



## Helping Kids Celebrate God's Rescue God's Way

When Jesus Saves Someone It's Always Good News

### Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Retell the story of the Good Thief on the Cross and explain what Jesus promised him.
2. Understand that God's rescue (salvation) is a gift received through faith, not something we earn.
3. Recognize why heaven celebrates when anyone turns to God, no matter how late it happens.

### Scripture Focus

- "And he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' And he said to him, 'Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.'" Luke 23:42–43, (ESV)
- "Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents." (Luke 15:10, ESV)

### Lesson Flow (25 min)

#### 1. Connect (3 min)

- **Opening Thought:** Ask: "Have you ever joined a game or activity late, but were still allowed to play or even win a prize? How did that make you feel?"
- **Assessment:** Teacher observes student attentiveness and willingness to share.

#### 2. Teach (7 min)

- **Bible Story:** Read or retell The Good Thief on the Cross (Luke 23:39–43)

When Jesus was on the cross, two men were next to Him. One made fun of Him, but the other admitted they were guilty while Jesus was innocent. With a humble heart, he turned to Jesus and said, "Remember me when You come into Your kingdom." He couldn't go back and fix his mistakes, but he chose to trust Jesus in that moment.



## School Lesson Plan | God's Rescue

Jesus answered with amazing love: "Today you will be with Me in paradise." This shows us what salvation really is. It isn't about how many good things we've done or how long we've followed Jesus. It's about trusting Him. Even at the last moment, Jesus can save—and when He does, heaven celebrates!

- **Discussion Questions:**

1. What did the thief on the cross ask Jesus to do for him?
2. How did Jesus respond, and what does that show us about His love?

- **Explain:**

- God's rescue (salvation) is a free gift through faith in Jesus.
- Heaven celebrates every person who turns to God, no matter when it happens.

- **Assessment:** Teacher checks understanding through student answers and engagement.

### 3. Model (7 min)

- **Teacher shares:** A personal example of someone you know who came to faith later in life, or a time when you chose to celebrate someone turning to God instead of being jealous.
- **Student activity:** Invite students to act out or draw (Charades or Pictionary) short scenarios such as a kid joining a game late but being welcomed, a sibling admitting wrong and saying sorry, or a friend deciding to start coming to church so they can experience how God's rescue looks lived out in everyday life.
- **Assessment:** Teacher notes engagement and ability to apply salvation to examples.

### 4. Pray (2-3 min)

- "Jesus, thank You for rescuing us. Thank You that it's never too late to turn to You. Help us celebrate when others believe in You. Amen."
- **Assessment:** Teacher observes participation and reverence during prayer.

### 5. Closing/Reflection (5 min)

- **Key Takeaway:** Heaven celebrates every person who turns to God.
- **Student Reflection:** *Think of one person you would like to see turn to God. How can you pray for them this week?*
- **Teacher closes:** Summarize the lesson and encourage students to celebrate small steps of faith in others.
- **Assessment:** Teacher notes student reflections and willingness to connect learning to real life.

### Optional Extension: Independent Practice

- Write or draw a "Celebration Card" for someone they're thankful God has rescued, or for someone they want to pray will turn to God.