



Helping Kids Receive Salvation God's Way

When God's Rescue Becomes Real

Lesson Aim

To help children understand that salvation is God's loving rescue through Jesus Christ, not something we earn, but a gift of grace that brings us into God's family.

Scripture Focus

- "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." (Luke 19:10, *ESV*)
- "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8, *ESV*)

Connect

- **Connection Point:** Ask: "Have you ever been lost or couldn't find your way back to someone? How did it feel when they found you?"

Teach

- **Bible Story:** Read or retell the story of Zacchaeus Meeting Jesus (Luke 19:1–10).

Zacchaeus was a tax collector in Jericho. He was very rich but not very happy. He had taken money that didn't belong to him, and people didn't like him because of it. One day, Jesus was passing through town. Crowds lined the streets to see Him, and Zacchaeus wanted to see too, but he was too short to look over everyone's heads.

So, Zacchaeus ran ahead and climbed up a sycamore tree to get a better view. As Jesus walked by, He stopped right under the tree, looked up, and said, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." Everyone was shocked. They thought Jesus would never spend time with someone like Zacchaeus.



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But Zacchaeus came down right away and welcomed Jesus joyfully. Being with Jesus changed his heart. He said, “I will give half of my money to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone, I’ll pay them back four times as much!”

Jesus smiled and said, “Today salvation has come to this house.” Zacchaeus hadn’t earned God’s love. Jesus offered it freely, and Zacchaeus responded with a new heart.

This is what salvation means. It is God’s rescue plan to bring people back to Himself. Salvation starts when we believe that Jesus is God’s Son and trust Him to forgive our sins. It means turning from the wrong things we do and letting Jesus lead us. When we are saved, God gives us a new heart that loves what He loves and helps us live in His ways. Salvation is not something we earn by being good; it is a gift of grace that shows how good God is.

- **Discussion Questions:**

1. Why do you think Jesus wanted to visit Zacchaeus?
2. How did Zacchaeus show that his heart had changed?
3. What does this story teach us about God’s love for people who have done wrong?

- **Explain:**

- Salvation is God’s gift; we can’t earn it by doing good things.
- When we receive Jesus, He changes our hearts and helps us live God’s way.

Model

- **Teacher shares:** how you realized that God’s love wasn’t based on being perfect but on trusting Jesus to forgive and lead you.
- **Student activity:** Invite kids to role-play everyday “found and forgiven” moments they might face, like admitting when they’ve made a mistake, including someone who’s left out, or choosing kindness after a disagreement. After each short scene, discuss how responding with grace shows what it means to follow Jesus.

Pray

- “Dear Jesus, thank You for coming to find us when we were lost. Thank You for loving us and forgiving us, just like You did for Zacchaeus. Help us trust You, follow You, and show Your love to others. Amen.”

Craft/Activity

- Provide paper and crayons or small craft trees. Have kids draw or build a simple “sycamore tree” and write on it, “*Jesus knows my name.*” Encourage them to decorate it with words or pictures that remind them of God’s grace and love.

Key Takeaway

- God saves us by His love and grace.