



Date: _____
Series: Meet the God/Man, Jesus
Winter Year 2, Lesson 40

Jesus—The Inviter

Take Home Point: *Jesus welcomes children and invites all to receive his salvation as a gift.

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: Mark 10:13-16. Jesus welcomes the children.

Key Verse: Mark 10:15 “Whoever doesn’t receive the kingdom of God as a little child receives it will never enter it.”

We will help kids know:

- Jesus invites us into his kingdom. We get in by simply receiving his gift of salvation and not by working it out on our own.




We will help kids feel:

- Delighted that Jesus loves them and would like to spend time with them.
- Compelled to invite others to receive Jesus as well.

We will help kids do:

- Tell how a person can be part of the kingdom of God.
- Talk about where they see themselves in a faith relationship with Jesus.
- If they have never received Christ as their Savior, give them an opportunity to respond to Jesus’ invitation.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
Small Group Warm-Up 	3-4	Sharing “Knock, Knock” jokes and marshmallows prepares the kids to discuss where God lives in his kingdom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bowl of small marshmallows
Large Group 	4 8-10 11-13 14-15	Overview “Meet the God/Man” Game Show: This week the game show contestants will attempt to spell the word “Inviter.” Audience Participation Drama: “Jesus Welcomes the Children” – An adult shepherd and child help present the application to the Bible verses from Mark 10:13-16. The simple faith of a child is portrayed. Puppet Presentation: “Jesus – The Inviter” – Gordy learns that having child-like faith is more than just telling good knock-knock jokes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gordy • game show set • sport coat • large placards with letters <i>Option:</i> pieces of construction paper with letters boldly printed on them • game board <i>Option:</i> foam core or poster board) • bell, horn, or buzzer (2-4) • desk and chair • two invitation cards printed with: “I died for your sins and was raised to life to live with you. You are invited to know me, love me, and follow me.” (p.17) • long sheet of paper • checkbook, pen, and check
Small Group Application 	4-7	Kids play a game to demonstrate how one enters the kingdom of God by receiving God’s invitation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • large marshmallows (one per child) • small marshmallows (eleven per child) • six toothpicks for each child • piece of paper • extra toothpicks (at least 10) • marker • napkins • game cards (p.16)---set per group

Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



Purpose: *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

Today's lesson introduces Jesus as the Inviter. Typically, the warm-up time is very clear in presenting the theme for the day. Today and throughout the series, however, the warm-up must be much more subtle in stating the day's theme. The reason for this is that the large group presentation will be in a game show format. Contestants will be trying to guess the theme of the day. Therefore, today we do not want to blatantly mention beforehand that Jesus is the Inviter. Even if this is not clearly spoken, the kids will be involved in a warm-up activity related to the topic.

In today's small group warm-up and application, you will use small and large marshmallows along with toothpicks. These can be a delightful addition to the lesson as they can help perk a child's imagination and involvement. They could also be a significant distraction if not managed properly. The shepherd needs to maintain control of the marshmallow supply. Explain that if anyone grabs a marshmallow without permission, they will not be given any other marshmallows.

The warm-up event begins with a bowl of small marshmallows. Explain to the kids that these marshmallows will be, for a moment, doorknobs. Just to get into the mood, ask if any of the kids know any knock-knock jokes. Share some knock-knock jokes and snack on the small marshmallows. You will need enough leftover to have eleven small marshmallows per child.

Sample knock-knock jokes are:

Knock-knock.

Who's there?

Abby.

Abby who?

Abby Birthday!

Knock-knock.

Who's there?

Adam.

Adam who?

Adam my way!

Knock-knock.

Who's there?

Barbie.

Barbie who?

Barbie-Q Chicken!

Knock-knock.

Who's there?

Cows go.

Cows go who?

No, cows go moo!

Knock-knock.

Who's there?

Canoe.

Canoe who?

Canoe come out and play?

Now let's imagine that this marshmallow is the doorknob on the door to where God lives in his kingdom. What do you think that place is like? Let's talk about your ideas.

After all of the kids have shared, say:

Today we will continue to find out more about who Jesus is. We are in the series, "Meet the God/Man—Jesus." Today the "God/Man" has something to do with doorknobs. Maybe you can figure out what it is.

Large Group: 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Overview

"Meet the God/Man" Game Show: This week the game show contestants will attempt to spell the word "Inviter."

Audience Participation Drama: "Jesus Welcomes the Children" –An adult shepherd and child help present the application to the Bible verses from Mark 10:13-16. The simple faith of a child is portrayed.

Puppet Presentation: "Jesus – The Inviter" – Gordy learns that having child-like faith is more than just telling good knock-knock jokes.

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.

Observation Questions: What happened?

Have kids refer to Mark 10:13-16 in their Bibles.

When people brought their children to Jesus, what did the disciples do? (Mark 10:13. *They tried to stop them.*)

How did Jesus feel about the disciples trying to stop the little children coming to him? (Mark 10:14. *He became irritated.*)

Who is part of the kingdom of God? *(Children like these.)*

How must everyone receive the kingdom of God? *(Mark 10:15. As a little child.)*

Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?

What do you think it means to receive the kingdom of God like a little child? *(Trusting Jesus as a child does.)*

How do you think Jesus feels about little children? *(He loves them. In Mark 10:16, Jesus put his arms around them and blessed them.)*

Application Questions: What does this mean to me?

The main point of small group is to help each child hear the invitation of Jesus. Jesus says: "I have given my life for you. Trust me as your Savior. Come to know me as a friend, and follow me as a leader."

Show kids the bowl of small marshmallows and again ask them to imagine these marshmallows are doorknobs that lead to the kingdom of God. Explain:

The kingdom of God is wherever God rules. The kingdom of God can be right here in this church because he rules the hearts of the people here. The kingdom of God is also where you will see Jesus face to face – heaven. *(You might want to add some more personal illustrations.)*

If these are doorknobs into the kingdom of God, what does it take to get into heaven?

Give each child a "doorknob" to eat after they share what they understand about getting into God's kingdom. You could also encourage them to talk about what it feels like to belong to the special group of people who are a part of God's kingdom – the church.

Today we want to be sure that everyone here knows that Jesus invites him or her to be part of God's kingdom. Jesus wants to be your Savior and also your friend and leader. Mark 10:15 says, "Whoever doesn't receive the kingdom of God as a little child receives it will never enter it."

Application Activity:

Supplies:

- one bowl of large marshmallows
- one bowl of small marshmallows (eleven per child)
- six toothpicks for each child
- one large marshmallow for each child
- piece of paper
- extra toothpicks
- marker
- napkins
- game cards

**We are going to play a game called, “What Does It Take to Get In?”
That is, what does it take for us to get into God’s kingdom?**

Give each child six toothpicks, eleven small marshmallows, and one big marshmallow. Have kids make a marshmallow person of themselves.

Use your own imagination to make marshmallow legs, arms, and a head.

Fold a piece of paper in half and set it up like a tent. Draw a door and write on it: “Kingdom of God.” Leading up to the door, make five X’s out of toothpicks. These X’s are like places on a game board where kids’ marshmallow figures travel from one space to the next trying to get closest to the door and inside the tent. Say:

For every time you can answer “yes” to one of the game cards, you will be able to go one place forward. When you answer “no,” you will have to go one place backward. You cannot go any farther back than this last X.

Have kids each take a turn reading the game cards and have all kids respond by moving their little person one space forward or one back.

To make sure that the kids cannot “work” their way to heaven, place the game card that reads “If you have ever done any sin, go back to the beginning” under the X closest to the door. With such a card, it is obvious that no child can get through the door on his own.

The last card to be read is one that reads: “Jesus has invited you to his kingdom and paid the price by dying for your sins and rising again. Do you want to come to him as your Savior, friend, and leader? Then enter his kingdom.”

If the children want to eat their marshmallow people later, they may want to place them on napkins. Obviously, all of the kids will not be able to put their people on each X, but they can cluster around the X.)

The important truth in this game is that we cannot earn our way to heaven or the kingdom of God by “being good”. Jesus made the way for us with his death and resurrection.

Have you ever heard the phrase “by invitation only”? That means you can only get in if you have an invitation. We can only receive salvation as a gift. It does not depend on the good things we do, but on the one best thing that Jesus did – gave his life for us. He made the way for us and invites us to be with him.

Then why should we do good things? *(Doing good is very important, and we do good things because we want to follow Jesus and do what he wants.)*

The good things you do can help others receive Jesus' invitation as well. The things you do for God are very important. You show God you love him when you obey him and follow his ways.

Help kids visualize this concept by placing their marshmallow people on the other side of the door (paper tent) to the kingdom of God.

Just like these marshmallow people are on the other side of the door, when you believe that Jesus is your Savior and accept his invitation, you can live in the kingdom of God right now.

Today we want to remember that **Jesus welcomes children and invites all to receive his salvation as a gift.*

Even though God's kingdom is invisible when it is right here around us, in heaven, we will be able to see it clearly. If we are a part of God's kingdom here, then we know for sure that when we die, we will be a part of God's kingdom in heaven.

Closing Prayer:

Give any child who is not sure if he has received Jesus an opportunity to invite Jesus to be his Savior. The child could pray the following prayer in his heart or repeat it while you pray it aloud. For that matter, the kids could put the prayer into their own words. Encourage kids to be thankful for Jesus' invitation. Pray for other people who may not have received this invitation yet.

Prayer to Receive Jesus' Invitation

Dear Jesus, thank you for being the Inviter. You have invited us into your kingdom. We have sinned, and we need your forgiveness. Thank you for dying on the cross to pay for our punishment. Thank you for being alive right now. We receive your invitation to come into your kingdom. It is a wonderful gift. Thank you very much. Help us love and follow you in all that we do. Amen.

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Large Group Presentation: 20-30 minutes

“Meet the God/Man Game Show”

The large group format for the “Meet the God/Man” series is a game show. The large group presenter is the game show host and Gordy is an assistant who ad-libs comments during the game show. Immediately after the game show, Gordy helps introduce the topic discussed that day. He does this with a brief scripted dialog, in which he presents a typical view of a third grade boy.

The more creative the set is for this game show, the more fun it can be for adults and children alike. In advance, gather adults to help with special props or decor. The large group presenter needs to have a bright or colorful sport coat or something to serve as a game show host costume. This will help the kids know when he is functioning as a game show host and when he is presenting the Bible event.

Throughout the series, large placards with letters will be necessary to make the mystery word and provide visual effect for the game. Today’s mystery word is “inviter.” The God/man, Jesus, is an “inviter.” Seven placards with the letters spelling “inviter” need to be available. Number the letters like below. As contestants answer questions, these letters are attached or turned over on the board or the wall. Be creative in your own facility as to how these letters can be posted. Foam core or poster board might be excellent backing.

The game format operates as follows:

The official beginning comes with the kids singing the “God/Man” theme song or a song of your choice that enhances the theme. It will be used throughout the series. To receive your copy of the music, go to http://www.awaken.nu/music_godman.php You can download the mp3 file (sample) for free or purchase a CD (includes trax and demo) for \$5.00, plus shipping and handling. Sheet music is \$3.00 plus shipping and handling.

Gordy then introduces the game show host. The game show host welcomes all of the contestants to the game “Who Is the God/Man?” (A game show sign would be helpful.) They would then randomly select contestants from the ping-pong ball container. Two boys and two girls should be selected to represent the team of each gender. Give the children the option of picking someone near them to substitute for them if they do not want to come up and be part of the show. This will compensate for kids who are shy.

The game show is conducted before the Bible event is read. Kids are guessing the answers, but then are better prepared to hear the main points of the Bible reading that is read after the game show.

The game show host will read a question and the contestants will beep in with a bell, a horn, or a buzzer. Whoever beeps first gets to answer the question. If they beep in before the question is completely asked, the host will not tell them the rest of the question. If they answer the question correctly, they get a chance to look at one of the

letters to be placed on the board. They will have five seconds to guess what the word is that describes who our God/Man is. If they fail to answer the question correctly after beeping in, the other team can answer the question following an additional clue. If that team correctly answers, then they will have five seconds to guess the descriptor for the God/Man. If neither team correctly answers the question, the letter is still revealed for the clue though no one is allowed to guess the word.

Typically, the kids will guess the word before all of the letters are given. Whichever team does this, wins the game. It might be interesting to keep a weekly tally of who is doing the best job. Nonetheless, it is still fun and helpful to complete the clues even after the word has been guessed. The remaining clues are given to Gordy so the questions can quickly be covered.

Clue Sheet
“Meet the God/Man” Game
Mark10:13-16

I-N-V-I-T-E-R
7 5 1 6 3 2 4

For letter number one, can you answer the following? Last week the disciples were arguing among themselves about:

- A. Who was the greatest.**
- B. Who had to wash the dishes.**
- C. Who ate all the peanut butter sandwiches.**

(Answer: A. Who was the greatest.)

You win the letter V! You have five seconds to guess what the God/Man is.

For letter number two, can you tell me the following? Jesus said, “If you want to be the greatest then you must become a _____ to all.”

- A. Hero**
- B. Servant**
- C. Peanut butter sandwiches**

(Answer: B. Servant)

You win the letter E! You have five seconds to guess what the God/Man is.

For letter number three, can you tell me the following? Not long ago we studied how Jesus the God/Man showed his heavenly glory on the mountain. What did God call him? Did he say:

A. *"This is my Servant, with whom I am pleased."*

B. *"This is my Son, with whom I am pleased."*

C. *"Who is this guy?"*

(Answer: B. "This is my Son, with whom I am pleased.")

You win the letter T! You have five seconds to guess what the God/Man is.

For letter number four, can you tell me the following? Several weeks ago Jesus said that we are not to light a lamp and put it under a bushel basket. That Sunday we learned that Jesus was the _____ of the world and shines on our life so that we reflect him.

A. *light*

B. *mirror*

C. *laser*

(Answer: A. light)

You win the letter R! You have five seconds to guess what the God/Man is.

For letter number five can you tell me the following? Several weeks ago Jesus, the God/Man, told stories to teach people. This is an example of him being a great _____.

A. *teacher*

B. *healer*

C. *peanut butter sandwich taster*

(Answer: A. teacher.)

You win the letter N! You have five seconds to guess what the God/Man is.

For letter number six, can you tell me the following? In today's lesson Jesus will become irritated with his disciples. They are trying to stop some people from coming to see Jesus. Whom do you think they are trying to stop?

A. *traveling salesmen*

B. *children*

C. *Roman soldiers*

(Answer: B. children)

You win the letter I! You have five seconds to guess what the God/Man is.

For letter number seven, can you tell me the following? In today's lesson Jesus says that, if we do not receive the kingdom of God like a little child, _____.

A. *We will never enter it.*

B. *We will be nothing but spiritual babies.*

C. *You will never be able to eat peanut butter sandwiches.*

(Answer: A. We will never enter it.)

You win the letter I! And the God/Man is...the Inviter!

Jesus Welcomes the Children

Audience Participation Drama

For the large group presentation the presenter will simply read the Bible event from Mark 10:13-16. Use an easy to understand translation of the Bible. We recommend using *God's Word to the Nations*.

After the Bible reading, the presenter *invites* a child he has selected in advance from the audience to be a part of an interactive drama. The child needs to be prompted to answer the leader's questions with the word "yes" or a nod. A shepherd should also be prompted beforehand. The shepherd will need to ad-lib the following three scenarios. Give the shepherd enough notice to adequately think about his actions.

Mr. King: *(After reading the Bible.)* **What do you think Jesus means by the following statement? "Whoever doesn't receive the kingdom of God as a little child receives it will never enter it."**

First, let me explain about the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is where God rules. Remember that God is the King of the universe, so if he is right here ruling in our hearts, then the kingdom of God is also right here *(Points to heart)*. But we can't see God here. When we go to heaven, we can see God face to face. He is ruling there. So the kingdom of God is also in the wonderful place of heaven.

Okay, kids, imagine this is the scene. I am an angel, even if I don't look much like an angel. These are the very gates of heaven, even if it doesn't look like the gates of heaven. Here is a desk and a chair at which I sit to see who it is that is going to be able to get into heaven. In my hand are two invitation cards. These are from the God/Man, Jesus. He is the Inviter. He invites all people to know him, love him, and follow him. This card goes to my friend, (child's name), and my friend, (shepherd's name).

Hand both the adult and child an invitation.

Let's just see why we should let these people into heaven.

The shepherd approaches with an air of pride and arrogance. He tries to bargain his way into heaven on each of the following three accounts. He can ad-lib his part any way he wants. The child will sit down on the chair and wait his turn while the shepherd bargains to get into heaven.

Shepherd: You should let me into heaven because of how important I am in the church. Everybody likes me. Everybody thinks I'm wonderful! I do so many good things. Here, let me show you a list of all my accomplishments so

far...(*Shows the long sheet of paper.*) That is just this year! You should let me into heaven for that.

Mr. King: **Let me see if that is enough.** (*Surveys the list.*) **Nope, I'm sorry. These are not enough good things to earn your way to heaven.**

Shepherd: Well, if that is not enough good things, let me tell you a little more about myself. I think you must be a very new angel or you don't know very much! Otherwise, you would know who I am. I am one of the most important people in my church and in my town. When I walk down the street, everyone turns to look at me. They say, "Wow! What a good and religious man." Why, I even teach Kingdom Quest and go to church three times a week! If that isn't enough, I don't know what is.

Mr. King: **Well, it isn't enough.**

Shepherd: Okay, I get it. What's your price? Let me get my checkbook out and I will write you a check right now for the full amount. I know how much God could use some of my money. I have enough to buy a big part of this heaven. Think of all the good things God could do with my money! That should be more than enough.

Mr. King: **I'm sorry that isn't enough.**

Shepherd: Then the price is just too high! It's not fair at all. All the good and religious things I do, plus the money I give, should surely be enough to get me into heaven.

Mr. King: **Tell me something. Do you have an invitation card?**

Shepherd: Oh, yeah. But I forgot about that a long time ago. That was only a silly card.

Mr. King: **Well, we will see.** (*Motion to the child to come forward.*) **Tell me, would you like a friendship with Jesus?**

Child: **Yes.**

Mr. King: **Would you like to get to know him better?**

Child: **Yes.**

Mr. King: **Would you like to be able to feel so close to him that you could feel his love deep in your heart?**

Child: **Yes.**

Mr. King: Would you like to be able to spend forever with him in heaven having a great time?

Child: Yes.

Mr. King: Do you have an invitation?

Child: *I sure do. Here it is.*

Mr. King: *(Examines the invitation card and then reads it to the audience.)* **This card says, “I died for your sins and was raised to life to live with you. You are invited to know me, love me, and follow me.” Come right in! You have the ticket.**

(At this point the shepherd that tried to work his way into heaven objects. He points out that the child has not done more good things than he. The child has not given more money or done more religious things. At each of those comments, Mr. King can ask the child, “Is this true?” The child answers, “Yes.”

The presentation’s final culmination is when the shepherd accuses the child of being a sinner.

Shepherd: Why, that child is nothing but a sinner.

Child: *(Agrees again.) I admit my sins and trust in Jesus as my Savior. He is the one who paid the price for my admission into heaven. (This line can be printed out and placed on the table in front of the child for him to read.)*

Mr. King: What is it about children that Jesus refers to when he says, “**Unless you receive the kingdom of God like a little child you will not enter it?**”

The answer is simple. A child is open enough to God to receive God’s kingdom as a gift. A child can have simple faith to trust God that he has taken care of everything through Jesus. Jesus is the God/Man who is also the Inviter. He invites us to be a part of his kingdom. Are you ready to go?

Start the puppet presentation while dismissing the actors from the Bible presentation.

Jesus – The Inviter

Puppet Presentation

Mr. King: Thank you very much for your help...

Gordy: (Interrupts.) Mr. King!

Mr. King: ...in showing how we. . .

Gordy: (Interrupts again.) Mr. King!

Mr. King: ... enter the kingdom of. . .

Gordy: (Interrupts again.) Mr. King! Mr. King!

Mr. King: Just a minute, Gordy. Don't you realize you are interrupting me?

Gordy: Of course, I do. I'm just a kid and kids are supposed to interrupt.

Mr. King: No, I don't think so. That is not polite, no matter how old you are.

Gordy: But I'm just a kid. What do you expect?

Mr. King: All right. Why are you in such a hurry?

Gordy: Knock-knock.

Mr. King: Oh, I get it. A knock-knock joke.

Gordy: Knock-knock.

Mr. King: Who's there?

Gordy: Arthur.

Mr. King: Arthur who?

Gordy: Arthur any more knock-knock jokes? (*Hee, heeing*)

Mr. King: Well, I don't have any.

Gordy: Well, you should. You are supposed to be like a kid.

Mr. King: What do you mean?

Gordy: Well, in the Bible event today...see, I was paying attention...unless you act like a kid you can't get into the kingdom of God.

Mr. King: No, Gordy, that means unless you have simple faith like a kid you can't enter the kingdom.

Gordy: Yeah, like the kid (*use child's name*) who was up here ready to get into heaven.

Mr. King: Yes. And how will he get into heaven?

Gordy: By trusting in what Jesus has done. Jesus gave his life for me. I know that and trust in him to take away all my sin.

Mr. King: Sounds to me like you know Jesus, love him, and follow him. You're in the kingdom of God right now. Would you close with prayer?

Gordy: Sure. Dear God, knock knock. Who's there? Just Gordy and all of us kids. We love you and thank you for inviting us into your kingdom. In Jesus' name, Amen.

GAME CARDS

Cut and place seven of these cards in a stack. There are two special cards. One of these special cards will be under the place that is right before the door of the Kingdom. The other special card will be placed as the last card of the deck. This card entitles all kids free access to the Kingdom.

SPECIAL CARD <i>Place under the place right before the door of the kingdom.</i> If you have done anything wrong in your life, go back to the beginning and start over.	SPECIAL CARD <i>Place as the last card of the deck.</i> Jesus paid for your entrance into his kingdom. He died on the cross for your sins. He is alive to give you life. If you trust him as your Savior and want to follow him as Leader, please enter his kingdom.
"I made my bed every day this week." Move one step forward.	"I helped a friend at school with homework." Move one step forward.
"I did not obey my parents right away when they asked me to do something this week." Move two steps back.	If you can tell about a time this week when you talked with someone else about Jesus, move forward two steps.
If you prayed every morning before going to school, move forward one step. If you did not do this, move back one step.	If you remembered to bring an offering to the Lord today, move forward one step. If you did not do this, move back one step.
"I shared a toy with a friend this week." Move forward one step if you share your story.	If you were unkind to someone at school this week, move back one.

You Are Invited!

I died for your sins and was raised to life to live with you. You are invited to know me, love me, and follow me.