

# DAY 1

## Meet Jesus!

### Discover His Bold Claims

**BIBLE PASSAGES**

1 John 3:5; John 4:5–26; Mark 2:1–12;  
John 14:1–6; John 1:1–5

**APOLOGETICS CONTENT**

Compared to all others, only Jesus can rightly claim to be God.

**PRECIOUS GOLD MEMORY VERSE**

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” John 14:6

**GEM TO TREASURE**

Don't be fooled by counterfeits!

**LESSON AIM**

Children will be challenged to meet Jesus in a fresh way as they learn about the bold claims Jesus made about Himself, including that He is God, He is the only way to heaven, and He can forgive sins. While briefly examining thoughts from famous thinkers and religious founders, they will realize Jesus is unique from all others.

**Today's Lesson at a Glance**

- News That's New  
Howdy, Partners!
- Discover What's True  
Part One: Staking His Claims  
Part Two: Gem to Treasure
- Time to Review  
Part One: Precious Gold Memory Verses  
Part Two: Go and Do  
Review Game: Bucket of Gold

**Preparing for the Lesson**

- Read Mark 2:1–12, John 1:1–5, 4:5–26, 14:1–6 and 1 John 3:5 to prepare for teaching about the bold claims of Jesus.
- Read this lesson several times and prepare the materials.
- Pray.

**Lesson Materials****FROM TEACHER RESOURCE PACK**

- Memory verse poster
- Daily overview poster
- Bold Claims posters

**FROM TEACHER RESOURCE CD-ROM**

- Day 1 Bible account reference sheets

**OTHER MATERIALS**

- Bible
- Old West costumes for teachers
- Claim-staking supplies (see page 13)
- Foil, paper, and markers
- Optional: Today's coin, 1 per child
- Optional: Student guides and supplies (see page 17)
- Optional: Review game supplies (see page 18)

## Today's Devotional: Meet Jesus

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1*

Imagine meeting a man who claimed to be God. What would you think? Crazy nut?

Now imagine this man claimed to be the fulfillment of statements written hundreds of years before. Sure, sure, weirdo.

Now imagine the little boy down the street who had died was running around again. The man who claimed to be God had raised him from the dead. It was no trick—you had seen the boy after he died, and he was now playing with your kids.

Makes you think, doesn't it? Could this man really be who he claimed to be?

This is our Savior.

Even though today, we would (and should) scoff at someone staking a claim to deity, Jesus Christ was the real deal. He was the Creator incarnate, the God-man, the One who came to save His people from their sins, fulfilling the promises God had made since the beginning of time.

As you study your Bible this week, focus your attention on the four gospels. Put aside the genteel storybook notions that cloud the truth about the Messiah. And read the accounts as if for the first time, marveling at the astounding claims Jesus made ("before Abraham was, I AM"); the awesome demonstrations of His power over

nature, sin, and death; the amazing fact that He *rose from the dead*; and the astonishing change in the lives of those He touched.

Of all the people who have ever lived, ever led a religion, ever claimed to be a deity, only Jesus has the credentials to deserve our worship and following. And the only way we can know the truth about Him is through His inspired Word, the Bible.

As you prepare to meet Jesus with your students today, let's meditate on this Puritan Prayer about the Rock of Ages.

Thou Great I AM,  
Fill my mind with elevation and grandeur at the  
thought of a Being  
With whom one day is as a thousand years, and a  
thousand years as one day.  
A mighty God who, amidst the lapse of the worlds,  
and the revolutions of empires,  
Feels no variableness but is glorious in immortality.  
May I rejoice that, while men die, the Lord lives;  
That, while all creatures are broken reeds, empty  
cisterns, fading flowers, withering grass,  
He is the Rock of Ages, the fountain of Living  
Waters.

—Arthur Bennet, *The Valley of Vision*  
(The Banner of Truth Trust: 2005), p. 104.

## News That's New (5 minutes or less)

**Teacher One:** Howdy, partners! Welcome to the Old West! I'm mighty glad to see y'all! My name is Miner \_\_\_ and this here is \_\_\_ (Teacher Two or Teaching Assistant). This is my cabin, and just over yonder is the Discovery Mine site. Hope you're excited, 'cause you're right smack dab in the heart of gold country!

Ever since the news about gold hit back east some years ago, everyone and his brother started comin' out west to try to find gold. It was rumored there were nuggets you could pick right off the ground! That caused a rush—a GOLD rush!

Truth be told, at the beginning of the Gold Rush, there really *were* nuggets you could pick right off the ground! People traveled by covered wagon or by boat and came in droves to try to get rich quick. Towns sprang up overnight. They were named *boomtowns*, because they were booming with business. It quickly got overcrowded though, and the gold became harder to find.

Still, I'm sure glad you're here because y'all *will* find some gold this week. The gold I'm talkin' about isn't the kind from the ground, though. We're gonna be minin' for TRUE gold and discoverin' that one-of-a-kind, extra special ROCK—the Rock of Ages, whom we call Jesus. He's worth more than all the silver and gold in the world! Maybe you've heard about Him before and maybe you haven't, but we're gonna meet Him in a fresh way and hear the claims He staked about Himself. So let's mosey on to our next activity and meet Jesus.

## Discover What's True (25–30 minutes)

### Part One: Staking His Claims (20–25 minutes)

**Teacher Two:** Go to the area of the room near the “creek” and pick up claim-staking supplies, which can be something like wooden stakes, a hammer, and a rope. (You might want to put your supplies in a feed sack or muslin bag.) Act as if you're measuring and hammering to stake a claim. (These can also be imaginary supplies.)

**Teacher One:** \_\_\_\_, what are you doing?

**Teacher Two:** I heard you say you were staking claims today, so I wanted to be sure to get ours staked before all the good locations were taken.

**Teacher One:** I said we were going to *hear* about claims today, not *stake* claims.

**Teacher Two:** You mean you aren't gonna try and get us the best claim on the creek?

**Teacher One:** No, I'm gonna show the boys and girls some amazing claims that Jesus made about Himself that are rock solid gold.

**Teacher Two:** Well, I reckon they must be worth lots of money, then!

**Teacher One:** They're worth a lot more than money. Why don't you take a load off your feet and listen as I explain what we're gonna do?

#### Old West costumes for teachers

★ Be familiar with the lesson, but don't memorize it. Place it on a clipboard to use as a reference.

★ Think of fun names for yourselves: Uncle Jed, Coyote Kate, Panner Pete, or Goldie.

★ If working as co-teachers, decide which parts of the lesson each of you will be responsible for teaching. Plan to both dress in costume.

★ The Bible is listed just once daily in the supply list but is used throughout, so keep it handy and marked to the correct passages.

★ You may want to bring in a picture of a boomtown.

- Bible
- Claim-staking supplies (wooden stakes, a hammer, a rope, a sack or bag)
- Day 1 Bible account reference sheets (Teacher CD-ROM)
- Foil, paper, and markers
- Bold Claims posters (Teacher Resource Pack)

#### PRE-PREP

1. Photocopy the Bible account reference sheets.
2. Make your visual representation for Claim 1. (See next page.)

# Day 1

Five accounts follow, with five claims of Jesus. The children will examine the claims and discover why Jesus is unique from (and superior to) anyone who has ever lived, including any founder of any religion or cult. Discuss the first example together (see below), then divide into four groups (with an adult in each group, if possible) and follow this progression for examples two through five:

Give each of the four groups one of the Bible accounts. (Use the Bible reference accounts on the Teacher Resource CD-ROM, or use Bibles in your favorite translation that have been bookmarked to the right spots.)

For the first 10 minutes, each group reads their Bible account and discusses what Jesus said about Himself (or what was said about Him). Some children are not good readers, so the adult in the group may need to do the reading. The group members use foil, paper, and/or markers to make a visual representation of the Bible account, which can be done in several ways. For example, for the Woman at the Well, they can try one of the following:

- Use foil to make a well and two people (representing Jesus and the woman).
- Use paper and markers to draw a quick picture of the account.
- Use a combination of paper, markers, and foil. Draw the background picture, and use the foil to make Jesus and the woman.

For the next 10–15 minutes, each group shares its Bible account and claim with the rest of the class, using the visual representations. For example, for the Woman at the Well account, the group will share briefly about the account and tell that Jesus claims to be God. They will use their visual representations as they are sharing.

At the end of each group presentation, it may be necessary for you to review the Bible account more specifically, depending on how well the group covered it.

Share the important additional information listed at the end of each account after each group is done and point out the coordinating section on the Bold Claims posters.

★ Each group has 3–4 minutes to share, so keep it moving!

## Claim 1: Only Jesus Is Perfect! (1 John 3:5)

Share this account with the whole group as a sample presentation before dividing into small groups. Make your visual representation before class to go with this example (e.g., a zero made out of foil, symbolizing no sin).

Read 1 John 3:5 out loud, then show your visual representation as you say the following:

**Have you ever heard of people such as Buddha or Confucius who developed false religions? There are many such counterfeit leaders out there. Remember, these people were just men. They made mistakes. They weren't perfect. For example, the man who developed Buddhism left his wife and son in search of answers about life. Joseph**



Smith, the founder of Mormonism, was arrested for dishonest banking. Other religious founders were known for their sinful lives.

Jesus, on the other hand, was perfect. He never sinned, never disobeyed God. He never made a mistake. His enemies tried to figure out something He did wrong so they could blame Him, but they could never come up with even one true claim. No one else can claim he is perfect and back it up with a perfect life. Only Jesus!

### Claim 2: Only Jesus Is God! (John 4:5–19, 25–26)

Additional information for the teacher to share after the group has shared:

Jesus claims here that He is God. That’s a mighty big thing to claim! Can you imagine someone comin’ up to you and claiming he is God? None of the world’s most famous thinkers, such as a guy named Socrates, claimed to be God. Founders of false religions, such as Buddha and Confucius, never claimed to be God. Some cultures, like ancient Greece or Rome, made up gods like Zeus or Hermes, but they weren’t for real. Only Jesus can claim to be God and back it up with His life. Only Jesus!

### Claim 3: Only Jesus Can Completely Forgive Sins! (Mark 2:1–12)

Additional information for the teacher to share after the group has shared:

When someone has sinned against us, we can forgive him for it. But we can’t offer complete forgiveness for all the sin (disobedience to God’s commands) someone has done in his life. Only God can forgive sins. Jesus claimed He is God by saying He can forgive sins. No one else can take away our sin, even if he is super famous, like President George Washington or Martin Luther King, Jr., or \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank with other examples). Those people are still just people. Only Jesus has the power to completely forgive sins. Only Jesus!

### Claim 4: Only Jesus Is the Way to Heaven! (John 14:1–6)

Additional information for the teacher to share after the group has shared:

Some people say all beliefs and religions lead to heaven. Religions such as Hinduism, or false thinking such as New Age, claim there can be many ways to get to God. In this passage, Jesus explains that there is only one way to heaven. He doesn’t say He’s *a* way, He says He’s *the* way! He makes the exclusive claim that He alone is the only way to eternal life. No one else can provide a way to heaven. Only Jesus!

### Claim 5: Only Jesus Is the Creator! (John 1:1–5; Colossians 1:16)

Additional information for the teacher to share after the group has shared:

Sometimes people talk about things like “Mother Nature” or “The Force” as if they’re real and can create. But there’s no such thing as “Mother Nature” or “The Force.” They’re just make-believe. And make-believe gods, like the Egyptian sun god Ra, don’t exist, either, and can’t create. The Bible clearly tells us that Jesus is the Creator (Genesis 1:1; John 1; Colossians 1). He created everyone and everything, including founders of false religions, such as Buddha and Confucius. No one else can create from nothing. Only Jesus!



# Day 1

## Bold Claims of Jesus

Claim	Passage	Bible Account	Point to Ponder
1. Only Jesus is perfect!	1 John 3:5	In Him is no sin	No one else was or is perfect. Only Jesus.
2. Only Jesus is God!	John 4:5–19, 25–26	Woman at the Well	No one else can rightly claim to be God. Only Jesus.
3. Only Jesus can completely forgive sins!	Mark 2:1–12	Paralyzed Man	No one else can completely forgive sins. Only Jesus.
4. Only Jesus is the way to heaven!	John 14:1–6	The Way, the Truth, and the Life	No one else can provide a way to heaven. Only Jesus.
5. Only Jesus is the Creator!	John 1:1–5, Col. 1:16	By Him all things were created	No one else can create from nothing. Only Jesus.

- Daily overview poster (Teacher Resource Pack)
- Optional: Today's coin, 1 per child

## Part Two: Gem to Treasure (5 minutes or less)

Always beware of anyone who teaches that Jesus is not God. The key question to ask people who follow any false religion or cult is who they think Jesus is. **DON'T BE FOOLED BY COUNTERFEITS!** (Point to the daily overview poster.) **Just like fool's gold looks similar to gold but isn't worth anything, false religions aren't worth anything because they don't believe Jesus is who He says He is. He's not just a good teacher or one of many gods. He is God! Only Jesus made these bold claims and backed them up with His life. He is who He says He is.**

Show them the coin they will receive at the end of the day and repeat this gem together: Don't be fooled by counterfeits! Ask the kids to briefly express in their own words to the person sitting next to them what the saying means. Then have a volunteer share his answer with the whole class and reinforce the correct idea.

## Time to Review (Remaining class time)

Choose from the following options. Specific supplies for this section are not listed in the supply list on the back cover since they will vary depending on the activities you choose. If time is an issue, the student pages can be sent home to be completed, and the review game can be done in class. Be sure to motivate the kids to do the student pages at home because they are full of good stuff! Have the team leaders check with the kids tomorrow to see how they did on them and consider giving contest bonus points to the children for their hard work!

## Part One: Precious Gold Memory Verses

### Option One

If you purchased the student pages, pass them out now. Use the memory verse poster as a reference and either:

1. Complete the Precious Gold sections together during class and challenge them to complete the rest independently at home, or
2. Challenge the kids to complete *all* of it at home.

### Option Two

If you didn't purchase the student pages, continue with the directions that follow, choosing according to your time.

Today's memory verse is listed first, with directions. If time allows, practice tomorrow's verse, as well.

**Today's Verse:** Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).

Practice this verse several times together, using the memory verse poster as a reference, then try the following challenge.

**Challenge:** With a partner, as a whole group, or working alone, have the kids practice today's verse. Set a timer for 20 seconds and say the verse at least three times without looking at it.

**Tomorrow's Verse:** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (Matthew 6:21).

Try the challenge again using tomorrow's verse.

## Part Two: Go and Do

Share one or more of the following ideas and challenge the kids to complete it now or at home, depending on the choice and how much class time you have.

1. **Read the account of the paralyzed man (Mark 2:1–12) as if you've never heard of Jesus before. Always be amazed as you read the Bible and meet Jesus on its pages!**
2. **Tell someone at least two ways Jesus is better than everyone else, including religious founders.**
3. **Jesus is our Rock (1 Corinthians 10:4). Write the name JESUS on a rock with a permanent marker. Decorate the rock and keep it as a reminder. Discuss what it means for Jesus to be our Rock.**
4. **One way Jesus is unique is He is the Creator (Colossians 1:15–17). Make a poster showing something Jesus created.**

- Optional: Student guides and supplies for Part 1 and Part 2**
- Memory verse poster (Teacher Resource Pack)**

# Day 1

Ask yourself this question: Why is it important for me to know this?

- 2 small galvanized buckets
- 30 wadded up sheets of yellow tissue paper

## PRE-PREP

1. Place the two buckets on a table with the tissue paper “nuggets” in a pile between them.
2. Make up 15–20 review questions from today’s lesson.

## Review Game: Bucket of Gold

Each day, an optional quick review game is included. It’s not only a fun ending to the lesson, but also reinforces what was learned.

**Goal:** See which team can fill its bucket with gold first.

**Play:** Divide into two teams. Boys against girls is quickest! Take turns asking the two teams review questions from today’s lesson. If the team gets it right, they automatically get one piece of gold in their bucket. They then get a turn to throw another nugget of gold in their bucket from five feet away. If the nugget goes in, it helps to fill their bucket. If it doesn’t, it goes back in the pile. Keep this moving at a quick pace! The winning team is the one whose bucket is most full by the end of the playing time.