed and cut a hole in the top large enough for kids to see the verse through it with the help of a flashlight. Set the prepared boxes along one end of the room, on tables or on the floor. Use tape to create a long starting line on the floor, opposite the boxes.

Read the Word of Wonder aloud together. Then ask each small group of kids to line up behind the starting line, and show them which box belongs to their group. Give a flashlight to the first kid in each line. Explain that the first kid in line will race to the box, use the flashlight to look inside, and shout the first word of the verse to the rest of the group. Then she will run back to the group and tag the next person in line, who will take the flashlight, run to the box, and read the first and second words of the verse. Each small group will continue this way until the entire verse has been read out loud and everyone has had at least one turn.

This activity can be done as a team-building activity with small groups going at their own pace or as a relay race with small groups competing against each other to see who is the first to say the entire Word of Wonder.



## PAUSE for Large Group time, then continue...

### Responding in Worship: Prayer Walk

**SUPPLIES:** masking tape (prep only), butcher paper (optional), permanent markers (optional)

**RESOURCES:** [Prayer Walk Prompts Sheets \(1/SG\)](#), [I AMs of Jesus Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Ahead of time, tape a wide path along the floor that kids can walk along. Options for shapes could be a spiral, a snaking line that goes back and forth, a zig zag, etc. Print the Prayer Walk Prompts Sheets and tape the prompts at intervals along the taped path, leaving the final paper (the “God!” heart) for the center or end of the path. Make sure there is enough space near the final paper for many kids to gather and worship. Alternatively, you could use permanent marker to write the prompts in larger letters on sheets of butcher paper and tape those alongside the path.



Gather kids together. **"Jesus is the way to God! Let's take some time to think about the ways God's Son, Jesus, helps us know God the Father and follow Him. A song will play, and when you're ready, I invite you to slowly walk along the path**

**taped to the floor, thinking about God and praying to Jesus. When you get to one of the papers, stop and read what it says. Then you can take a moment to say a quick prayer to Jesus.** Model this for the kids by stopping at the first paper and reading it to the kids: **What is something hard you need help with? Ask Jesus for help.** Demonstrate by pausing and praying quietly. **Each time you finish talking with Jesus in prayer, you can continue walking. This is not a time to rush or hurry. If you meet up with another friend, remain quiet and keep walking the path. It's not a race! This is a chance for us to walk and talk with Jesus, who is the way to God the Father. When you come to the end of the path, you'll see a paper with the word God! in a heart.** Walk to the final paper and point to it. **Here you can spend some time showing God your love and gratitude by worshiping Him. You can kneel or stand, sing or dance, and tell God "thank You" for sending Jesus to be the way to Him!**

**Leader Tip:** For Younger Kids. Position leaders at each of the prayer prompts to read/interpret them for younger kids and those who aren't confident reading. Or pair younger kids with older kids who can read each prompt for them.

#### **Make It Inclusive!**

Some kids, especially those who are neurodivergent, struggle to remain focused in quiet prayer. Provide simple alternative ways for kids to express their prayers to God. Consider setting play dough out on one table and paper and coloring utensils on another, along with the prayer prompts, for kids who want to express their prayers creatively.



Softly play “Waymaker” or other songs from the [I AMs of Jesus Elementary Spotify playlist](#). Open with a short prayer of invitation, such as this: **Father God, thank You for Jesus. Help us focus on Him as we find our way to You.** Allow time and space for kids to respond as they feel led, moving along the path and stopping to pray. When kids complete the prayer path, encourage them to spend time worshiping through song, dance, and prayer.