

Prepare

What's behind all this?

We often assume Jesus of Nazareth knew he was God, but, in fact, there is little in the Gospels to suggest he did. As an infant, angels and wise men told his parents that he was going to save Israel. As a 12-year-old, he told his parents they should have expected to find him in his Father's house.

While these were indications he was something special—maybe even the long-awaited Messiah—they alone did not imply divinity. Just before Jesus began his public ministry at age 30, the Gospels talk of his three temptations by the devil, implying that Jesus' own divinity was hidden from him, because, of course, God would not have been tempted.

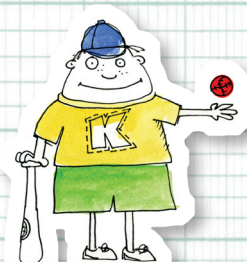
As Jesus' ministry continued, he had an increasing awareness that his relationship to God was unique—unlike what anyone had experienced before. By the time he was on the cross, he knew he had the power to grant someone—the thief on the cross next to him—eternal life. But it was really the early church—especially in the writings of the Apostles as they looked back on the story, miracles, and resurrection of Jesus—that fully recognized his divinity.

Where are kids at?

- Kids this age are rapidly developing and changing in ways they don't always understand. They may feel a connection with Jesus as they study how he becomes aware of who he was and is!



Matthew 4:1
Colossians 2:9
1 Corinthians 8:6



Where's this going?

Kids play with the idea that Jesus worked at understanding his divine nature throughout his life, and consider what this means for their own self-identity.

Consider this . . .

"I mean simply that we have no way of knowing whether Jesus thought of himself as the Messiah or as the Son of God in some special sense. According to the earliest layers of the developing gospel tradition, he said nothing about having such thoughts."

Marcus J. Borg, *Meeting Jesus for the First Time: The Historical Jesus & The Heart of Contemporary Faith* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1995), 29

encounter

15 minutes

Video

1. Set up

Ask kids if they have ever had their parents share a story about them that they themselves did not remember or know about. Give each kid a chance to share their story. Ask kids: How does it feel to know that there are lots of things you don't remember or don't yet realize about yourselves? Then pose today's question: Did Jesus know he was God?

2. Watch

"Did Jesus know he was God?" DVD 2, Chapter 2

3. Unpack

- What ideas from the video are new to you?
- If you were Jesus, would you have wanted to know right away that you were God? Why or why not?
- What's something new that you are learning about yourself? What has the process of discovery felt like?

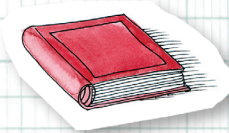
What about the Bible?

Think of a time when someone asked you to do something but you weren't sure that you could. Did you say yes anyway? How did it feel as you started doing it? How did you eventually figure out that you could do it? How did that feel? Share your experience with the group. Read Mark 1:40-45 together.

Questions for conversation while you work:

- According to the passage, what motivated Jesus to heal the leper?
- What would you be thinking if you touched someone and they were healed?
- When have you been able to do something you originally thought you couldn't do? How did it feel?
- Do you see any evidence in this story that Jesus knew he was God?

Make sure you've got the obvious stuff for this session—re:form video (DVD or download), Anti-Workbooks, Bibles, pens or pencils, paper, tape, etc.



mes·si·ah

[muhs-sigh-uh]

someone who will save or free a country or people

lep·er

[leh-p-ur]

A person with the skin-and-nerve disease of leprosy. Leprosy can now be cured with medicine.



Back it up . . .

"Christians often assume that Jesus knew that he was God. But, in truth, the Bible isn't really clear on that point."

re:form DVD

engage

25-30 minutes

Choose 1+ Anti-Workbook (AW) activities to explore the session question. The first 2 are for individual use, while the last 2 involve the whole group.



1. Anti-Glasses AW p. 102

Think of a time when you were unsure or unsettled about what was coming next in your life. Were you nervous, or even frightened? How did you cope with how you were feeling? What eventually happened? How did God's presence in your life support you through this time? Share your experience with being limited in what we can see of our lives.

Questions for conversation while you work:

- How do your Anti-Glasses change how you see the world?
- For those who wear regular glasses, what did it feel like when you first got glasses?
- What is it like to have limited vision as you try to do normal activities?
- How well do you feel like you know who you are?
- What do you think Jesus thought about the unusual events that were occurring in his life?

Get this stuff . . .

Collage-making materials such as torn paper, feathers, torn tissue paper, seeds, beads, etc. Glue sticks. Simple jigsaw puzzle.

Where's this going?

Kids create crazy glasses to experience limited vision and consider what it would be like to have limited knowledge of self.



2. Be Somebody! AW p. 103

Pick a famous person or character to be as you introduce this activity. Be sure to dress the part! Explain the activity to your group while maintaining your character. Allow kids to ask you a few questions. Gauge kids' reactions as you keep on with the charade. Use your own experience with pretending to be famous to guide your discussion with kids throughout the activity.

Questions for conversation while you work:

- What famous person did you choose to be and why?
- How did people react to you when you tried to convince them that you were a famous person?
- Were you able to keep a straight face? Why or why not?
- Why is it hard to convince others that you're famous?
- Why would it have been hard for Jesus to convince people he was God?
- Which do you think would have been harder—convincing someone you're famous or convincing someone you're divine? Why?
- If Jesus had been given a choice, do you think he would have chosen to be one with God? Why or why not?

Get this stuff . . .

Note cards.

Where's this going?

Kids pretend to be famous people and experience what it might have been like if Jesus had made any claim about being God.

Back It Up . . .

"Some would argue that Jesus never openly claimed to be God because in the Jewish faith—and Jesus was Jewish—it was unthinkable for a Jewish man or woman to think, let alone say, that they and God were one and the same. It was considered blasphemy."

re:form DVD



3. Imagine a Future! AW p. 104

Set up three baskets labeled “20 Years Ago,” “Today,” and “20 Years From Now.” Get kids started thinking by having them write down things they know about what the world was like 20 years ago, what it’s like today, and what they think it might be like 20 years from now. Get them thinking about fashion, transportation, buildings, homes, technology, and more! Have them put their scraps of paper in the respective baskets. If they need inspiration during the activity, encourage them to tap into the brainstorm baskets!

Questions for conversation while you work:

- What is your wildest prediction?
- What is your greatest hope for your life 20 years from now?
- Why can’t we know what our future will bring?
- How do you feel when you think about your future? Why?
- Consider kids who live in poor countries. What do you think their futures hold?
- What do you think Jesus would have thought about his future?

Get this stuff . . .

Assorted pieces of scrap paper. Three baskets.

Where’s this going?

By making predictions about their futures, kids will think about what their futures may hold and about what Jesus knew or didn’t know about his future.



4. Who Am I? AW p. 105

Pull a card from the deck of cards you brought and, without looking at it, place it against your forehead for kids to see. Ask “yes or no” questions to figure out what card you’re holding up. Once you figure it out, create an explanation of how the identity of that card is really important to you, how it fits your personality, and how it really represents who you are.

Questions for conversation while you work:

- What types of questions best helped you guess who you were?
- What questions would you ask other people to figure out who YOU really are?
- Why is it sometimes hard to know who we really are and who we are supposed to be?
- What questions might Jesus have asked God as he was learning who he really was?
- When you are confused about your life, whom do you talk to?

Get this stuff . . .

Deck of playing cards.

Where’s this going?

Kids play a 20-questions-type game to discover who they are, leading to insights about what makes us who we are and what made Jesus who he was.

Back it up . . .

“So even if Jesus did know he was God, he’d probably want to keep that to himself.”

re:form DVD

respond

15-20 minutes

Gather to share the different points of view kids have discovered and developed during the session.

Regroup

Pass a note card to each kid. On the front side, ask kids to write one thing they know about themselves. On the back side, have them write something they want to know about themselves. Have kids share both sides of their cards with the group. Then ask them how their cards might change in 20 years.

Share

Invite kids to share their work and describe how and why they did it. Affirm those things you appreciate or find interesting and ask others to offer helpful observations.

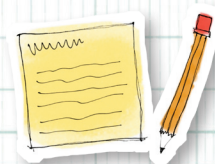
Questions for conversation:

- What are some new things you've learned about yourself recently?
- How does it feel when someone tells you something about yourself that you didn't realize before?
- What kinds of things do you think Jesus learned about himself as he grew up?
- Do you think Jesus knew he was God right away? Why or why not?

Send

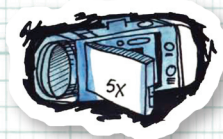
If you haven't already, place a clear vase in the center of a table, and make sure you have enough small clear containers for each kid to have one. For each lesson in the Jesus unit, you will continue to add new sand to the vase.

Fill half of your small containers with green sand to represent what we know about ourselves. Fill the other half of your small containers with orange sand to represent what we don't yet know about ourselves. Go around the table and give each kid a chance to name something that corresponds with the color of sand he or she is holding. As kids pour their sand into the vase together, say a prayer for a peaceful, healthy, and happy future for friends, family, and the church.



Get this stuff . . .

Note cards. Clear vase with straight sides. Small clear containers. Green and orange sand.



Capture it . . .

Use a digital camera, camcorder, scanner, web cam, or audio recorder to capture group conversations and individual pieces of work. Upload them to your online galleries, or ask kids to do so.