



YEAR 3 • LESSON 3

Jesus' Ministry Begins

John 1:14

QUESTIONS

AGES 3–5

1. What does John call Jesus at the beginning of the Gospel of John? *The Word.*
2. Did Jesus first start living when He was born? *No, He has always been alive, no matter how far back you go.*
3. What did Jesus do that only God can do? *He created everything.*
4. What does Jesus have in Himself? *Life that lasts forever.*

AGES 6–8

1. Why is Jesus called the Word? *We use words to reveal ourselves to others and to get things done. So Jesus is God's Word because He reveals God to us and does the Father's work.*
2. What does pre-existent mean? *It means that Jesus has always been alive.*
3. Is Jesus the same as God the Father? *No, but they have always been in a close relationship together.*
4. Is Jesus like God, or is Jesus God? *Jesus is God: He has the same nature as the Father. We know He is God because He is eternal, Creator, and self-existent (uncreated).*

AGES 9–11

1. What are some of God's works that Jesus does? *He created in the beginning, and He also saves (creates a new creation).*
2. Why is Jesus able to make us alive to God? *Because Jesus has life in Himself.*
3. How is Jesus able to show us who God is? *Because His life is light that can shine through the darkness of our sin.*
4. What is another word for the light of Jesus? *Glory. Jesus' glory is the same as the Father's glory.*

INTRODUCE

AGES 3–5

THAT’S ME!

Bring one of your baby pictures to class. Show it to the children and ask them if their parents have any pictures of them as babies. Talk about how every person begins life as a baby—even the tallest, oldest person they’ve ever seen started out life as a tiny, helpless child. Well, every person except One. Even though Jesus entered into this world as a baby boy, He was alive long before His birth. In fact, Jesus has no beginning. He is the eternal (always living) God.

AGES 6–8

BORN BUT NOT CREATED

When were you born? When did you begin to exist? Whose birthday do we celebrate at Christmas? So when did Jesus begin to exist? Trick question! He never began to exist, because He always was alive!

PONY EXPRESS

Communication is critical. We use our words to reveal ourselves to others and to get things done. One example of the critical nature of communication is the rise of the Pony Express. This mail service began in April 1860 and claimed that it could carry a letter from St. Joseph, Missouri to Sacramento, California in just ten days. While many said this couldn’t be done, the founders of the Pony Express believed they could do it by going in short stages and using mounted riders instead of coaches. Communication is important to God, too. But He didn’t use ponies and riders. God has revealed Himself to us through His Son. Jesus is the Word of God. Today’s lesson will be about this Word.

AGES 9–11

EARLIEST MEMORY

What are some of the children’s earliest memories? Can anyone remember anything when they were three years old? How about two years old? One year old? While some of us can remember further back than others, all of us have a starting point for our memories. But not Jesus. His memories have no beginning because He has no beginning.

JUST RIGHT

Our planet is called a “Goldilocks planet.” Does anyone know why? It is just the right distance from the sun, meaning it is just the right temperature to sustain life: it is neither too hot nor too cold. Talk about how important the light is that we get from the sun. In addition to warmth, plants and other organisms convert the sun’s rays into energy. This process, called photosynthesis, is the basis for almost all life on earth since it starts the food chain. The sun also provides light so that we can see. But today we’ll see that Jesus gives even better light.

ILLUSTRATE

AGES 3–5

LIGHT CONQUERS DARKNESS

Turn off the lights and use a small flashlight to show how even a small amount of light is able to drive darkness out of the room. Darkness cannot overcome it. Neither can Satan and the powers of darkness defeat the light of Jesus.

NO BEGINNING

Bring a large ball of yarn to class. Ask a child to begin pulling on the end of the yarn. As they pull, more and more yarn will come off the ball. While they're pulling, ask the class how long they think it will take to get to the beginning? If they keep pulling the yarn, they will eventually unravel the whole ball. But not with Jesus. If His life were represented by this yarn, then they would never get to the beginning, no matter how long they pulled. You would keep pulling forever and ever because Jesus has no beginning. He is Eternal.

AGES 6–8

IT WON'T GO OUT!

Buy some trick birthday candles that are extremely difficult to blow out. Light one of the candles in class and have a few children try to blow it out (don't tell them it's a special candle). Use this to illustrate John 1:5: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

BACK TOGETHER AGAIN

What is your favorite toy? If that toy broke, shattering into many pieces, would you be able to fix it? But what if the person who designed it and made it came to your house? Do you think he could put it back together and make it work again? This is similar to what Jesus came to earth to do. Because He is the One who created us in the beginning, He is the only one who can put us all back together and make us right.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Materials: Craft sheet, tape, black cardstock, yellow crayons.

Directions: Color the image of the world and the light bulb. Have the kids write on the black cardstock with the yellow crayon the word "Jesus is the" and "of the" as shown in the image. (Instead of a yellow crayon, you could use a silver Sharpie or glow-in-the-dark paint). Tape the light bulb and the world to complete the sentence.

AGES 9–11

SO MUCH MORE

Bring or show the class a reproduction of a famous painting. Explain that reproductions are great because they allow us to see famous works of art that we might not otherwise be able to see

because we couldn't afford to purchase or travel to see the original. However, they are not the original, and a serious art collector would be able to spot differences between a reproduction and the original. But this is not the case with Jesus. He shows us God, but unlike a painting that has been reproduced, Jesus is not inferior to God in any way. He is God Himself (Heb 1:1-3).

GREATEST DETERRENT

Ask the children to identify some things people do to prevent crime (build a fence, buy a dog or gun, install locks or a home security system, put up signs, etc.). What about installing a light? Hold up a light bulb and talk about how something as simple as light can stop criminals because they don't want to be seen. The light that Jesus provides does more than just prevent evil: His light conquers evil (John 1:5)!

CREATED FOR RELATIONSHIP

Who is your best friend? How long have you been friends? Does anyone know where the idea of a relationship comes from? It comes from God. In John 1:2 we read that Jesus, the Word, "was in the beginning with God." The Father and Son (and the Holy Spirit) have enjoyed a perfect relationship for all eternity. And when God created us in His image (Gen 1:26), He created us to have a relationship with Him. But that relationship has been broken by sin (Gen 3:8). In response, God has sent His Son to pay the price of our sin so that we can once again enjoy friendship with God (John 15:13-15). Are you friends with God? Or are you His enemy?