

12

Responding to Jesus

Key Theme

- Jesus is the only way of salvation.

Key Passages

- Luke 4:28–29; Matthew 7:28–29; Mark 1:21–22; John 3:18, 3:36, 5:15–16, 10:31–33

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe the two ways people reacted to Jesus.
- Explain the importance of believing in Jesus Christ.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will practice the memory verse by completing the Memory Verse Review Sheet using the letter clues. If time allows, they will recite the verse to a partner or to the teacher using only the letter clues.



Activity 1: Responding to Jesus Class Notes

Students will fill out the Responding to Jesus Class Notes as you study the lesson.



Studying God's Word

People reacted in one of two ways toward Jesus, His teachings, and His miracles. Some hated Jesus and wanted to kill Him. Others were astonished and believed His teachings. People have those same two reactions to Jesus today. God's Word says that those who do not believe will be condemned. But those who do believe will not be condemned. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. It is only through Him that we are saved.



Activity 2: Four in a Row

Students will review the lesson by playing a game of "Four in a Row."

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- ☐ Print the Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- ☐ Memory Verse Poster
- ☐ Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student



RESPONDING TO JESUS CLASS NOTES

- ☐ Print one Responding to Jesus Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

- ☐ Responding to Jesus Class Notes for each student
- ☐ Responding to Jesus Class Notes Answer Key
- ☐ Pencils



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- ☐ Print and cut out the five Scripture Strips from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- ☐ Study the Prepare to Share section.
- ☐ Go Before the Throne.

- ☐ Five Scripture Strips
- ☐ Student Take Home Sheets



FOUR IN A ROW

- ☐ Print one Four in a Row Teacher Guide from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- ☐ Prepare a 16-section square grid on the floor with masking tape.
- ☐ Cut 8 red circles and 8 black circles from red and black construction paper. Or use different colored paper plates.

- ☐ Four in a Row Teacher Guide
- ☐ Masking tape
- ☐ 8 red and 8 black construction paper circles to mark four in a row
- ☐ Beanbag, rolled sock, or other appropriate item for each team



Memory Verse

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

► **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages along with this background.

As we have studied Jesus Christ in the Gospels, we have seen that His life, His character, and His ministry were as diverse as they were controversial. Perhaps that is why God chose four distinct writers to tell of His life. Each one was called to present an individual portrait of Jesus. And yet, when you read them together, they display a fuller, richer picture of the God-Man, the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ!

The very sad truth of the matter is that He was not widely accepted when He lived on earth—and is still not widely accepted today. This perhaps brings to light a better understanding of Jesus's teaching: that we must enter by the narrow, difficult gate to gain eternal life. For the broad gate leads to destruction and death, and many enter through it (Matthew 7:13–14).

Often, the reactions to His teachings were far from positive. You would think that the God-Man would be welcome in the synagogue and His teachings would be anticipated and sought after. But that was not the case. The religious rulers repeatedly heard what He said and were filled with wrath. They were frequently stirred to intense anger by His claims, and in their anger they would threaten His very life (Luke 4:28–29).

It wasn't just His teaching that angered them, but His miracles as well. The Bible tells us that after He healed a man who had been paralyzed for 38 years, the Pharisees and Jews persecuted Him and sought to kill Him (John 5:15–16). Another time the Jews were so angry they picked up stones to stone Him (John 10:31). At this point they admitted why they were moved to murder: "You, being a man, make Yourself God" (John 10:33).

These reactions from the religious rulers were not fueled by truth, but by jealousy and hatred that someone would claim to be God—and that this Man would demand their respect, submission, and attention.

Jesus came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). He did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Matthew 9:13). Those who saw their need listened and learned from the Messiah. The Bible tells us that they were astonished at His teaching, for Jesus taught as one who had authority, unlike the scribes in the synagogues (Matthew 7:28–29; Luke 4:21–22). His teaching and His miracles led believers to proclaim, "He [Jesus] has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak" (Mark 7:37). So even while many wanted to destroy Him, those who

witnessed His life, and had eyes to see the truth, were convinced that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matthew 16:16).

This division of belief continues today. Some people are astonished and transformed by His Word as they ponder His grace, mercy, love, and forgiveness. Others mock the Word and refuse to humble themselves before the Son of God, who came to bring eternal life to those who would know the true God and Jesus Christ whom He sent (John 17:3).

Jesus spoke clearly and directly about the truth He had come to reveal. His words were, and are still today, convicting to eternal life or condemnation.

He who believes is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (John 3:18)

He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. (John 3:36)

Our prayer for the unsaved, especially those we are privileged to teach, ought to be, "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion" (Hebrews 3:15).

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

It has become popular in our Western culture to use Jesus to promote personal or political agendas. *What Would Jesus Eat?* is the title of an eating program and cookbook, touting the health benefits of a 2,000-year-old Middle Eastern diet. "What Would Jesus Drive?" is a website of the Evangelical Environmental Network, encouraging Christians to drive eco-responsible vehicles.

Others quote Jesus to promote their views on being tolerant, such as "Do not judge, lest you be judged!" or "Let he who is without sin cast the first stone," ripping these words out of their context to make a point. In these and many other circumstances, Jesus is redefined—sometimes as a good moral teacher, an ethicist, or an environmentalist. But for those who read the Gospels in context and seek to understand who Jesus was and what He said, this trivializing of Jesus's person and work in order to use Him to support one's own agenda is nothing short of blasphemy.

Jesus clearly taught that He was much more than a great moral teacher. He claimed over and over to be

God. He said that He and the Father are one, a claim His audience understood to be a claim to deity (John 10:30–33). He used the Old Testament name of God I AM to refer to Himself (John 8:58). Jesus authenticated His claim of deity by miracles demonstrating power over nature, over disease, and even over death. He claimed to forgive sin and then validated His claim with physical healings (Luke 5:17–26).

In addition to His claim to be God, Jesus claimed to be the only way of salvation—the only way that sinners can be reconciled to God. He stated, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). He also said, “Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins” (John 8:24). And consider this: “Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God” (Luke 12:8–9).

As Christians, we must be careful not to water down the gospel or Jesus’s claims in order to promote a feel-good Jesus or a Jesus who is here merely to fix our unhealthy eating habits or to promote environmentalism. And we must not ever change the gospel in order to be seen as culturally tolerant or inclusive. It is actually more loving to tell people of sin, judgment, and salvation through Christ than it is to leave them believing a false gospel, only to have them perish outside of Christ and His great salvation.

Jesus was not just a good moral teacher or example for us to follow. No, He was the eternal Son of God,

the second Person of the Trinity, who claimed to be the exclusive Savior of men and women. Jesus brings division. The gospel is a stumbling block to many. A misguided response to a false presentation of Jesus will not save anyone. But when people understand their need for a Savior because of their sin and then recognize Jesus as the sinless Son of God crucified and raised, then by God’s grace they can repent and trust that Jesus, the God-Man, is mighty to save.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Lord Jesus, you astonish me. Your life and your Word reveal your love and compassion for people—for me! You healed; you taught; you raised the dead! Your Words and power showed people your divine nature. I praise you for that. Yet, I am saddened that so many reacted to you with hatred, jealousy, and hard hearts. I pray for my students, my unsaved loved ones, and my unsaved friends and neighbors. May they respond to the gospel with belief and astonishment one day. Give me the boldness and sensitivity to share your Word with them. Help me to love people enough to tell them of sin, judgment, and salvation through Christ. Thank you for saving me. I am forever grateful.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet. If time allows, have the students recite the verse together, to each other, or to you.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Responding to Jesus Class Notes

MATERIALS

- ☐ Responding to Jesus Class Notes for each student
- ☐ Responding to Jesus Class Notes Answer Key
- ☐ Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Print the class notes for each student. Pass them out at the beginning of class. Have students fill in the blanks as you study the lesson.

We will be completing these class notes as we study the Bible passages. Do not work ahead. We will finish them together.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we complete the class notes today, we will recognize that the people who heard Jesus teach had two reactions to Him—they either hated Him or were astonished at Him.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

Refer to Past Lesson Theme Posters. In the last several lessons, we have talked about what Jesus taught and did while He was on earth—His purpose, His miracles, and who He said He was. Last week we spoke about what Jesus expected from His disciples—His followers.

- ? *Refer to Lesson 11 Lesson Theme Poster.* How does Jesus want His followers to live? Allow discussion.

➤ Use the New Testament History Poster included with your teacher kit as you teach the lesson. Emphasize that Jesus ministered only 3 years, and He lived only about 35 years. Yet His life changed the world forever and brought eternal life to all who believe.

Jesus said that His true disciples—those who wanted to come after Him—would learn to deny themselves, take up their crosses, and follow Him. He meant that those of us who want to follow Christ will live lives that want to please Him more than ourselves. We will want to be obedient to His Word. And every day we will work to make Jesus Christ the most important thing in our lives—more important than anything the world has to offer; more important than anything we own or anyone we know.

This was a hard lesson for the people in Jesus's time, and it is still a difficult lesson for us today. And that is one reason why there were such different reactions to Jesus. And there are still different reactions to Him today. We are going to see what some of those reactions to Jesus were. These Scripture Strips have the verses on them. *Pass out the Scripture Strips.*

Luke 4:28–29

First, turn to Luke 4:28–29 in your Bibles. If you have Luke 4:28–29, would you come up front and read it for us, please? Listen carefully, everyone. *Have student read Luke 4:28–29.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Now take a look in your Bibles as we answer some questions about those verses.

Observe the Text

? Where did this take place? *Luke 4:28. In the synagogue.*

The people were listening to Jesus teach in the synagogue. They didn't like what He said.

? How did they react to what He said? *Luke 4:28. They were filled with wrath.*

? What does that mean, filled with wrath? *Allow discussion. They were very angry.*

? They were very angry. What did they do to Jesus because of their anger? *Luke 4:29. They took Him out of the city and to the top of the hill. They wanted to throw Him off the cliff.*

That is a lot of anger. They took Jesus and threatened to throw Him off the hill! They wanted to kill Him. They did not like what He was teaching.

? So what did Jesus do? Did He get thrown off the cliff? Look at Luke 4:30. *No. He got away.*

John 5:15–16

Now let's read about another time something like this happened. This is about a man Jesus healed and how the people reacted to that miracle. Turn to John 5:15–16 in your Bibles.

? Who has that verse? Will you come up to the front and read it? Listen carefully. *Read John 5:15–16.*

? Now look in your Bibles as we answer these questions. What did the man do after He was healed? *John 5:15. He told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.*

? What did the Jews do when they heard that? *John 5:16. They persecuted Jesus and looked for a way to kill Him.*

I would say these people were angry, too! They found out Jesus healed a man and wanted to persecute and kill Him for it! Let's move on!

Find John 10:31–33 in your Bibles. Again, the people showed they were angry at Jesus. This happened after Jesus had told them that He and the Father (God) were one and the same.

John 10:31–33

? Who has that verse? Will you come up to the front and read it for us? *Read John 10:31–33.*

? What did the Jews do to Jesus? In John 10:31. *They picked up stones to kill Him.*

? Why did the Jews want to stone Him? It's at the end of John 10:33. *For blasphemy. He was a man and made Himself God.*

The Jewish leaders were furious at Jesus. It seemed no matter what Jesus did, they came after Him. This time they called Him a blasphemer because He claimed to be God. They did not believe what Jesus said about Himself.

Discover the Truth

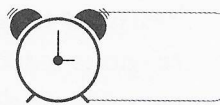
Let's go to the class notes now and recap what we have just heard from God's Word.

? Will someone read #1 on your class notes? What is the answer? *Assign a reader. Wrath. Have students complete #1.*

? And what about #2? How will you answer that? *Assign a reader. Kill. Have students complete #2.*

? And #3? Someone read that. *Assign a reader. God. Have students complete #3.*

Jesus made men angry. They didn't want to believe or even hear that Jesus was God in the flesh. They didn't like who Jesus said He was, or what He taught, or even the miracles He performed. They refused to believe and wanted to kill Him. But God protected Jesus from these men—until it was time for Him to die on the Cross, according to God's perfect timing and His perfect plan.



READ THE WORD

We have seen that many men were angry and wanted to kill Jesus. But not everyone acted that way. These next verses tell about a different reaction to Jesus. This first passage happened after a sermon Jesus had just preached.

- ? Turn in your Bibles to Matthew 7:28–29. Who has that Scripture Strip? Come on up here and read it to us. *Read Matthew 7:28–29.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Let's answer some more questions so we can see a little more clearly what is going on here. Look in your Bibles to find the answers.

Observe the Text

- ? What did the people think of Jesus's teaching? *Matthew 7:28. They were astonished.*
- ? And why were they astonished at His teaching? It is in Matthew 7:29. *Matthew 7:29. He taught with authority, not like the scribes.*

Yes. Jesus knew what He was talking about, and it was clear to the people that He did. The scribes were leaders and teachers. But Jesus was different from the scribes. He taught with authority. And these people who heard Him were astonished.

- ? Let's look at another example of this. Turn to Mark 1:21–22 in your Bible. Who has those verses? Come on up and read them for us. *Read Mark 1:21–22.*
- ? Where was Jesus? In what city? *Mark 1:21. In Capernaum.*
- ? Where did He go on the Sabbath to teach? *Mark 1:21. In the synagogue.*
- ? And once again, the Bible tells us what the people thought of His teaching. How did they react? *Mark 1:22. They were astonished.*
- ? What made Jesus's teaching different? Why were the people so astonished and impressed with Him? How did He teach? *Mark 1:22. He taught as one with authority.*

Discover the Truth

- ? Look back at the class notes. Will someone read #4? How will you answer that? *Assign a reader. Astonished. Have students complete #4.*
- ? And how about #5? What is the answer to that? *Assign a reader. Authority. Have students complete #5.*

Yes! Jesus taught with authority—not as the scribes and the other religious teachers of His time. Jesus is God! The things He said and did proved who He was! These people were astonished. Others hated what Jesus taught.



READ THE WORD

- ? So, why should we care how the people reacted to Jesus and what He did and taught? *Allow discussion.*

The way people respond to Jesus is very important, and we should care very much. Let's see what the Bible tells us about that.

- ? Go to John 3:18 in your Bibles. This verse shows us why believing in Jesus is so important! Will someone read it for us? *John 3:18. Assign a reader.*

John 3:18



EXAMINE THE WORD

Let's take a closer look at that verse.

Observe the Text

- ? Again, this is talking about one who does and one who does not believe in Jesus. What happens to the person who DOES believe in Jesus? *He is not condemned.*
- ? And what happens to the person who DOES NOT believe in Jesus? *He is condemned.*
- ? And why is that person condemned? It is at the end of that verse. *He has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

That's right. This verse is very clear. Whoever believes in Jesus is not condemned, but will have eternal life. Whoever does not believe in Jesus is condemned because he does not believe in the name of Jesus Christ.

- ? What happens to people who have eternal life when they die? *Allow discussion. They go to heaven.*

People who believe in Jesus have eternal life and go to heaven. They will spend eternity with Jesus. It is a wonderful promise and hope!

- ? And what happens to people who do NOT have eternal life when they die? *Allow discussion. They go to hell.*

People who are condemned by God will go to hell after they die. They have NOT believed in Jesus Christ. They will spend eternity apart from God in suffering and pain because of their sin.

Do you see why we should care how people react to the message of Jesus? It is very important. There is one more verse I want to share with you. Turn to John 3:36. Will someone read that please? *John 3:36. Assign a reader.*

John 3:36

This verse is repeating the same message. But I want you to understand that this is a very important issue. Heaven and hell are real, and Jesus offers a way to get to heaven.

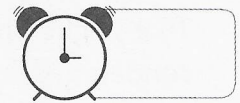
- ? Look at John 3:36 again. What will the person who believes in the Son (Jesus) have? *Everlasting life.*
- ? What will happen to the person who does not believe in the Son (Jesus)? *Will not see life. The wrath of God will be upon him.*

Discover the Truth

What an important message! If we believe in Jesus—if we are astonished at His teaching, His miracles, and believe He is who He said He was, we will have eternal life with Him. If we do not believe in Him, we will not have life, and God's wrath, His punishment, will be on us forever—for all of eternity.

- ? Let's finish our class notes. Will someone read #6 for us? What is the answer?
Assign a reader. Believes. Have students complete #6.
- ? And what about #7? Who will read it? *Assign a reader. Condemned. Have students complete #7.*
- ? And #8. What is the answer? Read it for us. *Assign a reader. Forever. Have students complete #8.*
- ? And #9. What will happen to the person who rejects Jesus? Someone read that one. *Assign a reader. Hell. Have students complete #9.*

There is a way to eternal life! That eternal life promises to be a joyful time. There will be no more tears, death, sorrow, or crying, and no more pain. Everything will be made new! And Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life that will lead all believers there. It is only through Jesus that we can be saved!





Four in a Row

MATERIALS

- ☐ Four in a Row Teacher Guide
- ☐ Masking tape
- ☐ Beanbag, rolled up sock, or other appropriate item
- ☐ Red construction paper—8 sheets
- ☐ Black construction paper—8 sheets

INSTRUCTIONS

Use masking tape to make a 16-section square on the floor. The square should be four sections wide by four sections high. Each section should be equal in size. Cut 8 red circles and 8 black circles from the red and black construction paper. Or use some other appropriate markers for the two teams.

Divide the students into two teams—red team and black team. Give each team eight paper circles—either red or black. Students will toss the beanbag to a square. They will answer a question. If correct, they can put a marker in that square. To win the game, teams must get four circles in a row on the grid—by answering the questions correctly and throwing the beanbags accurately. Allow students to use their Bibles, class notes, and Lesson Theme Poster to answer.

We are going to review now by playing “Four in a Row.” I’ll put you into two teams: Red Team and Black Team. I want each

team to throw the beanbag onto an empty square on the grid. I will then ask a question about what we have been learning. If your team answers correctly, mark the grid where the beanbag landed. If you don’t get it correct, the other team will have an opportunity to answer and earn a space on the grid. We will alternate teams until one team gets four circles in a row. *Play the game using the Four in a Row Teacher Guide. Repeat the game as time allows.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

This game was a fun way to review a tough topic. *Congratulate the winning team.*

In Jesus’s day people reacted to Jesus in one of two ways. Some were astonished and believed Him. Others hated Him and wanted to kill Him. People react the same way today. Some reject Him and hate Him. Others believe the message He has for us—that He is the only way to the Father. And it is only through believing in Him, repenting of our sins, and trusting Him for forgiveness that we will get to heaven.



Applying God’s Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

God shows us in His Word that there are two ways people reacted to Jesus. We saw that some of the people, especially the Jewish religious leaders, were angry when they heard Jesus’s teaching and saw His miracles. They wanted to kill Him. And the other reaction was just the opposite. Some of the people were astonished at Jesus’s wisdom and teaching. They believed Him.

How we respond to Jesus is so important. Whoever believes in Him is not condemned. That person will go to heaven and have eternal life with God. But whoever does not believe is condemned. The unbeliever will spend eternity in hell.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

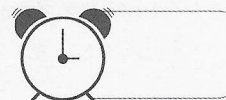
There were two reactions to Jesus. Some people loved Him, and some people hated Him.

- ? Where do you stand? Would you be one of the leaders who were angry with Jesus, hated what He said and did, and wanted to kill Him? *Pause for reflection.*
- ? Or are you someone who really believes that all Jesus said and did was powerful and meaningful and true? *Pause for reflection.*

This is an important question. And only you can answer it for yourself. How do you become one of those who DO believe and HAVE eternal life forever? You start by admitting to God that you are a sinner, you are sorry for your sins, and then ask for His forgiveness. He'll give it if you ask. Then you turn away from your sinful life and turn to Jesus. That's called repentance. You believe that Jesus is who He says He is in His Word, and receive His free gift of salvation and eternal life. When you do that, your sins are washed away and Jesus's righteousness is transferred to you.

We call this being saved because you are saved from the condemnation and wrath of God that every sinner deserves. Instead of condemnation and eternal punishment when you die, you will have the hope of eternal life with God.

I pray that each of you will one day believe that Jesus is the Son of God who lived, died, and rose again so that sinners may have eternal life.



► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the students to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

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



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Thank God for the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ and its power to save.
- Pray that God will open the eyes of the students to see His truth and be astonished at Jesus Christ.